



Hon. Malcolm Turnbull MP
Prime Minister of Australia
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House of Representatives
Parliament House
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Australia
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Hon. Peter Dutton MP
Minister for Immigration and Border Protection
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3 February 2017

Dear Prime Minister,

WE, the undersigned, write as journalists, writers, cartoonists and performers to urge you to allow our colleagues **Behrouz Boochani, Mehdi Savari, and Eaten Fish** to be resettled in Australia.

All three men have sought protection as refugees from Iran and are currently detained at the Manus Island Regional Processing Centre in Papua New Guinea which is operated on behalf of the Australian Government.

Well into the fourth year of their ordeal on Manus Island, and with delays and uncertainties in relation to any US resettlement deal, the three men remain in limbo. To varying degrees, the years of detention have severely impacted their mental and physical health.

- **Behrouz Boochani**, 33, is a Kurdish journalist. He has worked as a journalist and editor for several Iranian newspapers. On February 17, 2013, the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps ransacked his offices in Ilam and arrested 11 of Boochani's colleagues. Six were imprisoned. He has courageously continued to work as a journalist while in detention, and is a regular contributor to publications in Australia and overseas, often reporting on the situation and conditions on Manus Island. He has been recognised as a refugee and we urge you to allow him to reside in Australia to resume his career as a journalist. Boochani is a Main Case of PEN International, and has been recognised as a detained journalist by Reporters Without Borders. (RSF)
- **Mehdi Savari**, 31, is an Ahwazi Arab performer. As an actor, he has worked with numerous theatre troupes in many cities and villages in Iran, and performed for audiences in open public places. He was also well-known as the host of a satirical children's TV show before fleeing Iran. Mehdi is a person of short stature and has met with severe discrimination over his life. His dwarfism has been exacerbated by the conditions and his treatment on Manus Island over the last three years, and he continues to suffer a range of physical ailments and indignities, as well as regular bouts of depression and chronic pain. As he has also been recognised as a refugee, we urge you to facilitate his resettlement in Australia. We also refer you to a resolution passed

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by the International Federation of Actors congress in Sao Paulo, Brazil, in September calling for his release from detention.

- **Eaten Fish**, 24, is a cartoonist and artist who prefers to be known by his nom-de-plume. He has recently received Cartoonists' Rights Network International's 2016 award for Courage in Editorial Cartooning. His application for refugee status has not been assessed. Since he was detained at Manus Island, he has been diagnosed with mental illnesses which have been compounded by his incarceration. We urge you to allow him to live in Australia until the final status of his claim can be determined.

As journalists, cartoonists, writers and performers, we are aware that the rights we enjoy are matched by a responsibility to challenge and confront tyranny and wrongdoing, to bear witness and uphold truth, and to reflect our society, even if sometimes unfavourably. We are privileged that in Australia we are able to pursue these ends without fear of persecution or threat to our personal liberty.

We believe that to continue to detain these three individuals without charge or trial undermines freedom of expression and the right to seek asylum. All three have courageously continued to practice their vocations on Manus Island despite their incarceration. We urge you to allow them to be resettled in Australia so that they can live, work and contribute to Australian society.

MEAA is joined in this letter by the International Federation of Journalists, the International Federation of Actors, Reporters Without Borders, the Cartoonists' Rights Network International, PEN International and members of the global network of the International Freedom of Expression Exchange.

We urge you to give the cases for resettlement of these three men serious consideration.

Signed,

Paul Murphy, Media,
Entertainment & Arts
Alliance

Helen Garner, writer

Frank Moorhouse, writer

Christos Tsiolkas, writer and
broadcaster

Toni Jordan, writer

Alex Miller, writer

Alexis Wright, writer

Kim Scott, author

Raimond Gaita, writer and
philosopher

Marieke Hardy, writer and
broadcaster

Anita Heiss, author and
poet

Robert Manne, writer and
academic

Elliot Perlman, author and
barrister

Samah Sabawi, Author and
playwright.

