



IN THE FIRING LINE

SHOOTING AT AUSTRALIA'S REFUGEE CENTRE ON MANUS ISLAND IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



Amnesty International is a global movement of more than 7 million people who campaign for a world where human rights are enjoyed by all.

Our vision is for every person to enjoy all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards.

We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion and are funded mainly by our membership and public donations.

© Amnesty International 2017

Except where otherwise noted, content in this document is licensed under a Creative Commons (attribution, non-commercial, no derivatives, international 4.0) licence.

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/legalcode>

For more information please visit the permissions page on our website: www.amnesty.org

Where material is attributed to a copyright owner other than Amnesty International this material is not subject to the Creative Commons licence.

First published in 2017

by Amnesty International Ltd

Peter Benenson House, 1 Easton Street

London WC1X 0DW, UK

Index: ASA 34/6171/2017

Original language: English

amnesty.org



Cover photo: People march in an event organized by Doctors for Refugees to demand humane treatment of asylum seekers and refugees, in Sydney on 5 November 2016. Australia's detention of asylum seekers on remote Pacific Islands of Nauru and Papua New Guinea's Manus, 'amount to torture' under international law, Amnesty International said recently in a report that alleged widespread abuse and an 'epidemic of self harm'

© PETER PARKS/AFP/Getty Images

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



BACKGROUND

At 7:20pm on Friday 14 April 2017, Amnesty International began receiving text messages, videos and images from refugees and refugee advocates about shots being fired by Papua New Guinea Defence Force soldiers close to and at the Australian run refugee centre on Manus Island, Papua New Guinea (PNG). The incident was subsequently widely reported in the Australian media. However, critical questions remain about what transpired on 14 April.

Based on witness accounts and the limited official information, we know that at around 6:00pm on Friday 14 April, Papua New Guinea Defence Force soldiers physically assaulted a number of refugees and staff at the refugee detention centre. The Papua New Guinean Police later stated that the incident involved 'drunken soldiers' going on a 'rampage', indiscriminately attacking refugees, service providers working at the centre and police officers.¹ The police confirmed that in addition to physical assaults, some of the soldiers discharged firearms.

Luckily, no one was shot or killed on 14 April, but the unlawful use of firearms by soldiers posed clear risks to those at the centre, including refugees, service providers and government officials working there. Iranian refugee and journalist, Behrouz Boochani, who has been detained at the centre for over three years, claimed on social media that two Sudanese refugees and one Pakistani refugee received injuries from rocks thrown by soldiers, and that one security contractor was badly beaten by soldiers.² PNG police also stated that a senior PNG Immigration official was injured and received medical treatment.³

The Australian government also confirmed on 14 April 2017, in response to an inquiry by ABC News, that shots were fired but claimed that "There are reports PNG military personnel discharged a weapon into the air during the incident."⁴ The Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection also claimed that only one asylum seeker was injured by a thrown rock during this incident.⁵ Witnesses claim the soldiers shot into the centre.⁶ The Australian government statement was made before any investigation into the incident had been undertaken.

This briefing examines the available evidence through the analysis of images and video, as well as a review of media reports and official responses by both the Australian and Papua New Guinean authorities.

While this briefing seeks to give some clarity on what happened on 14 April 2017, only a prompt, independent, impartial and effective inquiry would be able to ascertain the full circumstances of these events. The Australian and Papua New Guinean governments must co-operate to ensure an independent inquiry takes place and, that those responsible for causing injury or unlawful use of firearms are held accountable.

¹ Loop PNG, *Soldiers rampaged through detention centre: police*, 16 April 2017, available at <http://www.looppng.com/png-news/soldiers-rampaged-through-detention-centre-police-56881>

² Message sent to Refugee Advocate in Australia by Behrouz Boochani, 19 April 2017 and as reported by Rebekah Ison and Andrew Leeson, *One injured as shots ring out on Manus*, The Australian, 15 April 2017, available at <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/latest-news/one-injured-as-shots-ring-out-on-manus/news-story/b5ac433a9c284b7a850f3be6d427df7c>

³ PNG Daily News (first reported in PNG Post Courier), *Defence raid Manus asylum centre*, 18 April 2017, available at <https://pngdailynews.com/2017/04/18/defence-raid-manus-asylum-centre/>

⁴ Erik Tlozek, *PNG Police respond to shooting at Manus Is centre*, ABC, 15 April 2017, available at <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-04-14/png-police-respond-to-reports-of-shooting-at-manus-is-centre/8445274>

⁵ Erik Tlozek, *PNG Police respond to shooting at Manus Is centre*, ABC, 15 April 2017, available at <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-04-14/png-police-respond-to-reports-of-shooting-at-manus-is-centre/8445274>

⁶ Erik Tlozek, *PNG Police respond to shooting at Manus Is centre*, ABC, 15 April 2017, available at <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-04-14/png-police-respond-to-reports-of-shooting-at-manus-is-centre/8445274>; and Message sent to Refugee Advocate in Australia by Behrouz Boochani, 19 April 2017 and as reported by Rebekah Ison and Andrew Leeson, *One injured as shots ring out on Manus*, The Australian, 15 April 2017,

MANUS REFUGEE CENTRE

Asylum seekers and refugees have been sent to Manus Island, Papua New Guinea, as part of a bilateral agreement between Australia and PNG. This centre is where people arriving in Australia by boat to seek asylum are forcibly removed to PNG or Nauru, whilst their refugee claims are processed. There are two separate facilities on Manus Island – one is located in the town of Lorengau, the other is on Lombrum Naval Base, a 45 minute drive from Lorengau. This report refers to the facility on Lombrum Naval Base as the ‘Manus Refugee Centre’.

Currently around 888 refugees and asylum seekers are in Papua New Guinea. It is not clear how many refugees or asylum seekers were at the Lombrum refugee centre on the evening of 14 April 2017.

This is not the first time that refugees who have been sent to PNG by the Australian authorities have been attacked. An earlier attack on the refugee centre by Papua New Guineans living near and working at the centre in February 2014, resulted in the death of Reza Berati, and injuries to more than 62 asylum seekers.⁷ While two Papua New Guineans were convicted of Reza Berati’s death, others involved in these attacks (including others who were allegedly involved in his murder) have not been held accountable.⁸

However, incidents at the Manus Refugee Centre are rarely made public, due in large part to the Australian government’s policy of secrecy with respect to its offshore processing of asylum claims. The Australian government has gone to great lengths to hide the harm of its offshore refugee centres on Manus Island and Nauru, including by imposing criminal sanctions (up to 2 years imprisonment) for service providers who speak out about conditions in the centres.⁹

METHODOLOGY

Amnesty International’s Digital Verification Team reviewed 21 images and six videos believed to have originated from the Manus Refugee Centre on the night of 14 April 2017. Some of these images and videos, originally coming from refugees, have already been aired on mainstream Australian media (Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Fairfax), posted on social media or shared by refugee advocates.¹⁰ The digital experts used reverse image search tools and corroboration with known photos of the centre to geolocate the images.

A military expert also reviewed the images and videos.

⁷ Amnesty International, *This is still breaking people*, May 2014, available at <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa12/002/2014/en/>

⁸ Amnesty International, *Annual Report 2016: Papua New Guinea*, 2017, available at <https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/asia-and-the-pacific/papua-new-guinea/report-papua-new-guinea/>; see also Michael Gordon and David Wroe, *Asylum seekers give police*

details of Manus slaying, 29 March 2014, available at <http://www.smh.com.au/national/asylum-seekers-give-police-details-of-manus-slaying-20140328-35on4.html>

⁹ Amnesty International, *Island of Despair*, 2016, available at <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa12/4934/2016/en/>

¹⁰ Images which identify people’s faces are not reproduced in this report because it may create risks to refugees or their families if they are identifiable.

REVIEWING THE PHOTOGRAPHIC AND VIDEO EVIDENCE

This section presents the full analysis of the 21 photographs and 6 videos. These images are compared with known photos of the centre, including satellite images and Google Earth images, in order to verify that photos and video did in fact originate from the Manus Refugee Centre on 14 April as claimed. Google Earth was useful to geolocate photographs because there are limited photos available of the centre due to restrictions imposed by the Australian and Papua New Guinean governments on journalists travelling to Manus Island and accessing the Manus Refugee Centre.

The below image shows the Manus Refugee Centre where the incident occurred. The red box marks Mike and Foxtrot Compounds, where it is claimed the incident took place. The Lombrum Naval Base is located to the right of Oscar Compound, and the soccer field or oval can be seen just beyond this on the far right.

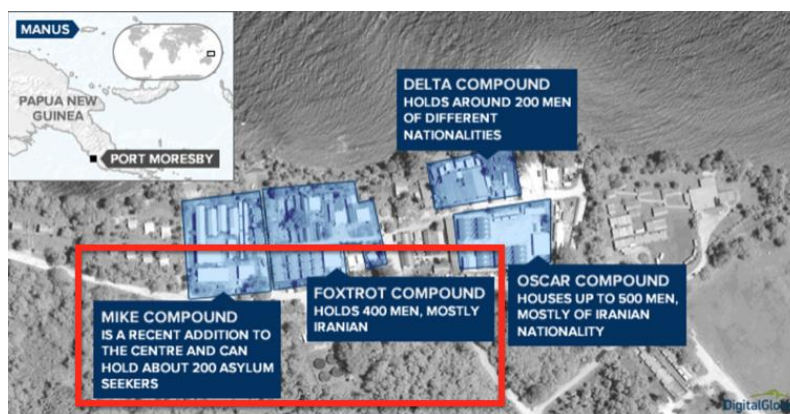


Image: 2014 map from ABC News shows Foxtrot and Mike compounds

ARE THE PHOTOS AND VIDEO AUTHENTIC?

In order to verify the photos and video as authentic, these images were checked with known images from the centre, including images from Google Earth.

Below is a Google Earth image showing buildings in Foxtrot compound, an enclosed area within the Manus Refugee Centre, taken in December 2014. Features on the buildings in the images provided by refugees –

including roofs, doorways and building materials – were checked against this to establish that the photos and videos were taken at the Manus Refugee Centre.



Image Source: Google Earth
December 2014

Geocode: -2.0378774
147.367698



Left: Archive image of Manus
Island Detention
Centre: Fox Trot Compound Housing

Middle: Archive image of
Manus Island Detention
Centre: Fox Trot Compound
Housing

Bottom: Social Media Image
of Manus Island Detention
Centre from April 14th 2017



The top two images are archive images of the Manus Refugee Centre, taken in Fox Trot Compound. These confirmed photos of the centre, taken in 2014, are compared to an image believed to have been taken on 14 April 2017 at the Manus Refugee Centre.

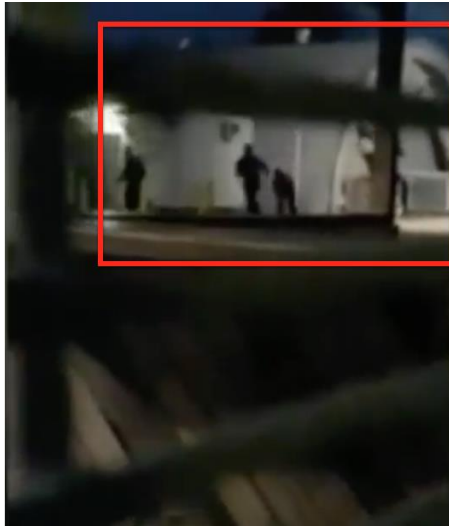
Amnesty's Digital Verification Corps were able to match the building materials, doorways and roofing structure in these three images (as highlighted by red and blue boxes).

A reverse image search was used to determine that the 2017 image has not appeared on the internet before 15 April 2017.

The similar construction in these materials lead to the conclusion that the lower image most likely came from Fox Trot Compound in the Manus Refugee Centre on 14 April as claimed.



Below are two images from a video believed to be taken by a refugee at the centre on the night of 14 April and broadcast on ABC News. These images have been compared with Google Earth and show the same distinctly curved building (highlighted by the red box) and annexure next to the building (highlighted by the blue box), making it possible to confirm that these images came from the Manus Refugee Centre.



*Image source: Left and Right
- News Report from ABC
News on 0'19" & 0'33"
seconds*



*Left: Google Earth Image of
Coordinates -2.037789,
147.369027
[image south north]*

In addition, the Google Earth image makes it possible to highlight where the video was most likely filmed from on the night of the incident (blue star above).

HAVE THE IMAGES APPEARED ON THE INTERNET BEFORE?

