



Regional Peer-Learning Platform and Program of Action on Alternative Care Arrangements for Children in the Context of International Migration in the Asia Pacific

18-20 February 2025

Sydney, Australia



CONTENTS

Welcome to the Platform	p. 3
Meeting agenda	p. 4
Participant list	p. 6
Briefing papers	p. 8
Logistical notes	p. 23
Participant profiles	p. 28
About the organisers	p. 44

Welcome to the Platform

The International Detention Coalition (IDC) and Secretariat of the Asia Dialogue on Forced Migration (ADFM) are delighted to welcome participants to **Sydney, Australia** on **18-20 February 2025** for the eighth meeting of the *Regional Peer Learning Platform and Program of Action on Alternatives to the Detention of Children in the Context of Migration in Asia Pacific* (the Platform).

Background

This Platform brings together individuals from policy and implementing agencies in the governments of Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand and Thailand, as well as experts from civil society, academia and international organisations. The purpose of the Platform is to share positive practice and concrete examples of what is working in each national context, with the aim of transitioning away from the immigration detention of children. In addition to knowledge and experience sharing and supporting policy development, the Platform also facilitates bilateral engagement on particular areas of interest and arranges site visits to inspire change.

The Platform was created in November 2019 and met for the first time in Bangkok, Thailand, on the thirtieth anniversary of the Convention of the Rights of the Child. During the pandemic the Platform has convened four times virtually: in December 2020 on mainstreaming child protection; in May 2021 on case management; in September 2021 on access to education; and in April 2022 on effective collaboration between government and civil society. After travel was again possible, the Platform met in Putrajaya, Malaysia in November 2022 and then in Jakarta, Indonesia in February 2024. This will be the Platform's first time meeting in Australia.

We know that each national context is unique and is on its own journey away from held detention of children. No one country has a perfect system or knows all the answers. With this in mind, the Platform is based on the understanding that there is still much we can each learn from each other's experiences, particularly when we share frankly and openly with each other and involve a wide range of stakeholders in the discussion.

Platform objectives

- Exchange positive practice and latest developments in alternative care arrangements for children in the context of international migration, and respond to challenges states are facing.
- Build momentum for continued progress on implementing effective alternative care arrangements, involving government, inter-governmental, civil society & faith-based organisations.

Modes of engagement

- The meeting will take the format of a roundtable of approximately 35 people, with a norm of one person per agency or organisation.
- Participants are selected on an invitation-only basis based on their relationship to and knowledge of policy and practice of alternatives to detention in their country context.
- As much as possible participants will be consistent between roundtable meetings.
- Roundtable conversations are closed door and conducted under the Chatham House Rule.
- Observers will be kept to a minimum to ensure free and frank conversation.
- The meeting will not be recorded. Only a high-level summary of discussions will be made public following the event.
- Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in Thai language via zoom.

Participants are encouraged to contact organisers with any questions or suggestions ahead of the meeting: adfm@cpd.org.au, or by WhatsApp +6281210407337 (Christy Kumesan)

Provisional Agenda

Venue: Baker Mackenzie, 100 Barangaroo Ave, Barangaroo NSW 2000

<u>Tuesday 18 Feb - Day 1</u>	
9:00-10:15 am	<u>Session 1a: Welcome</u> • Welcome to Country • Welcome from Assistant Minister for Immigration Matt Thistlethwaite • Welcome from organisers • Brief recap of key elements for community and rights-based Alternatives to Detention (ATD) models • Introductions, ice breaker and overview of agenda
10:15 am-12:00 pm	<u>Session 1b: Introduction to country contexts</u> • Invite one representative from each country to give a 5-10 minute overview of their country's context to set the scene. • Proposed order: Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Thailand • Brief Q&A will take place after each country has spoken. <i>Bus to site visit departing 12pm</i>
12:00 pm - 5:00 pm (including lunch)	<u>Site visit 1: Settlement Services International</u> • Gain insights into the structure and implementation of the Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) program, which provides essential assistance to individuals awaiting visa resolution. • Understand the broader ecosystem of programs required to deliver holistic, wraparound support for people seeking asylum and refugees. • Examine the gaps and challenges in government-funded service provision and explore how civil society organisations complement, adapt, and advocate within these frameworks. <i>Bus back to hotel at 5pm</i>
Evening	Free time
<u>Wednesday 19 February - Day 2</u>	
9:00-10:15 am	<u>Session 2: Reflections on site visit in country groups</u> • Reflect on the site visit in country groups, particularly questions that may have arisen about: - o NGO-government partnerships - o Whole-of-society and whole-of-government approaches - o Applicability for own national context • Plenary discussion to ask questions and share observations further <i>Bus to site visit departing 10:15am</i>

10:15-2:30pm <i>(including lunch)</i>	<u>Site visit 2: Asylum Seeker Centre</u> • Divide into two groups to observe the work of the Asylum Seeker Centre at two different locations. • Gain insights into the range of programs provided, including training, healthcare, and social support, and explore innovative approaches that center the leadership of people with lived experience. • Learn how the Centre operates on a day-to-day basis and the role of volunteers, partnerships, and community engagement in sustaining services. • Hear directly from people with lived experience about their priorities, challenges, and aspirations while living in the community.
3:00-5:00pm	<u>Session 3: Social Cohesion</u> • Hear about the development and implementation of Australia's Multicultural Framework, and social cohesion initiatives • Hear good practice examples from other countries • Discuss challenges all five countries are facing and concrete opportunities to address them individually and in collaboration
6:30-8:45pm <i>Drinks and canapes served</i>	<u>Panel Discussion on Improving Rights-Based Migration Management</u> Venue: Minter Ellison, 40 Governor Macquarie Tower, 1 Farrer Place An evening panel discussion will focus on rights based migration management systems featuring speakers from Australia and Southeast Asia. Additional guests will be invited from government, civil society and academia in Sydney to join this event.
<u>Thursday 20 February - Day 3</u>	
9:00-11:00am	<u>Session 4: Opportunities for regional cooperation</u> • Discuss opportunities presented by: - o ASEAN Declaration on the Rights of Children in the context of Migration - o Global Compacts on Refugees and on Migration • Informal time in country groups to discuss the applicability of the ASEAN Declaration, Global Compacts, and also relevance of other lessons learned over last two days
11:00am	Morning tea
11:30am-1:00pm	<u>Session 5: Reflection on Future of the Platform</u> • Discuss how the Platform can be most useful to participants in the future, using discussion questions included in the meeting materials
1:00pm	Final lunch/farewell
Afternoon	<i>This time is reserved for participants to follow up bilaterally or in small groups. Please let organisers know if you would like any assistance in arranging this.</i>
Evening	Participants fly out of Sydney

Participant List (alphabetical)

Sydney, 18-20 February 2025

Name	Position and organisation	Country
Amie Hope	Assistant Director, Multicultural Policy and Engagement Branch, Department of Home Affairs	Australia
Anan Insai	Inspector, Immigration Bureau	Thailand
Anderson Selvasegaram	Executive Director, SUKA Society	Malaysia
Andrew Hudson	CEO, Centre for Policy Development	Australia
Andrew Norris Anak Bobin	Assistant Secretary, Immigration Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs	Malaysia
Anne Hollonds	National Children's Commissioner, Australian Human Rights Commission	Australia
Caitlin McCaffrie	Policy Director, Centre for Policy Development	Australia
Carmen Ghaly / Maggie Brickwood	International Protection Adviser / Manager Asylum Seeker Services, Settlement Services International	Australia
Carolina Gottardo	Executive Director, International Detention Coalition	International
Celia Finch	Asia Pacific Regional Manager, International Detention Coalition	International
Chalisa Boon-long	Plan and Policy Analyst, National Security Council	Thailand
Chandran A/L Muniandy	Senior Assistant Director, Immigration Department	Malaysia
Christy Kumesan	Senior Project Coordinator, Centre for Policy Development	Indonesia
Dome Sooktawee	Thailand Programme Coordinator, International Detention Coalition	International
Fachryan	Immigration Consul, Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia	Indonesia
Frances Rush	Chief Executive Officer, Asylum Seeker Centre	Australia
Gading Gumilang Putra	National Advocacy and Communication Focal Point, Jesuit Refugee Service	Indonesia
Haekal Muda Ralial	Consul for Protocol and Consular, Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia in Sydney	Indonesia
Hannah Jambunathan	Asia Pacific Programme Officer, International Detention Coalition	International
Hebat Hisham bin Mohd Yusoff	Undersecretary, Immigration Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs	Malaysia
Jade Murray	Immigration Counsellor – Canberra, Immigration New Zealand	New Zealand
Joseph Haweil	Assistant Director Child Wellbeing Strategy and Capability, Refugee, Humanitarian and Settlement Division, Department of Home Affairs	Australia
Kanokwan Chaovakit	Plan and Policy Analyst, National Security Council	Thailand
Lavinia Mitchell	Assistant Secretary, Humanitarian Policy and Child Wellbeing Branch, Department of Home Affairs	Australia
Mark Loong (Session 3 only)	Director, Office of Community Cohesion, Department of Home Affairs	Australia

Mic Chawaratt Chawarangkul	Southeast Asia Programme Manager, International Detention Coalition	International
Millie Soo	Director Child Wellbeing Strategy and Capability Section, Refugee, Department of Home Affairs	Australia
Nara Masista Rakhmatia	Deputy Director for the Rights of Vulnerable Groups, Directorate of Human Rights and Humanitarian, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Indonesia
Nerys Jones (Site visit 1 only)	Acting Assistant Secretary, Complex Case Management and Support Programs, Department of Home Affairs	Australia
Norzie Fariza Suip	Principal Assistant Secretary, Department of Policy and Strategic Planning, Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development	Malaysia
Parinya (Ann) Boonridrerthaikul	Child Protection Officer (Children Affected by Migration) UNICEF Thailand	Thailand
Sripapha Petcharamesree	Senior Researcher, Faculty of Law, Chulalongkorn University	Thailand
Su-Anne Lee	Child Protection Specialist, UNICEF Malaysia	Malaysia
Tajul Ariffin	Director, National Intelligence and Crisis Management Division, National Security Council	Malaysia
Thienthong Prasanpanich	Director of Children and Youth Protection Division, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security	Thailand
Torrhey Burbage	Australia Programs Unit, International Organisation for Migration	International
Tri Nuke Pudjiastuti	Researcher, National Research and Innovation Agency	Indonesia
Yuhanee Jehka	Executive Director, HOST International	Thailand
Zcongklod Khawjang	Director of Displaced Persons Policy Coordinating and Illegal Migration of Foreign Affairs Division, Ministry of Interior	Thailand
Joining online for session 1b:		
Paula Attril	General Manager, International Casework, Oranga Tamariki / Ministry for Children	New Zealand
Sharyn Titchener	Manager, International Child Protection Unit (ICPU), Oranga Tamariki / Ministry for Children	New Zealand
Observers and Secretariat support:		
Annabel Brown	Deputy CEO, Centre for Policy Development	Australia
Bogdan Krasic	Europe Regional Manager, International Detention Coalition	International

Session 1b: National Contexts

Tuesday 18 February 10:15am-12pm

Session 1 task

The purpose of this session is to share the latest developments in your country related to alternatives to detention (ATD) for children, so that everyone is aware of what is going on in different countries.

