



The Hon. Scott Morrison MP
Minister for Immigration and Border Protection

MEDIA STATEMENT

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CHANGES TO RESETTLEMENT ANOTHER BLOW TO PEOPLE SMUGGLERS

Asylum seekers who registered with UNHCR in Indonesia on or after 1 July 2014 will no longer be eligible for resettlement in Australia, Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, the Hon. Scott Morrison said today.

Minister Morrison said the change was part of the Government's ongoing work in the region to strip people smugglers of a product to sell to vulnerable men, women and children.

"While nine of ten months of 2014 have passed without a successful people smuggling venture to Australia, we know smugglers continue to encourage asylum seekers to travel illegally to Indonesia for the purpose of seeking resettlement in Australia," Minister Morrison said.

"These changes should reduce the movement of asylum seekers to Indonesia and encourage them to seek resettlement in or from countries of first asylum."

Australia will continue to resettle some refugees who registered with UNHCR in Indonesia before 1 July 2014, however there will not be as many places allocated, meaning the waiting period in Indonesia to be resettled in Australia will be much longer.

Minister Morrison said the Government does not support asylum seekers travelling illegally to transit countries in search of more favourable resettlement destinations.

"The Government's policies under Operation Sovereign Borders have not only saved lives at sea, but also allowed more places under our humanitarian programme for the world's most desperate and vulnerable refugees. It is important that these places are not taken up by people seeking to exploit the programme by shopping for resettlement through a transit country."

In 2014–15, Australia's Humanitarian Programme will provide 13,750 places. These will include 11,000 places for people overseas, nearly all of whom will be in countries of first asylum.

The Indonesian government has been briefed on this decision, which is designed to reduce the burden, created by people smugglers, of asylum seekers entering Indonesia.