



NetIPR

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22 January 2003

The Hon. John W. Howard MP
Prime Minister
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2601
Facsimile: (02) 6237-4100

Dear Prime Minister

Re: Comprehensive and Independent Judicial Inquiry into the PSDP and sinking of SIEV-X.

We draw your attention to the sinking of the refugee boat, now known as SIEV-X, with mass drowning of 353 refugees on 19 October 2001. Despite initial confusion, it has now become clear that the boat sank in international waters sixty nautical miles from the Indonesian coast. There are serious allegations as well as strong indications that the sinking of SIEV-X was not entirely accidental and may even be attributed to the People Smuggling Disruption Program (PSDP) in Indonesia, which is administered by the Australian Federal Police. In this connection, we call your government's attention to the Australian Senate request last December for the immediate establishment of a comprehensive and independent judicial inquiry into the PSDP and sinking of SIEV-X.

We also call your attention to the wide-ranging and serious concerns within the Australian community regarding the sinking of SIEV-X. In this context, we wish you to take note of the fact that the competent and independent Australian Judicial Authority may be the best option to handle such an inquiry. As such, we appeal to your government to establish a comprehensive and independent judicial inquiry into the PSDP and sinking of SIEV-X.

In closing, thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours respectfully and sincerely

W/ (UNHCR) for
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Network for International Protection of Refugees

Dear Friend,
Please help fax/write letter
to Prime Minister J. Howard
to establish comprehensive
and independent judicial
inquiry. Regards, Oo.



AUSTRALIAN SENATE MOTION ON
INDEPENDENT JUDICIAL INQUIRY INTO PSDP AND SIEV-X

(Motion passed by Senate on 10 December 2002)

Standing in the name of Leader of the Opposition in the Senate (Senator Faulkner), Leader of the Australian Democrats (Senator Bartlett) and Senators Harradine, Murphy, Brown and Nettle relating to the report of the Select Committee on a Certain Maritime Incident

1. The Senate expresses its support for the majority findings in the Report of the Senate Select Committee into a Certain Maritime Incident, and calls on the Commonwealth Government to immediately implement all of the recommendations contained in that Report;
2. The Senate expresses its serious concern at the apparent inconsistencies in evidence provided to the Select Committee and Estimates Committees by Commonwealth agencies in relation to the People Smuggling Disruption Program and in relation to Suspected Illegal Entry Vessels (SIEVs), including the boat known as SIEV X; and
3. The Senate calls on the Commonwealth Government to immediately establish a comprehensive, independent judicial inquiry into all aspects of the People Smuggling Disruption Program (PSDP) operated by the Commonwealth Government and agencies from 2000 to date, including;
 - All funding and other resources put to the PSDP, both within Australia and overseas;
 - the involvement and activities of all Australian Departments and agencies involved in the PSDP, both within Australia and overseas;
 - the extent of Ministerial knowledge of, and authorisation for, the PSDP;
 - allegations raised in the media in relation to the PSDP, including by the Sunday program;
 - the nature of the co-operative relationship between the Australian and Indonesian Governments and agencies, including the operation of agreements and protocols, the funding and resources provided under those arrangements, and the activities of individual Australian and Indonesian citizens;;
 - the use of Australian equipment and resources in the PSDP, including use by persons outside of Australian agencies;
 - the effect of the PSDP on persons seeking asylum from Indonesia or Australia, including the effect on means of transport;
 - the circumstances and outcomes of all departures from Indonesia of all boats carrying asylum-seekers, including the circumstances of the sinking of SIEV X.