



Edmund Rice Centre

Awareness. Advocacy. Action

ERC JUSTICE UPDATES

February 2019 No.6

Dear All,

A Happy New Year to all our readers and welcome to the 6th Edition of ERC Justice Updates your regular newsletter from the Edmund Rice Centre, on all sorts of matters relating to social and environmental justice.

REMEMBER WE ARE HERE TO HELP!

Phil Glendenning Director of ERC reflects on two new additions to our ERC team.

"In good news ERC welcome Corinne Fisher as our new Coordinator of the Pacific Calling Partnership, as Jill Finnane steps back into a voluntary role. We cannot thank Jill enough for her leadership and wisdom in founding PCP over many years and we are lucky that she will still be involved. Corinne is a great addition to the ERC team and we welcome her warmly into our ERC network and community.

We also welcome back Dr Darryl Cronin as leader of our First Nations' program. Darryl is a great Indigenous leader and thinker, and we are very grateful to have him back on the team in 2019."

Thanks so much for your wonderful feedback, it is really appreciated.

Please do send us your feedback or any information you think would be good to include in further updates.

Thanks to all contributors and others here at ERC who have helped me establish the first five editions .

Don't forget to forward Justice Updates onto anyone or let me know their email address and I will subscribe them.

Regards

Marita

Communications Project Officer,
Marita McInerney



- On Monday February 11th, The Australian Government will have detained men, women & children on Nauru & Manus Island for 2018 days.
- Jan Owen CEO Foundation for Young Australians “1 in 3 young Australians are unemployed or underemployed. 70% of young peoples learning skills will be redundant by 2030”.
- Guardian writer & detained Asylum Seeker (Manus Island) Behrouz Boochani won \$125,000 after sweeping non-fiction prize and Victorian prize for literature at Victorian premier’s literary awards 2019. Read more:<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jan/31/behrouz-boochani-asylum-seeker-manus-island-detained-wins-victorian-literary-prize-australias-richest>
- MENINDEE DARLING RIVER FISH KILLS
3 MAJOR FISH KILLS DEC. 2018 -JAN.2019.
The world has seen horrific images of dead fish, emaciated animals, brown drinking water

& people suffering along the Darling River.

Please show your solidarity for the people and ecosystems of the Darling River. All people from far-western NSW affected are invited to attend public meetings. This is a Citizens Inquiry into the Health of the Darling River and Menindee Lakes - 19-28 March -

<https://tribunal.org.au/media/>



Updated ERC Facebook Profile

“Every year in the lead up to the 26th of January my body actually hurts and I can feel it in my soul. I can't go on social media, I can't find myself engaging in conversations about it because I only have to look at my kids and see that this stuff is not in the past, it's sitting right here in my lounge room with me.”

ERC First Nations Education Officer Cassandra Gibbs speaks about the need to [#changethedate](#) [#changethenation](#)



This Invasion Day, march for the future

Celeste Liddle, Eureka Street, Vol. 29. No.1, 22nd January 2019

A lot of Aboriginal people talk about the healing (emotional and otherwise) of being 'on country' and a couple of weeks ago, I went to Central Australia for exactly that purpose. Being out on my Arrernte homelands, I am able to get out of the daily hustle and bustle I experience living in one of Australia's big cities. Out there, I am part of something bigger — a feeling of belonging that is difficult to explain to those who don't have such ties to land.

When I'm in the desert, I'm in a place where my ancestors walked and thrived for centuries under some of the toughest conditions in the world. Where they carved and painted our stories into stone, and navigated these vast landscapes via song or stars. Where they found enough food and water to stay nourished and strong. Where they swam in and camped by pristine waterholes. In the middle of nowhere, the red dirt of the ground reflects the red tinge in my otherwise dark hair. Knowing where you've come from is a powerful feeling.

Beyond that though, it's a special experience to drive through the cattle station on which your grandfather was born, or through the one your great grandmother was born on. Ancient places which acquired new names as settlers brought cattle in and used traditional custodians as free labour.

Read more:



'My body is here in Australia but my heart is still there in the Philippines.'

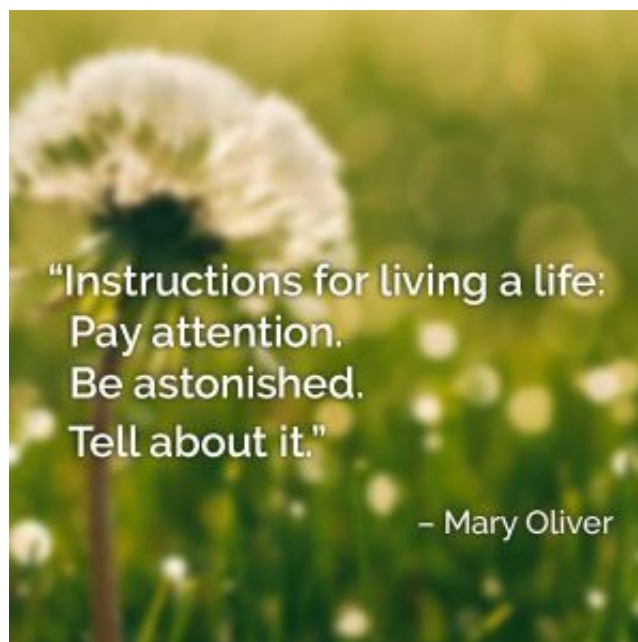
On December 1, 2018, St Mary's Catholic Parish, Erskineville, hosted a visit by a very unassuming Sr Patricia Fox and (Sister of Sion). This event was organised by Action for Peace and Development in the Philippines and Migrant NSW. More than 40 people attended made up of religious people, parishioners and people from the Filipino community.

I first met Sr Patricia at an International Peoples' Mining Conference in 2014 which had collected people from all over the Philippines and around the world to share how foreign mining companies are ruining the lives of people in many countries. Before I attended the Conference I was able to visit a number of mines in the north of Luzon that have and continue to wreak untold damage on the lives of peasants, farmers and Indigenous people. The first was an Australian mining company and the second was British. The people are promised employment,

schools and health care but often does not eventuate. People from other parts of the country are employed and the education and health care is forgotten or ignored.

Sr Patricia was deported from the Philippines after standing in solidarity with farmers, peasants, Indigenous people (the Lumads) and other human rights defenders. During her time in the Philippines she became aware of murders, land confiscations and the jailing of protesters. Working with the peasants she spoke of many stories about extrajudicial killings, people tortured and gaoled on trumped up charges for trumped up charges, which she went to document.

Read More: https://www.erc.org.au/sr_patricia_fox



New Issue of Just Comment

The name Diego Garcia sounds more like the name of a person rather than of an island part of the Chagos Archipelago situated in the middle of the Indian Ocean. This 44 square kilometres (17 square mile) atoll has been considered as one of the most valuable pieces of real estate on Earth because of its very important geostrategic location. Probably few have even heard of it. The footprint-shaped atoll lies in the middle of the Indian Ocean, at the tip of a chain of coral islands whose tropical beauty belies a difficult history.

[Read more](#)

REFLECTIONS

We must try to be like those rivers which enter into the sea without losing any of the sweetness of the water.

Catherine McAuley: "The Spirit of Institute", The correspondence of Catherine McAuley 1818-1841. p.460

'My wish is that, one day; formal education will pay attention to the education of the heart, teaching love, compassion, justice, forgiveness, mindfulness, tolerance and peace. This education is necessary, from kindergarten to secondary schools and universities. I mean social, emotional and ethical learning. We need a worldwide initiative for educating heart and mind in this modern age.'

[Dalai Lama](#)

True peace can rarely be imposed from the outside; it must be born within and between communities through meetings and dialogue and then carried outward.

Jean Vanier, Finding Peace

Our wounded self needs to be befriended and blessed - and then it will cease being petty and spiteful in the face of adversity.

Ronald Rolheiser

The biggest human temptation is to settle for too little.

[Thomas Merton](#)

Do not fear offending anyone. Speak as your mind directs and always act with more courage when "the mammon of unrighteousness" is in question.

Catherine McAuley, Letter to Mary Ann Doyle, July 24, 1841, p 418



MEDIA RELEASE

Will Prime Minister Morrison listen to our Pacific Island neighbours on climate change?

Having declined to attend the Pacific Island Forum last September and refused to increase Australia's pledge to cut carbon emissions under the Paris Agreement, Prime Minister Scott Morrison's current visit to Vanuatu and Fiji provides him an opportunity to listen and learn about what is important to our neighbours.

His visit and his associated statements seem to be somewhat ingenuously promising Pacific Islands that Australia will commit funds to ensure the "continuance of lifestyle and way of life" (in the face of climate change). Australia's stubborn inaction on domestic greenhouse gas emissions makes it hard to see how this visit will improve Australia's credibility and reputation as a regional leader.

In response to Mr Morrison's statements, Maria Tiimon Chi-Fang Outreach Officer with the Pacific Calling Partnership asked, "How can Australia's credibility as a regional leader be achieved without more action within Australia to cut back carbon emissions?"

She said, "I am delighted that Mr Morrison will be meeting with Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama."

In partnership with other Pacific leaders, Bainimarama is a global advocate on climate change. He chaired the 2017 UN Climate conference in Bonn where he urged the world to embark on a traditional Pacific process of Talanoa – the aim of

which is to share stories, build empathy and make wise decisions for the collective good.

“Again and again Pacific Island leaders have said that climate change is the single most important issue their nations face. They have repeatedly called on Australia to take a leadership role in facing climate change and many have expressed dismay at the lack-lustre Australian climate policies,” said Maria.

“While I commend Mr Morrison’s statement that he wishes to address the needs of particular communities, he needs to understand that climate change must also be addressed by the world community as a whole. It is imperative that Australia continue to support the Pacific Islands by reducing its emissions and by contributing to the Green Climate Fund,” explained Maria.

Read More:

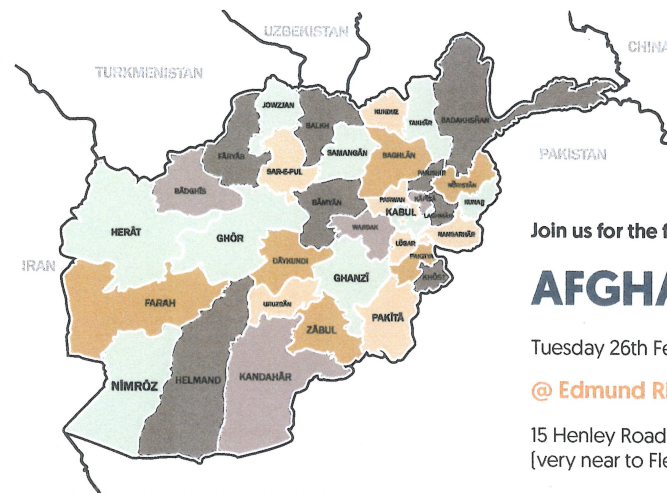
https://www.erc.org.au/will_prime_minister_morrison_listen_to_our_pacific_island_neighbours_on_climate_change

Maria Tiimon Chi-Fang as a result of this media release was interviewed by Alexandra Beech on the ABC Program PM. In the interview Maria strongly advocates for urgent action from the Australian government.

Link: <https://www.abc.net.au/radio/programs/pm/morrison-faces-climate-change-pressure-in-fiji/10728042?fbclid=IwAR1sgzsZYp55bBgjEPt0ndfLQfn1TglDP10e4rvMkvmmBnTMDiyq0ow55u8>

CORRECTION

In the December Edition of Justice Updates there was an error in relation to a story 'Asylum seeker student's university dreams revived after offers flood in' by Lily Nothling and Dea Clark. It was stated that Soumi Gopalakrishnan an Edmund Rice educated student attended St. James Flexible Learning Centre in South Brisbane; the correction is: 'attended St. James College, Spring Hill, Brisbane QLD. 4000'. Apologies for any untoward consequences of this error.



- ✓ Human Rights
- ✓ Religious Freedom
- ✓ Minority Issues
- ✓ Political Scene

Join us for the first in a series of conversations...

AFGHANISTAN NOW

Tuesday 26th February 2019 – 5.00pm to 7.00pm

@ Edmund Rice Centre for Social Justice

15 Henley Road Homebush West
[very near to Flemington Station]

Reserve your free place now:
Farhad Arian FArian@edmundrice.org or
phone ERC 02 8762 4200

PANELISTS: Phil Glendenning
Shukufa Tahiri
Martin Reusch
Farhad Arian



Afghanistan Now

Tuesday 26 February 2019 at 5pm – 7pm

Afghanistan Now is the first session on a series of conversations on human rights, religious freedom, minority issues and refugee rights which will be organised by the Edmund Rice Centre for Justice and Community Education. The session will reflect on the overall situation of Afghanistan in 2018 by focusing on the deterioration of security, growing human rights violations, ethnic and religious minority abuses, increasing political and economic instability and worsening of refugee crises.

The expected outcome of the session is to raise awareness about human rights, minority rights, refugee protection and sectarian violence in Afghanistan, and to propose practical solutions to the Australian Government and non-governmental stakeholders to take into consideration these issues in dealing with the Government of Afghanistan. The session will be of interest to those academics, humanitarian agencies, civil society activists, human rights advocates, refugee supporters, students and general public who are following social, political and security developments in Afghanistan.

In the beginning of the session, each panellist/guest speaker will speak for 10 minutes about human rights, religious freedom, minority issues and political scene in Afghanistan followed by 60 minutes interactive discussions and Q&A.

Panellists and Guest Speakers:

Phil Glendenning President of Refugee Council of Australia and Director of Edmund Rice Centre

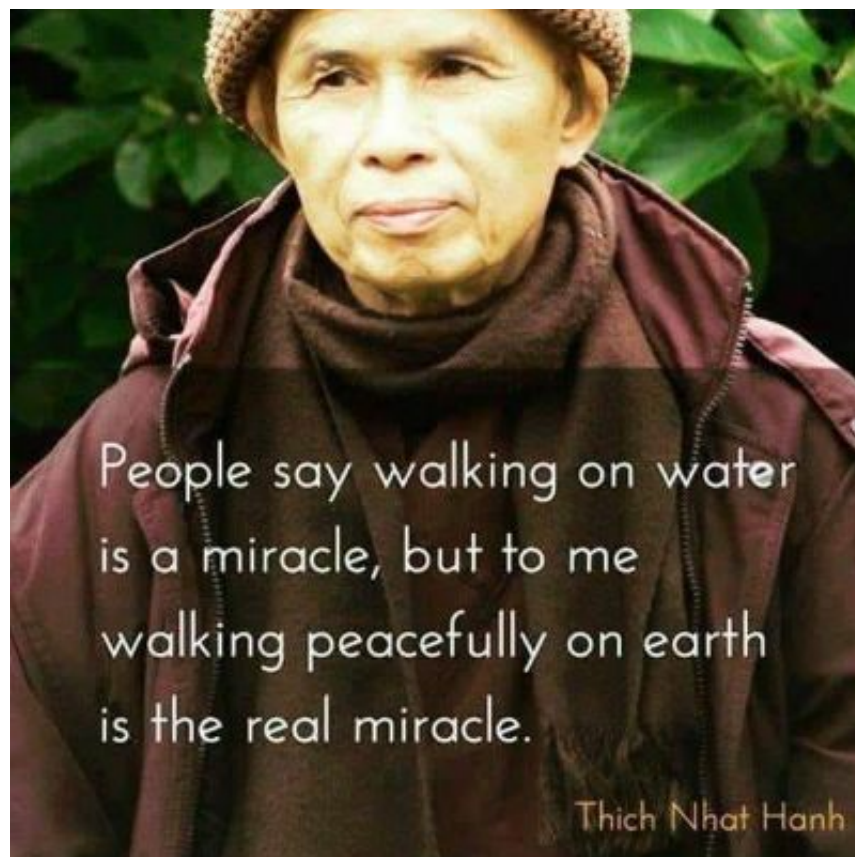
Shukufa Tahiri Policy Officer at Refugee Council of Australia

Farhad Arian Program Coordinator – Research and Policy at Edmund Rice Centre

Martin Reusch International Human Rights Activist

For more information, please contact Farhad at FArian@edmundrice.org or on 02 8762 4207.

Light refreshment will be provided for participants.



We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples of Australia as the traditional owners and custodians of the land. We commit ourselves to actively work alongside them for reconciliation and justice. We pay our respects to the Elders; past, present and future. As we take our next step we remember the first footsteps taken on this sacred land.