We ask each country group to **prepare responses to the following questions in advance, and nominate one speaker to share responses during Session 1** for a maximum of 10 minutes:

- What are the key developments on ATD for children in your country since we last met in February 2024?
- What has been working well, what has not been working well, and why?
- What would you like to achieve in 2025?

BACKGROUND

It is well known that immigration detention, even for short periods of time, causes significant harm to a child's physical, mental, and psychosocial well-being. Well established evidence shows detention is both harmful to individuals and their families,¹ and does not work as a deterrent to irregular movement.² Children who are detained are particularly at risk: even short periods of detention can have lifelong impacts on a child's mental and physical health due to the fact that they are still growing and developing.³

Increasing awareness of these negative impacts has led to growing momentum globally to end child immigration detention and implement community-based alternatives ("alternatives") that provide appropriate care, protection and support to children and their families.

In the Asia Pacific region, thousands of children are held in immigration detention every year. There is also increasing discomfort amongst many governments and stakeholders in this region about the ongoing immigration detention of children. This has led to some positive developments including high-level political commitments to end child detention, the release of children and their families from detention into community-based alternatives, and improved systems that prevent child detention in the first instance.

The piloting and expansion of alternatives - including shelters, foster care, and kinship care - has grown, boosting confidence in the ability of non-custodial policies to achieve the legitimate government aim of resolving the migration status of non-citizens while meeting community expectations regarding the treatment of children.

¹ Dudley, M., et al. (2012) "Children and Young People in Immigration Detention." *Current Opinion in Psychiatry*, 25(4): 284-292.

² International Detention Coalition, "[Reframing Immigration Detention in Response to Irregular Migration: Does Detention Deter?](#)" April 2015, No. 1

³ No Child in Detention Coalition (2014), *Dad, have we done something wrong? Children and parents in immigration detention*. No Child in Detention Coalition. See also Cleveland, J. and C. Rousseau (2013) "Psychiatric symptoms associated with brief detention of adult asylum seekers in Canada." *Can J Psychiatry* 58(7): 409-416

Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand and Thailand have each demonstrated a commitment to end immigration detention for children

GLOBAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

Growing commitment to ending immigration detention is evident in international and regional agreements, conventions, compacts and declarations calling for an end immigration detention for children and promoting community and rights based alternatives:

- **The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC):** emphasises that the best interests of the child should be a primary consideration in all decisions that affect them. The provisions on detention of children (as a ‘measure of last resort’) in the CRC may apply to children in conflict with the law, but are not applicable to immigration proceedings and therefore cannot be used to justify immigration detention of children.
- **The Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW):** underscores the importance of protecting the rights and dignity of women and children, including those who may be subject to detention as a result of immigration-related issues.
- **The Global Compact on Refugees (GCR):** urges states to commit to supporting “the development of non-custodial and community-based alternatives to detention, particularly for children.” (para 60).
- At the **2023 Global Refugee Forum** Australia and Thailand supported the ‘Multistakeholder Pledge: Developing alternatives to immigration detention and ending immigration detention of asylum-seeking, refugee, stateless and migrant children and their families’.
- **The Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM):** agrees to "Protect and respect the rights and best interests of the child at all times, regardless of their migration status, by ensuring availability and accessibility of a viable range of alternatives to detention in non-custodial contexts, favouring community-based care arrangements, that ensure access to education and healthcare, and respect their right to family life and family unity, and by working to end the practice of child detention in the context of international migration." (objective 13, paragraph 29(h))
- **The 2019 ASEAN Declaration on the Rights of Children in the Context of Migration:** says states “Agree that in order to promote the best interests of the child, States should work to develop effective procedures and alternatives to child immigration detention to reduce its impact, and ensure that, where possible, children are kept together with their families in a non-custodial, and clean and safe environment.” Guidelines on how to implement ATD for children in the context of migration under this ASEAN framework are currently in development.

NATIONAL CONTEXTS

AUSTRALIA

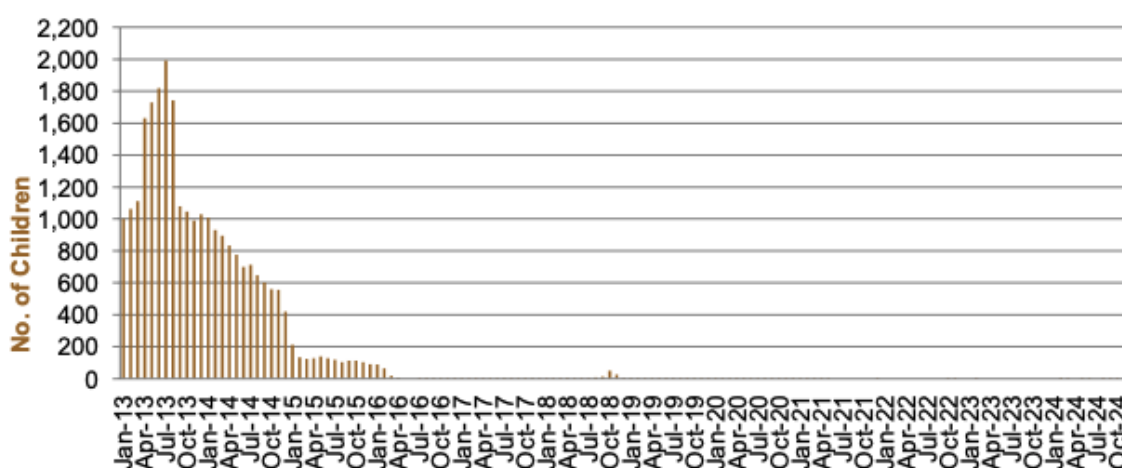
Australian law requires the detention of all non-citizens who are in Australia without a valid visa (classified as ‘unlawful non-citizens’). This means that people who arrive without a valid visa, or those who arrive with a visa that subsequently expires or is cancelled, are subject to mandatory immigration detention. Children are therefore also at risk of immigration detention, though their detention **must only be used as a last resort**.

Under the Migration Act 1958, Australia’s position on detention and alternatives to held detention propose that immigration detention should be used as a last resort, for the shortest practicable time and where necessary, reasonable, and proportionate to a legitimate purpose under the Act. **Community placements are the preferred alternative** while status resolution is pursued.

Children classified as “in onshore detention” in Australia usually reside in a residence determination placement in the community, or in places classified as “alternative places of detention (APODs)” which can include hotels or hospitals.

At its peak, 1,992 children were detained in Australian immigration detention facilities in July 2013, however these numbers have been declining steadily since 2014, and by April 2016 there were no children in immigration detention in Australia.⁴ According to the Department of Home Affairs, as of most recent reporting at 30 November 2024, there are currently fewer than 5 children (below 18) in immigration detention or APODS, and there are 47 children living in the community under residence determination⁵

Figure 3 – Children in Immigration Detention Facilities and Alternative Places of Detention



Graph source: Department of Home Affairs, ‘[Immigration detention and community statistics summary, November 2024](#)’, page 10.

A key milestone in Australia’s journey away from held detention of children was the **2014 National Inquiry into Children in Immigration Detention**, conducted by the Australian Human Rights Commission. This was followed in March 2015 by the creation of an independent Child Protection Panel within the Department of Immigration and Border Protection, and also the creation of a Child Safeguarding Framework. Australia’s progress to end the held detention of children in immigration facilities is welcome, however provisions still remain to detain children under the current legal framework of the Migration Act.

While Australia has made significant progress in reducing the detention of children, the broader immigration detention system continues to face challenges, including ongoing debates around detention conditions, indefinite detention, and the management of complex cases.

In November 2023 Australia made a number of relevant pledges at the Global Refugee Forum:

- to continue to share practice and policy lessons from Australia's journey away from held detention of children, especially within the Asia-Pacific;
- continued commitment to ensuring that held detention is only used for the shortest practical time and where necessary, reasonable and proportionate under the Migration Act 1958;

⁴ Australian Human Rights Commission, 2017, [Asylum seekers, refugees and human rights snapshot report](#), second edition, page 14.

⁵ The Department doesn’t report on exact numbers below five to maintain anonymity. See Department of Home Affairs, 2024, ‘[Immigration detention and community statistics summary, November 2024](#)’ released 19 December.

- to progress initiatives under the Alternatives to Held Detention Program, in support of expanding alternatives to immigration detention that are community-based and non-custodial;
- to support comprehensive protection and solutions strategies in the Asia-Pacific, and supporting States, including those who are smaller and emerging, to develop and strengthen their asylum systems and protection capacity.

INDONESIA

Indonesia has **effectively stopped the practice of immigration detention for people who have refugee or asylum seeker status** since a 2018 circular note from the Directorate General of Immigration stated that refugees and people seeking asylum are exempt from immigration detention.

Indonesia currently hosts roughly 13,000 refugees and asylum seekers, about half of whom live in IOM-administered accommodation, and half of whom live in the community with support from local NGOs and refugee-led organisations. Refugee and asylum seeking populations are primarily from Afghanistan, Somalia, Myanmar, Iraq and Sudan. Almost thirty percent of this cohort are children. Indonesia is not a major hosting country for migrant workers, rather it is primarily a country of origin for migrant workers who work abroad.

Pursuant to the Presidential Regulation No. 125 of 2016 on the Treatment of Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Indonesia, the responsibility for managing refugees is delegated to local governments. This Presidential Regulation is currently being reviewed and updated. In July 2019, a Second Circular Letter from the Secretary General of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology **enabled formal access to education for refugee children in Indonesia**, however there are some gaps in implementation on the ground. In practice many refugees in Indonesia study at refugee-run learning centres which teach in English, rather than accessing public schools which teach in Bahasa Indonesia.

In October 2024 Indonesia's new President Prabowo Subianto was inaugurated, and announced changes to Indonesia's ministerial arrangements. While the placement of the National Refugee Task Force within the new government structure is yet to be confirmed, it can be seen as an opportunity to strengthen Indonesia's approach to refugee policy.

MALAYSIA

In recent years, the Malaysian Government has taken steps to address the issue of immigration detention of children. In 2023, the Home Ministry launched 'Baitul Mahabbah', a "child-friendly" detention centre for children under 10 years old and their mothers. Conditions seem to be an improvement on mainstream adult detention centres, and select NGOs are allowed access to provide activities, which include basic literacy classes, group therapeutic activities and sewing classes for women. The Home Ministry has since opened six Baitul Mahabbah centres in Peninsular and East Malaysia, and has announced plans to open at least 12 centres by December 2025.

As of 30 September 2024, there were 2,092 children held in immigration detention centres across Malaysia, including the 209 children and mothers placed in Baitul Mahabbah centres. Despite taking steps to provide a more humane environment for children, Baitul Mahabbah centres remain gazetted under the Immigration Act as detention centres, and there are no current exit plans for children other than deportation. However, the Home Ministry has demonstrated their commitment to explore community-based alternatives to detention, and are conducting consultations with local

and international NGOs to develop ATD policies in line with national laws and regulations.⁶ These efforts build upon the processes and intention of the ATD pilot which was approved in 2021, and the **Home Minister's continued commitment to release children from immigration detention** into the care of child protection NGOs.⁷

Additionally, the Government of Malaysia has been working to strengthen refugee management systems, underpinned by the National Security Council Directive 23 (Refugee and Asylum Seeker Management Policy and Mechanism) which was revised in 2023. While the contents of the directive and the amendments are not publicly available, it is said to include provisions on legal status, and improving refugees' access to services. The National Security Council has identified four key clusters to strengthen the Government's role in refugee and asylum seeker management: 1) Refugee and Asylum Seeker Management Mechanism; 2) Refugee Status Determination; 3) Law Enforcement To Refugees and Asylum Seekers; and 4) Social Support Systems. Efforts to implement these systems have commenced - the Ministry of Home Affairs is working on developing a refugee registration system, and issuing a 'Refugee Registration Document' (*Dokumen Pendaftaran Pelarian*) (DPP), which would allow registered refugees the right to work in select sectors.⁸ The DPP has been approved at the policy level, and a pilot rollout was conducted in May 2024. Currently, processes of procurement and implementation are ongoing.

NEW ZEALAND / AOTEAROA

New Zealand is geographically unique in the region, as an island far from other land masses without border countries. The only means of entry is through air and airports. Between 2015-2020 there were 2,655 asylum seekers in New Zealand, of whom 86 were detained. The Department of Immigration's Operational Manual states the detention of children should only be used as a last resort and very rarely happens in practice. Children with irregular immigration status in New Zealand can attend school, obtain free vaccinations and have their birth registered (if born in New Zealand to parents with irregular status).

There is not a mandatory detention policy for asylum seekers, refugees or immigrants in irregular situations in New Zealand. The exception to this is an amendment to the Immigration Act 2013 which provides for the detention of minors in the case of a "mass arrival group," which has never happened. In these circumstances there are various protections guaranteed, including that the child must have a responsible adult appointed to represent their interests, and they must be able to express their views on detention and have those views considered.

In June 2021, Immigration New Zealand commissioned an independent review of the processes and procedures relating to the detention of asylum seekers in New Zealand. The review was released in May 2022 and made 11 recommendations. In responding to the recommendations the government particularly committed to "review and change our operational guidance and decision-making framework relating to restricting the movement of asylum seekers, to ensure it complies with our human rights obligations" and establishing a decision making panel to consider any recommendations to detain asylum seekers or restrict their movements, consistent with 20112 UNHCR Detention Guidelines.

⁶ Malaysia Gazette, 2024, [Baitul Mahabbah keenam akan dibuka di Johor](#)

⁷ Malaysiakini, 2024, [Detention options: Ministry studying community-based programmes](#); Malay Mail, 2023, [Saifuddin Nasution: Home Ministry to shift children out of Immigration Detention Depot to welfare organisations](#)

⁸ Parlimen Malaysia, 2024, [Penyata Jawatankuasa Pilihan Khas Wanita, Kanak-Kanak Dan Pembangunan Masyarakat - Kelangsungan Hidup Pelarian Di Malaysia](#)

Alongside Australia at the recent Global Refugee Forum, New Zealand committed to supporting comprehensive protection and solutions strategies in the Asia-Pacific, and supporting States, including those who are smaller and emerging, to develop and strengthen their asylum systems and protection capacity.

THAILAND

In Thailand, there are an estimated three and half million migrants with regular status, and two million with irregular status; the vast majority of whom come from Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia. As of September 2023 there were 90,801 Myanmar refugees and 4,998 urban refugees and asylum-seekers from around the world registered with UNHCR Thailand.

There are currently **eight different ATD policies in Thailand**. These include the Memorandum of Understanding on the Determination of Measures and Approaches to Alternatives to the Detention of Children in Immigration Detention Centres (MOU-ATD), the National Screening Mechanism (NSM), the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), the Regularisation of Undocumented Migrant Workers, Civil Registration, Temporary Shelters, Temporary Safety Areas (TSAs) and Bail and Reporting.

Recent developments in Thailand: include:

- Implementation of the National Screening Mechanism (NSM) from 25 September 2023. The NSM is implemented according to the Regulation of the Office of the Prime Minister on the Screening of Aliens who Enter into The Kingdom and are Unable to Return to the Country of Origin B.E. 2562 (2019). The Immigration Bureau continues to work in partnership with UNHCR and civil society through the NSM Taskforce to fully implement the NSM and address critical gaps related to its operationalisation.
- Conducting the first NSM review in September 2024. The Immigration Bureau facilitated the NSM Annual Review following the NSM's implementation. Participants included representatives from relevant government agencies, UN agencies, and civil society. This included incorporating stakeholder feedback and recommendations for the Immigration Bureau to report to the NSM Committee and the Prime Minister."
- Making progress in the use of alternative care arrangements for migrant and refugee children through the MOU-ATD established in 2019. In 2022, the government adopted the MOU-ATD Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework and subsequently conducted an evaluation in 2023. In September 2024, DCY, in collaboration with other agencies, finalised the revision of the MOU-ATD Standard Operating Procedures after incorporating stakeholder feedback, and then submitted them to the signatory agencies for approval.
- Thailand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and IOM Thailand co-hosted a public forum on "Shaping Public Perceptions towards Migrants". This public forum is part of a two-year project to foster evidence-based migration discourse and media reporting. The public forum will be followed by a series of capacity-building sessions for journalists, journalism students and government officials, as well as journalism grants and international exchanges.
- Two Parliamentary House Committees presented three reports to the Parliament proposing reforms to Thailand's migration governance framework. Adopted by the Parliament Assembly, these reports were subsequently sent to the government and relevant agencies. The Parliamentary Committee on the National Security established a working group to study and draft amendments to the Immigration Act, B.E. 2522 (1979)
- In 2024 Thailand removed its reservation to Article 22 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child reaffirming its commitment to protecting the rights of refugee and asylum-seeking children, including their access to protection and assistance in line with international standards.

Site Visit 1: Settlement Services International

Tuesday 18 February 12-5pm

This visit provides an opportunity to explore the role of a government-contracted civil society organisation in delivering support services to people seeking asylum and refugees. Specifically, participants will:

- Gain insights into the structure and implementation of the Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) program, which provides essential assistance to individuals awaiting visa resolution.
- Understand the broader ecosystem of programs required to deliver holistic, wraparound support for people seeking asylum and refugees.
- Examine the gaps and challenges in government-funded service provision and explore how civil society organisations complement, adapt, and advocate within these frameworks.

About Settlement Services International in their own words:

Settlement Services International (SSI) is a national not-for-profit organisation providing life-changing human and social services. With community at the heart of everything we do, our purpose is to create a more inclusive society in which everyone can meaningfully contribute to social, cultural, civic and economic life.

SSI supports newcomers and other Australians to achieve their full potential. We work with all people who have experienced vulnerability, including refugees, people seeking asylum, people with disabilities and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, to build capacity and enable them to overcome inequality.

SSI draws on its expertise and experience to advocate for the people and communities it serves. Through the work we do; we empower people to change their lives. Through our advocacy and representation, we influence ideas and policy.

Additional Resources:

- [SSIs story](#)
- [SSIs impact strategy](#)
- [SSI Annual report 2024](#)

Lunch at this site visit will be provided by Chef Alick from African Food Feasts. African Food Feasts offers a diverse selection of dishes inspired by the vibrant cultures of Africa. Chef Alick was born and raised in Zimbabwe where he trained as a chef. He relocated to Australia more than 15 years ago, with the dream of creating a genuine African culinary experience. African Food Feasts seeks to connect the diaspora to their roots, as well as invite others to come and celebrate together.

Site visit 2: Asylum Seeker Centre

Wednesday 19 February 10:30am-2:30pm

This visit provides an opportunity to examine how civil society, the private sector, and community networks mobilise to address gaps in government services for people seeking asylum. Specifically, participants will:

- Gain insights into the range of programs provided, including training, healthcare, and social support, and explore innovative approaches that center the leadership of people with lived experience.
- Learn how the Centre operates on a day-to-day basis and the role of volunteers, partnerships, and community engagement in sustaining services.
- Hear directly from people with lived experience about their priorities, challenges, and aspirations while living in the community.

Established in 1993, the Asylum Seekers Centre (ASC) is the first organisation in Australia to specifically welcome and support people seeking asylum. They provide practical and personal support for people seeking safety in Greater Sydney, and advocate for fair and humane policies at every level.

ASC's vision is that: *"Australia opens its heart to people seeking asylum, affirming their basic human rights to freedom from persecution, violence and fear. Recognising our shared humanity, we extend our welcome, respect and support. We are a stronger and more vibrant country as a result."*

To achieve this, ASC works to:

- Connect people to support and services: services include accommodation, financial relief, health care, employment assistance, education, food, material aid and recreational activities.
- Engage community: The ASC builds and harnesses the good will in the community towards people seeking asylum. They create opportunities for people to provide practical support as well as to advocate for political change.
- Influence policy and legal change: ASC draws on the direct daily experience of people seeking asylum to develop and promote campaigns to improve public laws and policies, working with other services to bring about needed change.

The ASC is a not-for-profit organisation with a voluntary board of directors. It relies on philanthropic grants, individual donations, some state government support, a small team of professional staff and a network of hundreds of volunteers.

ASC's strategic goals for 2024-2028 are:

- Advocate for a fairer, more just system and shift community sentiment;
- Innovate in their service delivery;
- Build a sustainable organisation with the financial and human resources to be ambitious in meeting their goals;
- Strengthen participation and leadership of people with lived experience within the ASC.

Lunch at this site visit will be provided by the Asylum Seeker Centre and partners.

Session 3: Social Cohesion

Wednesday 19 February 3-5pm

This session will explore the importance of planned and multi-actor approaches to social cohesion and its role in fostering sustainable alternatives to detention. Participants will reflect on the practical challenges policy-makers face in navigating political environments while promoting inclusion and countering discrimination. The discussion will also identify concrete actions that different actors—government, civil society, media, and communities—can take to build more cohesive and resilient societies. Guiding questions include:

- Why is social cohesion important for the success of ATD and broader migration governance?
- What policy barriers exist in your country when promoting inclusion and social cohesion? How can these be navigated?
- What strategies have been effective in countering negative perceptions of migrants and refugees and promoting social cohesion?
- Who are the key actors (e.g., government, civil society, media, private sector, community leaders) that must be involved in strengthening social cohesion, and how can they collaborate?
- What is one concrete action you or your organisation could take to contribute to social cohesion in your country?

Social cohesion can be understood as shared belonging to a community with trust, tolerance and solidarity among its members. Social cohesion is a critical element of successful, sustainable ATD as it creates an enabling environment in which migrants and refugees are included into host communities contributing to thriving diverse and strong communities. When people feel safe and included into society, it is likely to reduce the risk of absconding and increase compliance with migration processes. Social cohesion initiatives need to work with both newcomers and host communities to foster connections and trust and increase resilience against friction and instability.

Successful social cohesion requires a whole-of-society approach, for instance:

- Governments play a role in developing policies that work to increase inclusion and access to services, alongside policies which promote diversity and decrease discrimination and xenophobia
- Media has a role in promoting positive narratives and countering hate speech
- Civil society can support these steps through providing on-ground services which promote intercultural understanding and dialogue. Mainstream civil society organisations have a role in understanding what migrants need and including these supports in their service delivery.
- Local residents and migrant/refugee community members play a role to practice tolerance and understanding and to actively participate with each other to build a resilient and inclusive community.

Social cohesion initiatives can take multiple forms and look different across contexts, some examples include:

- **Australia** - The Australian Government commissioned an independent review of its Multicultural Framework in 2023 that resulted in the report [Towards Fairness - a Multicultural Australia for All](#) containing 29 recommendations and a roadmap focused on connection, identity and belonging and inclusion. Another example is community funding support from the [Australian Home Affairs Department](#) to Palestinian and Muslim communities affected by the Hamas-Israel conflict, which include a range of social cohesion

initiatives including emergency relief to recent arrivals from Gaza, capacity building initiatives with youth leaders, and national programs combating racism and Islamophobia.

- **Malaysia** - In 2023 the office of the Speaker of Malaysia's House of Representatives (*Dewan Rakyat*), in partnership with the ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights (APHR) launched a [‘Toolkit for Parliamentarians to Promote Counter Narrative to Hate Speech Towards Migrants and Refugees in Malaysia’](#). The toolkit acknowledges the role of MPs in building inclusive communities, and includes possible strategies MPs can use to end harmful perception and disinformation about migrant and refugee communities.
- **Thailand** - The Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs hosted a seminar on [“Promoting the Right Perception of Migrants”](#) in collaboration with IDC. The seminar, which involved participants from multiple relevant sectors, aimed to identify means to effectively promote positive public perception and attitudes towards migrants and refugees in Thailand, with the objective of eliminating discrimination against them and promoting the inclusion of migrants and refugees in Thai society.
- **Indonesia** - Social cohesion projects for refugees are primarily led by UN agencies (IOM and UNHCR), civil society organizations and refugee-led organisations. Activities are held to bring together refugees and local communities, such as neighborhood clean-up days, volunteer programs with local organisations, and various other daily contributions that foster positive interactions. Recently, to address misconceptions faced by refugees and asylum seekers in Indonesia, IOM launched a [five-episode web series](#), which explores the lives of new arrivals as they navigate coexistence with local communities. The series was produced in collaboration with refugees under IOM's care in Jakarta, Medan, Kupang, and Surabaya.
- **New Zealand** - in 2022 the New Zealand Government Ministry of Social Development launched *‘Te Korowai Whetū Social Cohesion’* which included a \$2 million fund for [community-based social cohesion initiatives](#). *‘Te Korowai Whetū Social Cohesion’* comes from a Māori proverb mean: “to weave the korowai (cloak) from the myriad stars”. It is intended to reflect the vision of social cohesion in Aotearoa New Zealand described in the Social Cohesion Strategic Framework, where everyone can support each other to thrive and shine bright like stars. This vision was developed in collaboration with diverse communities across the country.

Panel discussion: Improving Rights-Based Migration Management Systems

Wednesday 19 February, 6:30pm-8:45pm

We are pleased to invite you to an informal evening discussion on the topic of improving rights-based migration management systems.

Moderator: **Celia Finch:** International Detention Coalition Asia Pacific Regional Manager

Speakers:

- **Zaki Haidari:** Strategic Campaigner, Amnesty International Australia
- **Sriprapha Petcharamesree:** Senior Researcher in the Faculty of Law, Chulalongkorn University Thailand
- **Annie Harvey:** Associate Director, Strategic Projects, Community and Policy, Multicultural NSW

Closing reflections: **Hugh de Kretser:** President of the Australian Human Rights Council

This panel discussion is part of a two and a half day [Regional Peer Learning Platform on Alternatives to Child Detention](#) (the Platform), which has been running since 2019. The Platform is co-convened by the International Detention Coalition (IDC) and the Secretariat of the Asia Dialogue on Forced Migration (ADFM). The Platform brings together policy and practice agencies from governments in Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand and Thailand, as well as civil society, UN and academic experts, to discuss how to progress community-based alternatives to child immigration detention. The Platform recognises that each country's context is unique, but nevertheless there are promising practices we can learn from each other.

Since it was formed the Platform has met in Jakarta, Bangkok and Putrajaya, and now Sydney, Australia. To make the most of this occasion, IDC and the ADFM Secretariat are pleased to convene this evening event to provide an additional space for visiting Platform participants to hear new perspectives and meet with Sydney-based experts in a relaxed, informal setting. The panel discussion will reflect on opportunities to improve rights-based migration management systems in Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand and Thailand and the region as a whole, including drawing on lessons from the past five years of this work.

The event is being generously hosted by Minter Ellison, at their Sydney office: **Level 40, Governor Macquarie Tower, 1 Farrer Place, Sydney 2000**. Drinks and canapes will be served from 6:30 and the panel will begin at 7pm sharp.

About the speakers

Celia Finch joined the IDC team as the Asia Pacific Regional Manager in 2023. Prior to that, she held senior policy roles in the Australian public service for more than five years, coordinating settlement policy and working on Aboriginal Affairs. Celia has also worked as a monitoring and evaluation consultant for IOM Indonesia and was co-founder of Lighthouse Partnerships, an organisation that conducts evaluations, business development and strategic planning with organisations working on forced migration programs.



Zaki Haidari currently works at Amnesty International Australia as a Strategic Campaigner, and has previously worked with Jesuit Refugee Service Australia. He was recognised as a 2020 Australian Human Rights Commission Human Rights Hero and NSW International Student of the year in 2015. Zaki arrived in Australia from Afghanistan as an unaccompanied teenager and has since become a highly respected advocate for refugee rights.



Dr Sriprapha Petcharamesree is a Senior Researcher in the Faculty of Law at Chulalongkorn University. She has extensive experience in human rights, ASEAN and Southeast Asian studies, migration, statelessness and citizenship, and is part of the Secretariat of the Asia Dialogue on Forced Migration. Sriprapha served as the Thai representative to the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) from 2009 to 2012.



Annie Harvey works at Multicultural NSW as the Associate Director, Strategic Projects. Prior to this Annie managed migration support programs for Red Cross primarily with those vulnerable in the migration system, people seeking asylum, those that have been trafficked across borders and/or at risk of forced marriage and others who have been separated from loved ones through war or natural disaster. Annie has extensive experience in delivering settlement programs and designing policy responses and interventions that have a sustainable social impact.



Hugh de Kretser took on the role of President of the Australian Human Rights Commission in July 2024. Prior to that he was CEO of the Yoorrook Justice Commission, the first formal truth-telling process into historical and ongoing injustices experienced by First Nations people in Victoria. He previously worked as the Executive Director of the Human Rights Law Centre and the Executive Officer of the Victorian Federation of Community Legal Centres.



Session 4: Opportunities for regional cooperation

Thursday 20 February 9-11am

Over the past five years the Peer Learning Platform has demonstrated the value in sharing lessons between the five participating countries in the Asia Pacific in order to strengthen national migration systems. At the same time there have been a number of important developments at the regional and global level that have galvanised momentum for ATD for children (see overview on page 9). The purpose of this session is to briefly take stock of these developments, and explore how participating countries in the Platform can work together to make the most of these positive regional and global ATD policy developments. Guiding discussion question:

- How can this Platform support and enhance existing collaboration and commitments to advance national, regional and global policy and practice on ending immigration detention for children and promoting alternatives to immigration detention?

ASEAN is developing Guidelines on the Implementation of Alternatives to Detention for Children in the Context of Migration

ASEAN Member States adopted the ***Declaration on the Protection of the Rights of Children in the Context of Migration*** in 2019. The Declaration is noteworthy among ASEAN documents as it not only commits to ensuring the best interests of the child is the primary consideration in all relevant policies and practices, but also explicitly includes refugee and asylum seeking children within its scope. The Declaration contains provisions for strengthening national systems to identify and respond to the needs of children in the context of migration, including but not limited to child protection, education, health, and justice, and alternatives to detention. To assist in implementing the Declaration, an associated Regional Plan of Action was developed in 2021, and related ***Guidelines on the Implementation of Alternatives to Detention for Children in the Context of Migration*** are currently under development. These Guidelines have the potential to greatly enhance implementation of ATD across the region, beyond the three countries that participate in the Peer Learning Platform.

The Global Compacts and their associated procedures and intergovernmental meetings provide an opportunity to link national advocacy to international efforts and vice versa

Ending immigration detention and promoting alternatives is an area of complementarity between the two global compacts:

- The **Global Compact for Migration (GCM)** provides a unique framework for strengthening regional collaboration on migration governance. The regional reviews held in Bangkok 4-6 February 2025 and the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) scheduled for 2026 offer critical opportunities to encourage states to share and encourage good practice, and make commitments to strengthen national policy.
- All participating states have signed the **Global Compact on Refugees (GCR)**. Several of those who attended the 2023 Global Refugee Forum made pledges on alternatives to detention which have the potential to support national level change. There could be an opportunity to encourage other states in the region to consider participating in the next GRF.

The **Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD)** is a state-led and voluntary platform that fosters dialogue and cooperation on migration and development. It will be hosted in Colombia in 2025 and provides another platform for states to engage on issues related to migration.

Session 5: Reflections on Future of the Platform

Thursday 20 February 11:30am-1pm

This session will engage Platform participants in a forward-looking discussion on the strategic direction, format, and sustainability of the Regional Peer Learning Platform. Considering evolving national and international contexts and lessons from the recent [Learning Together](#) report, participants will reflect on how the Platform can remain impactful, relevant, and action-oriented.

Guiding discussion questions include:

- How could the Platform evolve to better meet your needs?
- How should the Platform's focus and scope adapt to remain strategic? (e.g., expanding beyond children, engaging new countries or actors, deepening regional collaboration, etc)
- What types of engagement (e.g., bilateral visits, in-person vs. virtual convenings, thematic deep dives) would be most effective in sustaining momentum?
- What partnerships or institutional alignments (e.g., with ASEAN or other regional bodies) could strengthen the Platform's influence and sustainability?
- What concrete contributions—expertise, leadership, funding, or other support—can you or your organisation offer to sustain and shape the Platform's future?

Co-hosts invite participants to give their honest reflections on the ongoing value of the Platform, and consider concrete ways they can support its sustainability, either in its current or a new form.

Over the last six months co-hosts carried out a reflection exercise, interviewing 20 past participants in the Platform over its five year lifespan. This exercise found that over the past five years the Platform has reached over 157 individuals through its in person and virtual convening, 69 of whom attended multiple meetings.

The resulting report *Learning Together* identifies **four key outcomes of this work**: Building collective momentum to progress national reform; developing policy champions; widening of space for collaboration between government and civil society and building momentum for regional collaboration. The report also identified **five key factors of success**, including convening in partnership; being intentional about who is in the room; creating the right enabling environment; incorporating site visits and lived experience and careful agenda design

The *Learning Together* report also highlights that the Platform achieved original objectives to:

- Exchange regional positive practice and latest developments in alternative care arrangements for children in the context of international migration, and respond to challenges states are facing.
- Build a regional platform and ongoing program of engagement, peer-learning and practical action on working towards ending child immigration detention, and implementing effective alternative care arrangements, involving government, inter-governmental, civil society and faith-based organisations.

In addition to achieving outcomes, the context in each participating country has changed over the past five years. As part of the *Learning Together* report development some interviewees indicated they felt the Platform had been effective in its current form but may need to adapt to changing contexts. For example, there have been significant regional developments since the Platform was first established in 2019, including national reforms in all countries and ASEAN's Declaration on the Rights of Children in the Context of Migration which includes commitments to ending the practice. This Declaration is unique in that it explicitly mentions refugee and asylum seeking children. ASEAN is now in the process of developing guidelines on implementing ATD for Children in the context of

migration. Australia has also pledged to continue sharing policy and practice from its journey away from held detention of children at the 2023 Global Refugee Forum, with this Platform being a key mechanism to fulfil this pledge.

Now that the Platform has met once each in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Australia, it is timely to reflect on what next: how the Platform can capitalise on current opportunities, and address challenges outlined below.

Some opportunities include:

- expanding the scope of the Platform beyond children
- changing the membership of the Platform to include other countries
- more direct engagement with other regional bodies
- more focus on facilitating bilateral visits and less frequent occurrences in regional groups
- engaging with new partners

Some challenges include:

- resourcing the Platform - both financial and human resources
- maintaining engagement between Platform meetings
- ensuring discussion is relevant for all national contexts
- meaningful and safe inclusion of lived experience leaders

Morning tea and lunch on this day will be provided by Sangee's Kitchen. Born in Malaysia, Sangee honed her skills as a curry chef, inheriting treasured recipes from her late father. Now she brings these flavours to life in Australia, where she has lived since 2018. Sangee has showcased her talents on TV show "the cook up" with Malaysian-Australian Adam Liaw, and often makes appearances at markets, festivals and fundraisers.

Logistics notes

Welcome to Sydney! Some information about logistics and travel are outlined below. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact us at adfm@cpd.org.au.

Venue

The venue for the Regional Peer Learning Meeting is at **Baker McKenzie, Floor 46, Tower 1, 100 Barangaroo Ave, Barangaroo NSW 2000.**

The venue is 8 minutes walk from the Novotel Sydney City Centre.

Accommodation

Accommodation for most participants during the event is at the **Novotel Sydney City Centre, 7-9 York Street, Sydney, NSW 2000.**

Organisers can arrange accommodation for up to four nights (including breakfast) for those who were covered by the organisers. For those who are self-funding, please let us know if you would also like to stay at the Novotel Hotel and we will ensure you get our group discount rate.

Participants will be responsible for any additional expenses (i.e. minibar, phone charges, etc.)

Check-in time is 2pm, however you are welcome to drop your baggage off at any time. Check-out time is 11am.

Airfares

Should you require assistance booking your flights please confirm this with organisers. The Centre for Policy Development (CPD) will be responsible for arranging flights for participants who need assistance.

Visas

Participants from Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand require a visa to enter Australia. Participants need to complete their own visa application, organisers cannot do this for you. Please ensure that you complete your visa application process THREE MONTHS BEFORE the meeting to allow for processing.

Organisers are not able to complete visa applications or expedite visas for participants. However if you have questions or need assistance with your visa application, please contact Christy Kumesan at adfm@cpd.org.au or by Whatsapp +6281210407337.

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is mandatory for obtaining an Australian visa. Please ensure you purchase comprehensive travel insurance covering medical, trip cancellations, and other emergencies. You will need to provide proof of insurance during the visa application process.

Below are some options for travel insurance:

- [Zurich Travel Insurance](#) (for Indonesian resident only)
- [Axa Travel Insurance](#) (for Thai resident only)
- [Zurich Travel Insurance](#) (for Malaysian resident only)

If preferred, organisers can arrange travel insurance for those unable to arrange it on their own. Please advise of your needs by return email.

Airport Transfer

The hotel is about a 20 minute car journey from Sydney International Airport (SYD).

Organisers will arrange airport transfers for those participants who are covered by the organisers. We will update you on the meeting point closer to date.

For those who are self-funding:

Airport **taxis** are a fast and convenient way to get from the airport to the venue and will cost about \$45-\$55 one way to the CBD. You will find taxi ranks at the front of all terminals - simply follow the signs to the nearest ranks.

The ride-hailing app **Uber** is also available at the airport. You will have to download this app from the App Store/Google Play Store and register an account in advance to book a ride. Send the request once you've exited the terminal, and your driver will meet you at the designated pick up zone for your terminal.

- T1 International - Exit Arrivals Hall A and follow signs to Rideshare
- T2 Domestic - Exit the terminal and follow the green signs for Priority Pick-up
- T3 Domestic - Passengers will be collected from the kerbside, directly outside of T3 Domestic terminal

Fares to Sydney vary depending on the selected vehicle option, travel time, and total distance. Use the [Uber Fare Estimator](#) to get estimated prices.

To avoid the traffic, another option to get from the airport to the venue is by taking the **train**. Sydney Airport is located just 13 minutes by train from the city. Airport Link offers a fast and convenient way to reach the city and suburbs, with trains running approximately every 10 minutes. The International station can be accessed from the arrivals level of the terminal, past Arrivals Hall A. The Domestic station can be accessed from the arrivals level of the T2 and T3 Domestic terminals. To use this service, you can either purchase an Opal Card from the station or WH Smith, or tap on with your Amex, Visa or Mastercard. For more information, including fares, maps, timetable changes and travel planners, choose from the links below.

[Airport Link](#)

[Opal Card](#)

[Transport NSW Trip Planner](#)

When returning, it is advised to be at the airport about 2 hours before your departure time. Factoring in a 20-30 minute journey from the hotel to the airport, aim to leave the hotel 3 hours before your flight's departure.

Local Transport

Daily transportation: Transport will be arranged by organisers between the meeting venue and site visits on 18 and 19 February, as well as to the evening venue on 19 February.

Local transport: Taxis and public transport are readily available in Sydney. “Opal cards” to use on public transport can be purchased at the airport or any convenience store, or you can also usually use your bank card as well.

Meals

Breakfast is included at the hotel, and all lunches and snacks during the meeting will be covered by organisers.

Evenings on 17 and 18 February: Participants have free time in the evening on 17 and 18 February. Organisers can cover participants up to a maximum of AUD 30 if required. Please speak to one of the organising team to arrange this in person.

Evening of 19 February: On Wednesday there will be a cocktail reception with panel discussion, where food and drink will be provided. Transport to and from the venue and the hotel will also be arranged.

The following restaurants are nearby the hotel and come recommended:

- [Medan Ciak](#) (Indonesian cuisine) - 10/339 Sussex Street (20 min walk / 12 min train)
- [Shalom Indonesian Restaurant](#) - shop 3-4/299 Sussex Street (20 min walk)
- [Malay Chinese](#) - 8 min walk from the hotel
- [Malacca Straits on Broadway](#) (Malaysian)- 5/66 Mountain St, Ultimo (27 min train / 10 min drive)
- [Mamak Haymarket](#) (Malaysian) - 15 Goulburn St (20 min walk)
- [Bar Luca](#) - 11 min walk from the hotel
- [Gateway Mall in Circular Quay](#) has many dining options
- [Haymarket area](#) has lots of good dining options including:
 - Chinatown Precinct in Haymarket has many cheap and good food options. A good recommendation is Kiroran Silk Road Uyghur Restaurant, 3/6 Dixon Street
 - Thai Town Precinct - in Haymarket on Campbell Street. A good recommendation is Yod 462/40-54 Campbell St, Haymarket NSW 2000

A general guide for the CBD’s restaurant could be accessed [here](#).

Facilities at/around the Accommodation

At the accommodation:

Novotel Sydney City Centre is conveniently located in the heart of Sydney CBD at 7-9 York Street, Sydney. The hotel is extremely accessible by train, located on the doorstep of Wynyard train station, and also accessible by light rail, bus or ferry. Inside the hotel you will find [Birdie Bar & Brasserie](#), which has a British-inspired menu using local Australian produce.

Local attractions:

Westfield Sydney (10 minutes walk from the hotel)

The closest large mall is a one-stop shop featuring a wide range of recognised national and international fashion brands, as well as entertainment, dining and relaxation options.

Hyde Park (14 minutes walk from the hotel)

Hyde Park is a good place to escape the hustle and bustle of the city and enjoy 16 hectares of wide open space. The park features attractions like the Anzac Memorial and Archibald Fountain, plus other statues and monuments.

Martin Place (7 minutes walk from the hotel)

Described as the civic heart of Sydney, Martin Place is a pedestrian mall lined with heritage-listed buildings featuring colonial architecture.

Barangaroo (5 minutes walk from the hotel)

This is one of the most popular strips of Sydney for eating, drinking, shopping and events. It is just a few minutes from the hotel. You can take a walk along the water and enjoy the view of Darling Harbour right around to the Harbour Bridge.

Circular Quay (13 minutes walk from the hotel)

This is one of the most iconic spots in Sydney, and also just a short walk from the hotel. Enjoy the breath-taking views of Sydney's Harbour, encompassing the iconic Sydney Opera House, and Sydney Harbour Bridge. You can also easily hop on a ferry from Circular Quay to experience another angle and viewpoint of the Harbour.

Sydney Opera House (20 minutes walk from the hotel)

The Sydney Opera House is a 20 minute walk from the hotel. You can sip a cocktail at the Opera Bar, or just walk around and enjoy the view, including iconic Sydney Harbour Bridge.

Royal Botanic Gardens (15 minutes walk from the hotel)

Australia's oldest botanic garden overlooks Sydney Harbour. The Botanic Gardens of Sydney encompasses world-leading botanic gardens and is a good place to unwind in nature.

Harbour Bridge (11 minutes walk from the hotel)

The Sydney Harbour Bridge is a steel arch bridge spanning Sydney Harbour, connecting the CBD to the North Shore. The view of the bridge, the Harbour, and the nearby Sydney Opera House is widely regarded as an iconic image of Sydney, and of Australia itself.

Darling Harbour (11 minutes walk from the hotel)

Darling Harbour is another nearby harbour adjacent to the city centre that is made up of a large recreational and pedestrian precinct.

Sydney Tower Eye (13 minutes walk from the hotel)

Sydney Tower, also known as Westfield Tower and formerly as Centrepont Tower, is an observation and telecommunications tower that is the tallest structure in Sydney, and the second-tallest observation tower in the Southern Hemisphere.

Queen Victoria Building (11 minutes walk from the hotel)

The Queen Victoria Building (QVB) is a five level shopping centre located in the heart of Sydney's CBD.

Art Gallery of NSW (18 minutes walk from the hotel)

The Art Gallery of New South Wales was founded in 1872 and is the most important public gallery in Sydney and one of the largest in Australia.

The Rocks (9 minutes walk from the hotel)

The Rocks is a neighbourhood of historic laneways in the shadow of Sydney Harbour Bridge. Locals and tourists mingle at the open-air Rocks Markets, purchasing street food and handmade fashion. The area has some of Sydney's oldest pubs and many of the upscale restaurants have harbour views.

General Information about Sydney

Weather: Sydney's weather in February is usually hot and sunny with high humidity. The average daytime temperatures in Sydney can range from 25-40°C while nights can be cooler and drop below 19°C. Please dress accordingly.

Currency: Australian Dollar (AUD). Currency exchange services are available at the airport and major banks. Cash is very rarely used in Australia so bank card transactions are highly encouraged.

Time Zone: In February Sydney operates on Australian Eastern Daylight Time (AEDT), four hours ahead of Bangkok and Jakarta and three hours ahead of Kuala Lumpur.

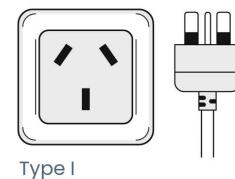
Obtaining SIM Card (if desired):

For staying connected during your stay in Sydney, you may want to purchase a local SIM card.

- **Where to buy:** SIM cards are available at the airport, convenience stores, and major retail outlets.
- **Providers:** Some major mobile providers include Telstra, Optus, and Vodafone.
- **Cost:** Plans start from AUD \$10 for basic prepaid packages with data.
- **Requirements:** You may need to show identification (passport) when purchasing a SIM card.
- **eSIM cards** are also a cost effective and convenient option depending on what model of phone you have. Airalo is [one brand](#) you can try, but there are many options available.

Electric Supply:

Australia operates on a 230V supply voltage and 50Hz. Most commonly, Australia uses Type I (three flat pins in a triangular pattern). Participants are advised to bring their own electrical adaptors if required.



Welcoming remarks: Speaker bio



The Hon. Matt Thistlethwaite MP

**Federal Member for Kingsford Smith
Assistant Minister for Immigration**

The Hon. Matt Thistlethwaite MP is the Labor Member for Kingsford Smith. He is currently serving as the Assistant Minister for Immigration.

Matt was formerly a member of the Australian Senate from 2011 to 2013 during which time he served as Parliamentary Secretary for Pacific Island Affairs, Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Parliamentary Secretary for Infrastructure and Transport.

Matt grew up in Maroubra, went to school in Pagewood and attended the University of NSW in Kensington where he studied economics before going on to become a lawyer. Matt Thistlethwaite is an active community volunteer and passionate advocate for advancing the interests of vulnerable and disadvantaged people.

Matt has extensive experience representing workers as a lawyer and trade union official in a range of industries including transport, power, manufacturing, agriculture, public sector, health and horse racing. Matt is a former director of the State Transit Authority of NSW, and the NSW Manufacturing Council. He was a member of the Racing Industry Participants Advisory Council, and an Executive Member of the NSW Jockeys Association.

Matt has been an active surf lifesaver for over 30 years and served four years as President of Maroubra Surf Life Saving Club. He was also the President of Maroubra PCYC from 1999-2004, and was awarded by PCYC NSW for his dedicated services in 2005. Matt has worked as a Senior Consultant with law firm Mallesons Stephen Jaques.

Matt was elected General Secretary of NSW Labor from 2008-2010. He was the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Unions NSW from 2004 to 2008, and worked for the Australian Workers Union for 10 years. He has been a member of NSW Labor since 1995 and was President of NSW Young Labor from 1997-98.

His tertiary qualifications are: Diploma of Law, graduated 2001; Bachelor of Economics (UNSW).

Participant Profiles



Amie Hope

Australia

Amie Hope currently works as an Assistant Director in the Multicultural Policy and Engagement Branch at the Department of Home Affairs. During Amie's time in government she has designed and developed innovative research partnerships focusing on social cohesion and multiculturalism.



Prior to working in government, Amie spent over 15 years working in refugee protection and resettlement. Internationally, Amie has worked in Thailand and Malaysia for the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) developing and evaluating global training programs for refugees, and was also nominated as an advisor to the European Resettlement Network. In Australia, Amie has worked extensively in the not for profit sector designing and managing onshore resettlement programs, employment and education programs and social inclusion projects with refugee communities.

Amie holds an MBA from the University of Sydney and a Bachelor of Arts in International Studies.

Anan Insai

Thailand

Pol. Maj. Anan Insai is an Inspector of the Sub-Division 3, Investigation Division, Immigration Bureau in Thailand. He supervises and provides care for mother and child detainees awaiting deportation at the Suan Plu Detention Center and Bangkhen Mother and Children Center.

Pol. Maj Anan is working in coordination with government agencies, United Nations agencies, and non-governmental organisations concerning the protection of mother and child detainees.



Anderson Selvasegaram

Malaysia

Anderson Selvasegaram is the Executive Director of SUKA Society, which he founded in 2010. SUKA Society focuses on solutions that protect and preserve the best interests of children. Its work covers the following areas: creating access to education for Indigenous children, protecting victims of human trafficking and advocating for alternatives to detention for children affected by immigration arrest and detention in Malaysia. In 2015, SUKA Society won the United Nations Malaysia Award on the occasion of the United Nations' 70th Anniversary.

Anderson holds a Bachelor of Science Degree from Universiti Putra Malaysia. In 2013 he was invited by the United States' State Department to attend the International Visitors Leadership Program. In 2016, he was appointed as the International Detention Coalition (IDC) Regional Advisor for Southeast Asia. He currently advocates with the government to initiate an 'alternatives to detention for unaccompanied and separated minors' pilot program in Malaysia. He is also currently a member of the National Project Advisory Committee (PAC) for the EU-UNICEF Initiative.



Andrew Hudson

Australia

Andrew Hudson is Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Centre for Policy Development (CPD). He has over 25 years of experience in public policy, advocacy and senior leadership, working with NGOs, the United Nations, the private sector and government. He is an expert in building collaborations and changing systems to improve the lives of disadvantaged people. Andrew joined CPD in June 2021 as inaugural International Director, to build out a new international program for CPD, and became CEO in April 2022.



Before joining CPD, Andrew was CEO of Crisis Action in New York, leading a global team of over 50 people in 11 countries working to build coalitions to protect civilians in conflict. Prior to that, Andrew worked at Human Rights First in New York, where he coordinated UN advocacy, managed the Human Rights Defenders Program and led Latin American work. Andrew has also worked as a lawyer in Australia, with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Ecuador and the UN Regional Commission in Thailand. He was Australia's first Youth Representative to the UN. Andrew holds honours degrees in politics and law from the University of Melbourne and a Master of Laws from New York University School of Law.

Andrew Norris Anak Bobin

Malaysia

Andrew Norris Bobin is currently working as the Assistant Secretary in Immigration Affairs Division, Ministry of Home Affairs, Malaysia. In his role, he assists the Division Undersecretary in coordinating policies related to immigration and detention affairs and represents the Division in committee meetings related to migration matters, refugees issues, and human rights. Andrew previously served in Immigration Department of Malaysia as Senior Assistant Director in the Administration Division.



Annabel Brown

Australia

Annabel Brown is Deputy CEO of the Centre for Policy Development (CPD) and has led policy and program work there for over eight years. Annabel was instrumental in establishing the Asia Dialogue on Forced Migration (ADFM) in 2015 as part of CPD's work to advance more dignified, durable and effective responses to forced migration. She is an experienced facilitator and adviser with over 20 years of experience supporting effective social and economic development in Australia and the Asia Pacific. Annabel has particular expertise leading research and evaluation projects focused on understanding policy influence, advocacy, leadership development, governance, accountability and empowerment.



Her work has a particular focus on service system reform, employment and economic participation, and place-based approaches to policy design, delivery and evaluation. Agencies and networks she has worked with include Transparency International, Oxfam, WaterAid, the Secretariat of Pacific Community, the Australian Public Service Commission and the Australian Aid Program.

Annabel has a Masters in International Development from RMIT University and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Western Australia, majoring in Philosophy. She is passionate about generating knowledge, through collaborative processes, and using that to improve policy and practice.

Anne Hollonds

Australia

Anne Hollonds has served as National Children's Commissioner in Australia since 2020. Her role is responsible for monitoring policy and legislation to ensure that the human rights of children are protected and promoted, and to provide advice to the government.



Prior to her appointment as National Children's Commissioner, Anne has served as a leader or director in both government and non-government organisations focused on research, policy and practice related to child and family wellbeing, including as Director of the Australian Institute of Family Studies. Before that she worked extensively in frontline practice as a psychologist and social worker, including in child protection, domestic, family and sexual violence, mental health, child and family counselling, parenting education, family law counselling, and community development.

As National Children's Commissioner Anne also contributes to numerous expert advisory groups for governments, research projects and non-government organisations.

Caitlin McCaffrie

Australia

Caitlin McCaffrie is the Forced Migration Policy Director at the Centre for Policy Development, where she has worked since 2018. In this role Caitlin coordinates the Track 1.5 Asia Dialogue on Forced Migration (ADFM) in collaboration with think tank partners in Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand, and provides policy analysis, advice and research on topics including migration governance, human trafficking, forced migration and refugee resettlement.



Prior to joining CPD Caitlin worked for non-government organisations in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, including the Cambodian Center for Human Rights and Stanford University's WSD Handa Center for Human Rights and International Justice, managing programs on research, education, outreach and trial monitoring of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia. Caitlin holds a Masters of Public Policy and Management Degree from the University of Melbourne and a first class Honours degree in International Studies from the University of Adelaide.

Carmen Ghaly

Australia

Carmen Ghaly is the International Protection Advisor at Settlement Services International (SSI). Carmen leads SSI's engagement in international advocacy, policy and global partnerships.

Carmen's work focuses on advancing durable solutions and protection for people who are forcibly displaced through resettlement, complementary pathways and strengthening the capacity of partners. She is an experienced social worker in forced migration and international development having worked in West Africa, the Middle East and Australia.



Carolina Gottardo

International

Carolina Gottardo is the Executive Director of the International Detention Coalition (IDC). She is a migrant lawyer and economist who has worked on human rights and public policy issues for more than 20 years in different countries and contexts. Her areas of specialisation are migration, asylum and gender. Carolina started as Executive Director of IDC in November 2020. Before joining IDC, she was the director of the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Australia for almost four years, and the director of the Latin American Women's Rights Service (LAWRS), a UK women's rights organisation working with refugee and migrant women for almost six years.



Carolina is currently a member of the board of the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN), Women in Migration Network and the European Philanthropic Initiative on Migration. She is also a member of the Global UN Women Expert Working Group to address the human rights of women in the Global Compact for Migration, former steering group member of the UN Migration Multi Partner Trust Fund and a co-lead of the UN Migration Network working group on alternatives to detention. Carolina holds Bachelors in Law and Economics from Universidad de los Andes and a Masters in Development Management from the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Celia Finch

International

Celia Finch is a policy and strategy advisor, project manager, researcher, social innovator and evaluator committed to working alongside communities impacted by forced displacement to influence decisions that affect them. Celia joined the International Detention Coalition (IDC) team as the Asia Pacific Regional Manager in 2023. Prior to that, Celia held senior policy roles in the Australian public service for more than five years, including coordinating settlement policy and working on Aboriginal Affairs.



Celia previously worked as a monitoring and evaluation consultant for the International Organisation for Migration Indonesia mission where she designed, implemented and evaluated migration and community stabilisation projects across Aceh, Jakarta, Papua, West Papua and Maluku. Celia was also a co-founder of Lighthouse Partnerships, an organisation that conducts evaluations, business development, and strategic planning with organisations working on forced migration programs. Celia has a Bachelor of International and Global Studies and Masters of International Security from the University of Sydney.

Chalisa Boon-long

Thailand

Chalisa Boon-long is a Plan and Policy Analyst (Practical Level) at the Division of Internal Security Affairs in the Office of National Security Council, Thailand. Her responsibilities include issues related to irregular migration, and she is responsible for drafting policy recommendations to resolve issues of statelessness and irregular migration in Thailand.

Prior to joining the National Security Council, Chalisa worked as a Social Development Worker at Child Online Protection Action Thailand (COPAT), in the Department of Children and Youth, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security Thailand.



Chandran A/L Muniandy

Malaysia

Chandran A/L Muniandy is currently the Senior Assistant Director in the Detention and Depot Management Division in the Department of Immigration Malaysia. He previously served as Commandant in Bukit Jalil and Pekan Nenas immigration detention centres for almost 9 years.

Chandran holds a Law Degree from University Malaya and a Masters of Law LLM from the Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, and currently teaches International Law at University Malaya.



Christy Kumesan

Indonesia

Christy Kumesan is Senior Project Coordinator at CPD where she works across the forced migration and just transition portfolios. She is a humanitarian and international development professional with a demonstrated history working for non-profit organisations. Christy is skilled in humanitarian diplomacy, multilateral affairs and policy, project management, organisational development, international relations, partnership development, as well as community engagement. Her professional goals include promoting peace through multi-tracks diplomacy and strengthening multinational collaboration to reach world prosperity and equality.



Christy has more than a decade of experience working in this sector including with GIZ, ICRC, RedR Indonesia, Humanitarian Benchmark Consulting, and Kompas Gramedia Group. She has a Masters Degree in Global Humanitarian Diplomacy from Universitas Gadjah Mada and a Bachelor of Political Science from the same university.

Dome Sooktawee

International

Dome Sooktawee is a dedicated social activist and independent migration consultant with a wealth of experience. Dome's research contributions span a wide range of human rights issues. His work includes child statelessness, victims of trafficking, migrant workers' health, and Rohingya refugees in the Andaman Sea. His advocacy has been a driving force behind alternatives to detention, national screening mechanisms for refugees, advocating for the protection of Rohingya refugees, and improving the quality of life for migrant workers, stateless persons and refugees in Thailand.



Dome holds a Master of Arts in Anthropology from Thammasat University, with a thesis focused on the Rohingya as a stateless population in Thailand. Through his research, advocacy and professional roles, Dome has contributed to protecting and empowering vulnerable populations in Thailand and beyond.

Fachryan **Indonesia**

Fachryan, Amd.Im., S.H., M.P.A., is an experienced Immigration Officer with over 23 years of service in Indonesia's Immigration sector. Throughout his career, he has worked at several Immigration Offices across the country, including a significant role at the Immigration Checkpoint at Soekarno-Hatta International Airport, one of Indonesia's largest airports. Fachryan has specialized in Immigration Intelligence and Enforcement, gaining valuable expertise in managing refugee-related cases, particularly in Aceh.



He completed his Bachelor's degree in Law at Padjadjaran University in Indonesia and further pursued a Master's degree in Public Policy at Flinders University in Adelaide.

Gading Gumilang Putra **Indonesia**

Gading Gumilang Putra is the National Advocacy and Communication focal point at Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Indonesia. JRS Indonesia has assisted refugees and asylum seekers since 2009, initially by accompanying Rohingya asylum seekers in Aceh and North Sumatra before developing assistance for refugees in Medan immigration detention centers (2012-2013 and 2018), Surabaya (2012-2015) and Manado (2015-2018), urban refugees in Bogor and Jakarta (2010 - present) as well as Aceh for emergency response. JRS Indonesia provides accompaniment, various basic needs services, as well as advocacy.



Gading graduated from the Faculty of Law, Universitas Gadjah Mada, specialising in International Law and passed the bar exam in 2017. Currently his work involves coordination and capacity-building among refugee communities, government, non-government organisations, and the private sector to achieve stronger collaboration in realising refugee rights in Indonesia and in the wider region.

Haekal Muda Ralial **Indonesia**

Haekal is a Consul for Protocol and Consular Affairs at the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia in Sydney, providing consular service for Indonesians in New South Wales, Queensland, and South Australia. Previously, he served for 4 years at the Office for the Minister and Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia.

Haekal obtained his Master of Public Policy and Management from the University of Melbourne. He co-authored a book entitled "Indonesia dari Seberang", where his chapter explores the ideas of stronger public participation in foreign policy and diplomacy.



Hannah Jambunathan

International

Hannah Reshma Jambunathan is the Asia Pacific Programme Officer at the International Detention Coalition (IDC), where she works to influence policy change on immigration detention and ATD. Prior to IDC, Hannah worked on gender and child rights, and is committed to building pathways towards systemic change, and a better future for women, children, and migrant/refugee communities in Malaysia.



In Malaysia, she is currently working in close collaboration with civil society and Government stakeholders to develop a community-based ATD policy for children, and she also coordinates a national civil society network to mobilise advocacy towards creating a more open social and political environment towards migrants and refugees. Drawing on her academic research background, Hannah has authored several research reports and policy briefs on the issue of immigration detention and ATD, in particular on the impacts of immigration detention on refugee communities in Malaysia, the intersections of gender and immigration detention, and the critical need to reduce the use of immigration detention for children.

Hebat Hisham bin Mohd Yusoff

Malaysia

Dr. Hebat Hisham Bin Mohd Yusoff is currently holding the role as Undersecretary in Immigration Affairs Division, Ministry of Home Affairs, Malaysia. His major field of specialization is in Economic Management, and had additional expertise in the fields of Management of International Relations and Foreign Affairs, as well as the Management of Safety and Security.



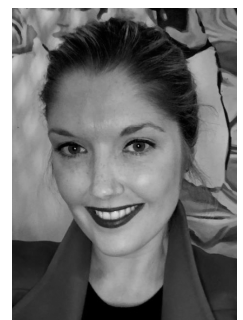
Dr Hebat is also a skilled writer, and has authored several journal articles published in Scopus-indexed journals. His work includes:

1. Asian Journal of Agriculture and Rural Development: Assessing the Comparative Advantage of Integrated Farming and Feedlot Production System of The Ruminant Sector in Malaysia: A Policy Analysis Matrix Approach; and
2. Journal of Agribusiness and Rural Development Research: Competitive Advantage Between Malaysia And World Halal Producers of Ruminant Meat.

Jade Murray

New Zealand

Jade Murray is the New Zealand Immigration Counsellor to Australia, based at the New Zealand High Commission in Canberra. Jade's work supports Immigration New Zealand to achieve outcomes across its immigration and border systems.



Jade has a wide variety of experience having served fourteen years working within areas such as Compliance and Investigations, Visa Operations and Customer Engagement. Most recently, Jade held the role of National Manager-Stakeholder Engagement where her team supported the Head of Immigration with external engagement with the various groups who have an interest in, or use, the immigration system. Prior to this role, Jade was National Manager – Risk and Verification, where she had overall responsibility for Immigration New Zealand's global risk and verification sites, risk assessment, triage and border intelligence and targeting teams.

Jade holds a Masters in Public Administration (Executive) which she completed through the Australia New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG).

Joseph Haweil

Australia

Joseph Haweil is an Assistant Director in the Australian Department of Home Affairs' Humanitarian Policy and Child Wellbeing Branch with responsibility for the development, oversight and review of policy documents, national-level response and coordination on child safety frameworks and international engagement.



Joseph has extensive experience in the design, delivery and management of government services with expertise in visa delivery, grant management, strategic and social planning, community development, public policy and local government. He has also represented the Department in oversight roles in the Immigration Detention Network. Across both the Department of Home Affairs and Department of Social Services, Joseph has worked in humanitarian and settlement programs and initiatives, including the Humanitarian Settlement Program and the design and delivery of national settlement consultations with refugees and service providers.

Joseph holds a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Political Science and History and a Master of International Relations, both from the University of Melbourne.

Kanokwan Chaovakit

Thailand

Kanokwan Chaovakit works as a Plan and Policy Analyst, Professional Level at the Office of the National Security Council Thailand. From 2022 to the present Kanokwan has worked on issues related to migration and refugees in Thailand.



Previously, as a Plan and Policy Analyst, Practitioner Level, Kanokwan focused on transnational threats and related issues, especially transnational crime such as drugs, human trafficking and people smuggling. Kanokwan has a Masters Degree in Political Science from Chulalongkorn University.

Lavinia Mitchell

Australia

Lavinia Mitchell is the Assistant Secretary, Humanitarian Policy and Child Wellbeing Branch in the Australian Department of Home Affairs. In this role, she leads development and reform of Australia's refugee resettlement and asylum policy, as well as strategic and operational support for the Department and Australian Border Force to meet its child safeguarding responsibilities.



Lavinia has worked on a range of diverse and complex policy issues during her career. As the Director of Migration Planning, she led reforms to ensure Australia's permanent migration program delivers for Australia's contemporary economic and social context. She has also led policy teams on unaccompanied minors, settlement support, and been seconded to Australia's Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Lavinia has accompanied her partner on diplomatic postings to Amman, Jordan and Washington DC. She completed graduate studies in policy leadership at Georgetown University in 2021, and holds a Master of Public Policy from the Australian National University.

Margaret Brickwood

Australia

Margaret is a dedicated social worker with eleven years of experience in the Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) Program, including seven years managing the program. She previously built a strong foundation in child protection and domestic violence support, working in both areas for two years each.



With her extensive background, Margaret has led the SRSS Program with a strong focus on supporting vulnerable families, women, and children, helping them resolve their status with the Department of Home Affairs.

Mark Loong

Australia

Mark is a Director in the Office of Community Cohesion and Strengthening Democracy Taskforce in the Department of Home Affairs where he leads on strategic policy. This includes the recent publication of the Taskforce's report 'Strengthening Australian Democracy: a practical agenda for democratic resilience'.



Mark has worked in a range of strategic policy and legal roles across government focussed on democratic and constitutional reform. This includes experience in the UK Cabinet Office as well as a political advisor to Dr Helen Haines MP in the Australian Parliament. Mark started his career as a Country Advisor with the Refugee Review Tribunal and later worked as a policy lead on immigration detention matters at a Royal Commission. He has also published on issues relating to human trafficking in the Asia Pacific region.

Mark holds a Master of Public Policy from Oxford University as well as initial degrees in law and social science from the University of Queensland. He is based in Sydney, Australia.

Mic Chawaratt

International

Mic Chawaratt Chawarangkul is the Programme Manager for the Southeast Asia sub-region at the International Detention Coalition (IDC). Prior to joining IDC, Mic held various roles within the humanitarian, human rights, and development sectors across Asia and Africa. He co-founded the Coalition for the Rights of Refugees and Stateless Persons (CRSP) and the Thailand Migration Reform Consortium (TMR).



Mic played a critical role in shaping Thailand's policy to end the immigration detention of children and in advocating for the establishment of the National Screening Mechanism for refugees in Thailand. He has served as a member of two Parliamentary House Sub-Committees focused on refugees and irregular migration, where he has championed reforms in Thailand's migration governance. Additionally, he advises the Parliamentary Committee on Legal Affairs, Justice and Human Rights, as well as the Parliamentary Committee on National Security, Border Affairs, National Strategy and National Reform, offering vital analysis and amendments to the migration legislative framework in Thailand.

Millie Soo

Australia

Millie Soo has more than 30 years of policy, program management, and visa delivery experience with the Australian Department of Home Affairs through many different roles in Canberra, New South Wales and overseas, including the application of immigration legislation, policy and procedures. Millie has represented the Department in overseas leadership roles to deliver visa outcomes for the Migration Program, Temporary Visa Program and the Refugee and Special Humanitarian Program.



Millie leads the Child Wellbeing Strategy and Capability Section, which is a dedicated team with responsibilities to raise staff awareness of child safeguarding responsibilities including reporting child protection issues; to influence policies and procedures; and evaluate risk mitigation strategies to safeguard child wellbeing. Millie also leads the work for the Department's response to the National Redress Scheme. The section also seeks continuous improvement from best practice and lessons learnt for the Department overall.

Nara Masista Rakhmatia

Indonesia

Nara Masista Rakhmatia is an Indonesian diplomat currently assigned as the Deputy Director for the Rights of Vulnerable Groups at the Directorate of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, dealing mainly with the rights of vulnerable groups such as women, children, persons with disabilities, and elderly since 2023. She had also assumed the position of acting Deputy Director for humanitarian affairs in 2023-2024 at the same Directorate.



She joined the Ministry in 2008, working on intra-regional cooperation in Asia-Pacific and Africa, including NAASP and APEC. She later served in Indonesia's Permanent Missions to the UN in New York (2014–2017) and Geneva (2020–2024). She was also Assistant Deputy Director for Regional Organizations at the Foreign Minister's Office (2017–2020).

She holds a Master's Degree in Peace and Conflict Studies from the School of International Relations, University of St. Andrews, United Kingdom. She also holds a Bachelor of Social Science in International Relations from the University of Indonesia and a Diploma in Broadcasting-Communication Studies from the University of Indonesia.

Nerys Jones

Australia

Nerys has worked for the Department of Home Affairs since 2006, across many program and policy areas, including external scrutiny, strategic policy, humanitarian settlement, counter people smuggling, regional processing and status resolution.

Since October 2023, Nerys has led a diverse branch responsible for complex case management of various cohorts including transitory persons and BVR holders and a number of support programs assisting vulnerable migrants as they work with the Department to resolve their migration status, including Status Resolution Support Services and Return and Reintegration Assistance Program. Nerys was a key negotiator in resettlement arrangements with the United States and New Zealand and continues to lead implementation of these programs.



Prior to her current position, Nerys was Senior Director Regional Processing and Resettlement Policy for several years responsible for various reforms in counter people smuggling and regional processing policy and international engagement environments.

Norzie Fariza Suip

Malaysia

Norzie Fariza binti Suid is Principal Assistant Secretary in the Policy and Strategic Planning Division at Malaysia's Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (MWFCDD). Her responsibilities include overseeing the formulation, monitoring, implementation and evaluation of legislative amendments, policies, strategies and action plans as well as international reporting related to children.



Prior to joining MWFCDD, Norzie worked at the Economic Planning Unit (later the Ministry of Economy) for 19 years. Her experience includes evaluating share applications (mergers and acquisitions) and properties, ten years working in policies and projects in Bumiputera development and six years in the field of social services conducting evaluations on physical and non-physical projects. Throughout that period, Norzie was also involved in the preparation of Malaysia's five-year development plan.

Norzie studied International Business Management at Universiti Utara Malaysia (Northern University of Malaysia) and holds a Masters of Science in Management (MSc. Mgmt).

Parinya (Ann) Boonridrerthaikul

Thailand

Parinya Boonridrerthaikul (Ann) is a Child Protection Officer with UNICEF Thailand. Ann is responsible for programme development, planning, management, monitoring, technical and operational support to the children affected by the migration programme, as well as networking and partnership building with UNICEF Thailand.



Ann has worked on civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights issues over the past twenty years, with experience in both program and management functions. Ann coordinated the Thai Civil Society Organisation (CSO) Coalition for the United Nations Universal Periodic Review, during Thailand's second review in 2016. Since 2015 Ann has worked on advocacy campaigns for rights-based migration management for urban refugees and stateless persons, by helping to establish the Coalition for the rights of Refugees and Stateless Persons (CRSP).

Paula Attrill

New Zealand

Paula Attrill is the General Manager of International Casework and Inter-country and Domestic Adoption in the Ministry for Children-Oranga Tamariki. Paula has had a long career in the New Zealand Public Service having held various operational roles in front line service delivery, leadership and management of care and protection, youth justice and adoption services, and advisory roles which have informed significant reform of the State care and protection system in New Zealand.



Paula holds both a Bachelor and Master's Degree in Social Work from Massey University New Zealand. She was recently awarded the Te Tohu Ratonga Tūmatanui o Aotearoa | The New Zealand Public Service Medal recognising her contribution to the New Zealand Public Service.

Sharyn Titchener

New Zealand

Sharyn Titchener is a qualified and registered social worker and is currently the Manager of the International Child Protection Unit for Oranga Tamariki-Ministry for Children. Sharyn has a special interest in the protection of children when they are being moved across international borders. For the past 14 years, Sharyn has been contracted as an international consultant by the United Nations, Save the Children and other international organisations, to provide technical assistance to projects in the Pacific. These projects have been aimed at developing and implementing safeguards to protect women and children from violence, exploitation, trafficking and harmful cultural practices.



Sharyn has studied at Massey University (New Zealand) and obtained a Master of Philosophy, a Post Graduate Diploma in Social Policy and Social Work, and a Bachelor of Arts Degree (Social Science).

Sriprapha Petcharamesree

Thailand

Dr Sriprapha Petcharamesree is an expert in forced migration issues in Southeast Asia, and is currently Senior Researcher in the Faculty of Law at Chulalongkorn University, and formerly Senior Lecturer in the International PhD Program at the Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies, Mahidol University, Thailand. She is part of the Secretariat of the Asia Dialogue on Forced Migration (ADFM).

Dr Petcharamesree was appointed by the Thai Government as the inaugural Thai Representative to the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), serving between October 2009 to December 2012. Her research and expertise focuses on human rights, ASEAN and Southeast Asian studies, migration, including statelessness and citizenship, business and human rights, and international relations. She has spoken and written extensively about all of these issues for decades. Dr Petcharamesree has a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Thammasat University, Thailand and received her PhD from the University of Paris-X Nanterre in France.



Su-Anne Lee

Malaysia

Su-Anne Lee is a Child Protection Specialist with UNICEF Malaysia, focusing on children affected by migration. Prior to UNICEF, Su-Anne worked on governance for development and institutional reform with the United Nations Development Programme and refugee protection with UNHCR in Malaysia.

Su-Anne has also worked in the areas of migration, anti-trafficking, and business and human rights in the international nonprofit sector in Hong Kong and Tokyo. She holds an LLB from the University of Sheffield and an LLM from Columbia Law School.



Tajul Ariffin

Malaysia

Tajul Ariffin joined the National Security Council Prime Minister Department (NSC PMD) in 2003 and is currently Director, National Intelligence and Crisis Management Division. Prior to his current position, Tajul rose through the ranks from Assistant Director to Principal Assistant Director and Deputy Director at the same Division.

He was appointed as State Security Director for the NSC PMD of State of Terengganu and State of Negeri Sembilan between 2011 and 2018. His areas of responsibility included formulation and activation of National Security Directives; national intelligence coordination; the management and operation of national security crises and coordination of national counter-terrorism mechanisms.

Tajul graduated from the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) in 2001 majoring in Political Science; completed a Diploma in Public Management at the National Institute of Public Administration in 2004; and a Master of Corporate Communication from Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) in 2018. He was awarded with Federal and State medals namely Medal of Knight of State (Kesatria Mangku Negara) in 2020 and Medal of State Loyalists of Negeri Sembilan (Ahli Setia Negeri Sembilan) in 2017.



Thientong Prasanpanich

Thailand

Thientong Prasanpanich is the Director of the Children and Youth Protection Division, Department of Children and Youth, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security. In this role she has oversight over the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Child Protection Act of 2003, and children and youth development and protection. She is involved in programmes relating to developing policies and strategies for vulnerable children including children affected from migration, and also serves on the secretariat to the National Child Protection Commission.

Currently, Thientong is working to develop cross-border child protection systems and to implement the Memorandum of Understanding on the Determination of Measures and Approaches Alternative to Detention of Children in Immigration Detention Centers, including case management in child protection.

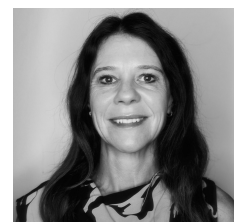


Torrhey Burbage

Australia

Torrhey is a National Project Officer at IOM Canberra. She has more than 20 years of experience working with the International Organization for Migration and a diverse set of skills and experience in programming, evaluations, migrant consultation, and training development and facilitation. She is committed to driving the development of innovative and practical solutions that empower migrants to realise their rights and contribute to realising the full potential of migration for migrants and the sending and receiving countries.

Torrhey holds a Bachelor of Business and Commerce from Monash University, majoring in law. She also practiced as an accountant (CPA) for more than ten years before transitioning full time to programming and continuing studies in Australian migration law.



Tri Nuke Pudjiastuti

Indonesia



Dr Tri Nuke Pudjiastuti is Research Professor, Research Centre for Politics, at the National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN) in Jakarta. She graduated with a Master of Arts in Geography and Environmental Studies from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Adelaide, with a focus on international migration. She completed her PhD in the Department of Criminology, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, University of Indonesia, with a dissertation focusing on people smuggling from Indonesia to Australia. For more than five years, she was a part of the ASEAN Research Team.

Dr Pudjiastuti's experience in trafficking and smuggling issues has also given her an insight into irregular migration. Although her research focuses upon Indonesia, it also notes regional mobility, particularly at the level of ASEAN. She has also produced position and policy papers for the Indonesian government. She is also part of the Secretariat of the Asia Dialogue on Forced Migration.

Yuhanee Jehka

Thailand

Yuhanee Jehka is Regional Manager for HOST International Foundation Thailand. She joined HOST International in 2021 to develop the community-based case management program for refugees and asylum seeker children and their families who are released from immigration detention in Thailand.



Yuhanee has a wealth of experience, having worked with refugee communities in both urban and camp contexts. After graduating from law school, she worked as a human rights lawyer and has been working in refugee protection and legal advocacy for the past nine years. In this role, she has assisted urban refugees and asylum seekers with their refugee status and resettlement to a third country in accordance with the refugee status determination processes.

Zconglod Khawjang

Thailand

Zconglod Khawjang is a Foreign Relations Officer at the Operation Centre for Displaced Persons, Ministry of Interior in Bangkok, Thailand. He has six years of experience in this space, focusing on forced displacement, statelessness, and labour migration issues since early 2018.



He holds a Master's Degree in Migration Studies from the University of Sussex, United Kingdom.

About the Organisers

The Asia Dialogue on Forced Migration (ADFM) is a Track II process established in August 2015 to pursue more effective, durable and dignified approaches to forced migration in the Asia-Pacific. It has become a leading expert group on issues of forced migration in the region, trusted by the Bali Process and ASEAN for independent and credible advice. The ADFM Secretariat comprises policy institutes in four countries: the Centre for Policy Development in Australia, the National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN) in Indonesia, the Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies, Mahidol University Thailand, and the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia.



The International Detention Coalition (IDC) is the world's leading movement dedicated to ending immigration detention. IDC is a migrant-led coalition, uniting civil society organisations, community groups and individuals behind a clear purpose: to end immigration detention and promote alternatives. There are fairer, cheaper and more effective ways to approach migration governance. IDC believes people should be able to live freely while they await the outcome of their immigration case, and we advocate for the human rights and dignity of everyone impacted by immigration detention. IDC works on multiple fronts to end immigration detention – strengthening the global movement, generating evidence, working to change laws and policies, and promoting practical alternatives to detention. Ultimately, IDC wants to get people out of immigration detention and into a life within the community, where they can be with loved ones, contribute to society and benefit from education, healthcare, employment and more.



Thank you:

Finally, organisers would like to thank a number of organisations whose support made this event possible: Baker McKenzie for generously opening up their meeting rooms to host our roundtable in over three days; Minter Ellison for providing the venue for our panel discussion on 19th February; and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for providing support to this evening event as well. Thank you also to the Australian Department of Home Affairs and Porticus Foundation for supporting the Regional Platform since its inception in 2019, and finally to our site visit hosts and caterers: Settlement Services International, the Asylum Seeker Centre, Inner West Pride Centre, Sangee's Kitchen and African Food Feasts.