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Alliance says No Forced Deportations as Iranian deadline looms

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The **National Anti-Deportation Alliance (NADA)** will launch its campaign to stop forcible deportation of asylum seekers with a National Day of Action on Wednesday May 28, 2003 (details attached). NADA, a national alliance of refugee and asylum seeker advocates, community supporters, legal advisors and activists, was formed in response to the threats of forced deportation of Iranian asylum seekers to Iran.

"The Australian Department of Immigration, Indigenous and Multicultural Affairs (DIMIA) threatened Iranian detainees with forcible deportation within 28 days unless they signed repatriation papers. The deadline is this week," says Pamela Curr, NADA member and Greens National Refugee spokesperson. "We are putting the government on notice that we will campaign vigorously to stop any forced deportations" she continued.

"The Iranian government has a human rights record which has attracted condemnation from the United Nations and the European Parliament. This regime has a documented record of public executions, stonings, public whipping of children as young as 12 years, amputation of arms and feet and eye gouging for its citizens who do not obey religious, political or sexual laws. Yet our government is willing to forcibly deport asylum seekers, many of whom will face almost certain persecution and imprisonment, if not death in Iran. Fear of torture or death on return has caused some detainees in Britain to commit suicide rather than be deported," Ms Curr says.

Chris Raab from NADA continued:

"Forced deportations are in themselves hazardous because they often involve the use of chemical and other restraints. NADA's concerns are based on the experience of this practice in Europe and England which has led to a number of deaths. The Institute of Race Relations in Britain recently released a report into 9 deaths during deportation where the official cause of death was asphyxiation or suffocation because people had been chemically and physically restrained on flights. "

"NADA has members and affiliates in every state and territory. This National Day of Action will see a show of strength and determination across the country to stop the deportation of Iranian asylum seekers. In many cities NADA members will also put airlines on notice that they will be named and shamed if they carry passengers against their will. NADA are seeking urgent meetings with airlines to gain assurances that they will not participate in force deportations and develop policies to this effect," Ms Raab concluded.

For more information:

Pamela Curr 0417 517 075
Chris Raab 0439 358 867

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