Fiona Wright, Author

Michelle de Kretser, author

Charlotte Wood, writer

Drusilla Modjeska, author

Gail Jones, author

Delia Falconer, author

Janet Galbraith, poet and
co-ordinator of Writing
Through Fences

Arnold Zable, author

Chris Wormersley, author

Maria Tumarkin, writer

Mireille Juchau, author

Paddy O'Reilly, writer

Tony Birch, author and poet

Melissa Lucashenko, writer

Anna Goldsworthy, writer
and pianist

Angela Savage, author

Evelyn Juers, writer

Randa Abdel-Fattah, writer

Mark Isaacs, writer

Robert Hillman, author

Debra Adelaide, writer

Rod Quantock, writer and
comedian

Emily Bitto, writer

Penny Hueston, editor

Michael Heyward, publisher

Kevin Brophy, poet and author
Geordie Williamson, writer and critic
Judith Rodriguez, poet
June Factor, writer
Tony Kevin, writer and ex-diplomat
Tessa Lunney, writer
Judith Buckrich, writer
Christine McKenzie, writer
Jackie Mansourian, writer
Dragan Zivancevic, writer and director
Bill Garner, writer and actor
Tracey Spicer, writer and broadcaster
John Shakespeare, cartoonist & illustrator, *SMH*
Kate McClymont, investigative journalist, *SMH*
Cathy Wilcox, cartoonist, *SMH*
Simon Letch, illustrator, *SMH*
Nick O'Malley, senior writer, *SMH*
Neil Chenoweth, senior reporter, *AFR*
Nick Moir, photographer, *SMH*
Peter Hannam, environment editor, *SMH*
Marcus Strom, science editor, *SMH*
Stephanie Wood, senior writer, *SMH*
Matt O'Sullivan, transport editor, *SMH*

Adele Ferguson, investigative reporter, *The Age*
Michelle Griffin, acting deputy editor, *The Age*
Maher Mughrabi, foreign editor, *The Age*
Greg Baum, associate editor, *The Age*
Andrew Dyson, cartoonist, *The Age*
Michael Bachelard, investigations editor, *The Age*
Mary-Anne Toy, features editor, *The Age*
Royce Millar, investigative reporter, *The Age*
Ben Schneiders, investigative reporter, *The Age*
Simon Johanson, business journalist, *The Age*
Rohan Connolly, senior football writer, *The Age*
Jewel Topsfield, Indonesia correspondent, Fairfax Media
Lindsay Murdoch, South-East Asia correspondent, Fairfax Media
Nick Miller, Europe correspondent, Fairfax Media
Miki Perkins, social affairs reporter, *The Age*
Sarah Danckert, business reporter, *The Age*
Gina McColl, investigations deputy editor, *The Age*
Gabrielle Jackson, opinion editor, *Guardian Australia*
Mike Ticher, news editor, *Guardian Australia*

Steph Harmon, culture editor, *Guardian Australia*
Stephanie Convery, deputy culture editor, *Guardian Australia*
Melissa Davey, Melbourne bureau chief, *Guardian Australia*
Paul Farrell, reporter, *Guardian Australia*
Michael Slezak, environment reporter, *Guardian Australia*
Joshua Robertson, Brisbane correspondent, *Guardian Australia*
Amanda Meade, media correspondent, *Guardian Australia*
Chris Graham, publisher and editor, *New Matilda*
Erik Jensen, editor, *The Saturday Paper*
Jeff Sparrow, writer and broadcaster
Michael Janda, business reporter, ABC
Peter Ryan, senior business correspondent, ABC
Karen Percy, senior reporter, ABC
Stephen Long, investigative reporter, ABC
Paul Syvret, assistant editor, *The Courier Mail*
Wendy Bacon, freelance journalist and academic
Robyn Arthur, actor
Kerith Atkinson, actor
Michala Banas, actor
Amanda Bishop, actor
Helen Dallimore, actor

Chloe Dallimore, actor/President, MEAA Equity
Alan Fletcher, actor
Patrick Frost, actor
Sam Gaskin, performer
Francis Greenslade, actor
Liam McIlwain, actor
Jonathan Mill, performer
Geoff Morrell, actor
Bali Padda, actor
Fiona Press, actor
Don Bridges, actor
Miranda Tapsell, actor
Pearl Tan, actor
Kerry Walker, actor
Rory Walker, actor
Elena Carapetis, actor
Chrissie Page, actor
Margot Knight, actor
Lachlan Woods, actor
Rod Mullinar, actor
Stuart Halusz, actor
Glenn Hazeldine, actor
Abbe Holmes, performer
Jason Klarwein, actor
Lorna Lesley, actor
Monica Main, actor
Jon Kudelka, cartoonist
Fiona Katauskas, cartoonist
David Pope, cartoonist

Andrew Weldon, cartoonist
First Dog On The Moon, cartoonist
Judy Horacek, cartoonist
Sam Wallman, cartoonist
David Squires, cartoonist
Glen Le Lievre, cartoonist
Oslo Davis, cartoonist
Zev Landes, cartoonist
Reg Lynch, cartoonist
Rod Emmerson, cartoonist
Christopher Downes, cartoonist
Adil Soz - International Foundation for Protection of Freedom of Speech
Afghanistan Journalists Center
Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain
Cambodian Center for Human Rights
Canadian Journalists for Free Expression
Cartoonists Rights Network International
Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility Freedom Forum

Globe International Center
Human Rights Network for Journalists - Uganda
Independent Journalism Center – Moldova
Index on Censorship
International Federation of Actors
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Media Institute of Southern Africa
National Union of Somali Journalists
Media Watch Norwegian PEN
Pacific Freedom Forum
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World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers