

National Inquiry into Children in Immigration Detention 2014

Sydney Public Hearing

Thursday, 31 July 2014

President	<p>Well before I finish today, and this we had hoped would be our last public inquiry, I would like to thank if I may Special Counsel Naomi Sharp who's put a great deal of work into understanding the situation and knowing how to ask questions that helped us establish the facts, which as I've stressed are so important. There's one point that I did want to make before concluding and that is that we had invited the Minister to come today. He declined today because he is concerned about the current High Court proceedings and that's appropriate for a Minister to make that judgement, but most importantly he has agreed to appear at some stage before the Inquiry is terminated. So it may be that we actually hold a fourth inquiry to ask the Minister the kinds of questions that we've been asking his departmental officials today. So I think it's fair to get that on the record. He has essentially said that he will appear. We hope that that will take place before the Inquiry is finally concluded. Can I perhaps also remind you about the confidentiality direction. We are very ... people have mentioned a lot of cases here and I do support that and encourage it in the sense that it's only by getting the stories, the individual stories, that we start to personalise this and get away from the language of extractions and Aquas and boat numbers and I know that, in my view, the Australian public needs to understand that personal level but it's absolutely crucial that we don't identify those people in any way that could cause them harm. So I'm sure you will take your attention here today very seriously and respect that confidentiality. So once again thank you very much for coming today, for so many of you to stay and listen to this evidence and I hope that you will look at our final report and know the extent to which we've been able to take this fully into account and, of course, to take into account the views of the Department when we do finally reach some conclusions. So thank you very much for being engaged in this and perhaps we'll see you again to see the Minister as well. Thank you very much.</p>
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