It was important to verify that these images have not been seen before as there has been at least three other known incidents when shots were fired in the vicinity of the centre, including:

- On 18 October 2013, there was an incident at the centre where a fight broke out between PNG Police posted at the centre and PNG Defence soldiers. Refugees claimed two shots were fired but Australian authorities denied this.¹¹
- Operation ‘Killum dog’ (meaning ‘kill the dogs’ in the local language of Tok Pisin) – where stray dogs were shot by local authorities near the centre. As this was not explained to refugees before it took place, the event triggered trauma in a number of detainees, according to medical experts who spoke to Amnesty International in November 2013.¹²
- On 16 and 17 February 2014, after days of refugees and asylum seekers peacefully protesting, Papua New Guineans (some working at the centre, others living nearby) broke into the centre attacking refugees and asylum seekers with sticks, rocks and machetes. Reza Berati was killed and dozens of other refugees and asylum seekers were injured. In a visit to the centre in March, an Amnesty International researcher observed two bullet holes in Mike compound (at around knee height). One asylum seeker also received a gunshot wound to the buttock, contradicting claims by police that only two warning shots were fired into the air. Two witnesses claimed that more than 20 shots were fired.¹³

As a result of the need to ensure these images did not related to any of the prior incidents at Manus Island, reverse image searches were conducted on the 21 photos and 6 videos taken at the centre on 14 April 2017. None of these images surfaced online before 15 April 2017. As a result, Amnesty International’s Digital Verification Team confirmed that these images and videos were most likely taken at the centre on 14 April 2017.

¹¹ Amnesty International, *This is breaking people: Human Rights violations at Australia’s asylum seeker processing centre on Manus Island, Papua New Guinea*, December 2013, pp 54-55, available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ASA12/002/2013/en/>

¹² Amnesty International, *This is breaking people: Human Rights violations at Australia’s asylum seeker processing centre on Manus Island, Papua New Guinea*, December 2013, pp 54-55, available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ASA12/002/2013/en/>

¹³ Amnesty International, *This is still breaking people*, May 2014, available at <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa12/002/2014/en/>

HOW MANY SHOTS WERE FIRED?

In a video taken at the centre on 14 April 2017, a popping sound can be heard nearby. A military expert confirmed this is consistent with the sound of gunshots. Up to six shots can be heard in this video.¹⁴ In another video, several pock-marks can be seen on a blue wall where refugees are standing (the stills below are taken from this video).¹⁵ Amnesty International's military expert found these marks were consistent with the use of firearms at the centre.



*Pock-marks
found in
refugee
centre walls,
believed to
be caused
by the use
of firearms.*

*Video
provided by
Refugee
Action
Coalition
(Sydney)*

While we cannot confirm exactly how many shots were fired, it is clear from both the sounds heard and bullet damage shown in the video that multiple shots were fired at the centre on 14 April.¹⁶

Other evidence relevant to understanding the nature of the shooting incident should be examined by official investigators, including CCTV footage,¹⁷ the types of weapons used, as well as forensic evidence at the scene (bullet damage and shell casings). The Australian and Papua New Guinean governments must co-operate to ensure this information is made available for the purpose of an independent investigation.

¹⁴ Statement by Behrouz Boochani (refugee) and Amnesty International received video footage through a refugee advocate based in Australia, showing a refugee talking about the incident while shots can be heard in the background. The same footage was aired on ABC News, and is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u81flrUag8>; other images were supplied by the Refugee Action Coalition.

¹⁵ Video provided by Refugee Action Coalition

¹⁶ Statement by Behrouz Boochani (refugee) and Amnesty International received video footage through a refugee advocate based in Australia, showing a refugee talking about the incident while shots can be heard in the background. The same footage was aired on ABC News, and is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u81flrUag8>; other images were supplied by the Refugee Action Coalition.

¹⁷ This article confirms that the presence of CCTV footage, and that the Australian government has access to CCTV cameras located at the Manus refugee centre: Sky News, CCTV footage confirms Manus Incident, 27 April 2017, available at <http://www.skynews.com.au/news/top-stories/2017/04/27/cctv-footage-confirms-manus-incident.html>

WERE SHOTS ONLY FIRED ‘INTO THE AIR’?

A spokesperson for the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection told to ABC News that ‘PNG military personnel discharged a weapon into the air during the incident’.¹⁸ No official written statement has been issued by the Department or the Minister regarding this incident. Also, Papua New Guinean Police Commander David Yapu claimed that shots were fired by soldiers ‘into the air’.¹⁹

The analysis of photos carried out by Amnesty International shows bullet damage to a blue wall of a building (above) and to a fence (below), suggesting that at least some shots were fired at the centre. Shots fired into the centre are at least capable of causing serious injury to, and threatening the right to life of, the people inside the Manus Refugee Centre. These photographs are reproduced below. Amnesty International’s Digital Verification Team also verified that these images are consistent with other images of the fences at the Manus Refugee Centre and that they had not surfaced online before 15 April 2017.

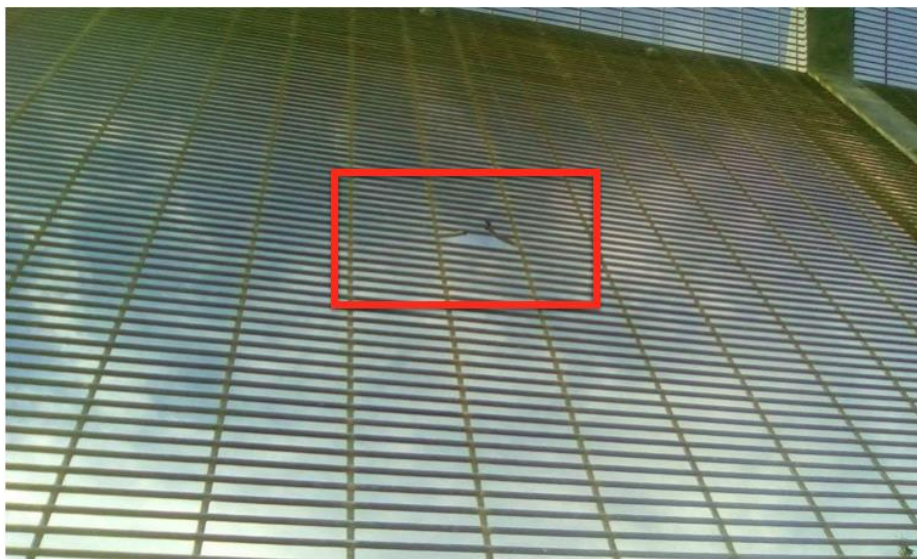
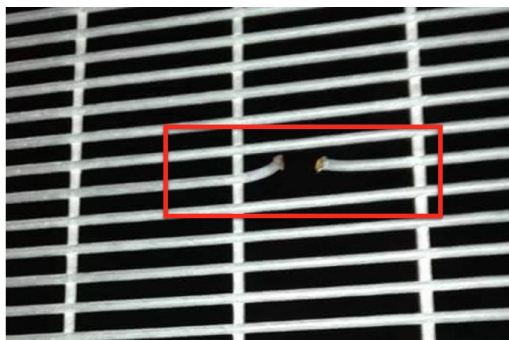


Image Source -The Guardian



Left: Image source – ABC News

Right: Image source – Daily Mail

The above images are believed to show bullet damage to the fence at the Manus Refugee Centre. These images were reported by various media outlets as coming from refugees at the Manus Refugee Centre on 14

¹⁸ Erik Tlozek, *PNG Police respond to shooting at Manus Is centre*, ABC, 15 April 2017, available at <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-04-14/png-police-respond-to-reports-of-shooting-at-manus-is-centre/8445274>

¹⁹ Loop PNG, *Soldiers rampaged through detention centre: police*, 16 April 2017, <http://www.looppng.com/png-news/soldiers-rampaged-through-detention-centre-police-56881>

April 2017. The three images are consistent with each other, even though taken from different angles, leading to the conclusion that the images show the same bullet damage in the fence. Amnesty International's military expert confirmed that this damage is consistent with the use of firearms at the centre.

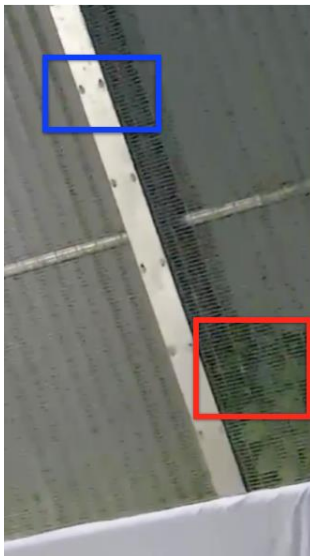
As there are few identifying features in these images beyond the distinctive fence pattern, Amnesty International's Digital Verification Team also verified that the images are consistent with images of the fences at the centre, which is done below.

THE FENCE: CAN WE PLACE IT AT THE MANUS REFUGEE CENTRE?

As the above photos show nothing more than damage to one aspect of the fence, it is important that these images are placed at the centre through verification with other images. Images of the fences as shown in the photos and video that emerged from the 14 April 2017 are shown below.



Image source: *The Guardian*



Left: Image source – *Refugee Action Coalition*

Right: Image source – *ABC News*

By cross comparing the images above, Amnesty International's Digital Verification Team found that the sizing of the grill is the same across all images even though the images are taken from different angles (see highlighted red boxes), leading to the conclusion that the images showing bullet damage (above) are of the fences at the Manus Refugee Centre as claimed. The blue boxes show the same size and spacing of rivets in the post, resulting in the conclusion that these images are of the same fence at the Manus Refugee Centre.

RESPONSE BY PAPUA NEW GUINEAN OFFICIALS

The official response by the PNG police gives an frightening account of what happened on 14 April 2017. In a media statement released on Tuesday 18 April 2017, the PNG police claimed that at around 6.30pm on 14 April 2017, a group of soldiers who were drunk 'went on a rampage... firing several shots into the air and indiscriminately assaulting policemen, PNG immigration officers, other service providers and asylum seekers' in apparent retaliation for an 'alleged assault' by an asylum seeker on one of their soldiers. In the statement, the Manus Provincial Police Commander (PPC), Senior Inspector David Yapu, said that soldiers entered the centre were shouting and 'throwing any objects they could get their hands on' at asylum seekers. He also stated that one refugee and one PNG Immigration official received medical treatment from medical service providers at the centre and was discharged.²⁰

In a media statement issued on 15 April 2017, the Royal Papua New Guinea Defence Force (RPNGDF) claimed that asylum seekers were asked to vacate the oval at around 6.00pm and that some refused to leave. The Base Duty Officer alleges he was assaulted by an asylum seeker when he sought to intervene. The statement said 'rocks were thrown by the asylum seekers and shots were fired by the members of the Naval Base'. The Commanding Officer of HMPNGS Tarangay (the name of the officer was not given) intervened and all was under control by 7.30pm that evening. While the PNGDF appears to blame asylum seekers for the escalation of this conflict, it is not clear why it took so long for the Commanding Officer to bring the matter under control. By this account, it is not alleged that shots were only 'fired into the air'.²¹

Both statements (annexed to this document) vary in some details, however both claim that the incident started over an altercation on the oval near the centre between asylum seekers and defence force soldiers. What resulted, was over an hour of chaos at the centre where soldiers discharged firearms and assaulted people, causing both physical injuries and property damage.

While both the PNG Police and the Defence Force have announced separate inquiries into the shooting, no independent inquiry has been announced and it is not clear that the findings of internal investigations will be made public. In order to comply with international standards, an inquiry must be prompt, impartial, independent and effective. The findings of any inquiry should be made public in order to ensure transparency and accountability of the process.

The Defence Act (PNG) governs the conduct of military officers under the Code of Military Discipline. Where a military officer has also breached ordinary criminal laws, the military should advise the appropriate authorities of this.²² In practice, however, it would be very difficult for the police to charge a military officer for acts committed on a military base, even if it amounted to an ordinary crime, without the full co-operation of the military. Internal disciplinary measures, whilst important, are only one aspect of the justice system. They must operate concurrently with any criminal law investigations in order to ensure full accountability.

Amnesty International has previously noted that Papua New Guinean authorities rarely hold the police, military or prison officers to account for human rights violations. A range of social and economic factors contribute to the challenges in holding officials accountable for human rights abuses in Papua New Guinea, including a lack of political will, lack of adequate government resources and the lack of strong and independent institutions to investigate complaints. For example, there is no independent oversight mechanism to investigate complaints against police or military officers. Whilst complaints can be made to the Ombudsman, this institution lacks adequate powers and resources to independently investigate such cases effectively. Papua New Guinea does not have a national human rights mechanism, although people can make complaints about violations of their rights under the Constitution to the National Courts. This process is often slow and costly, making it beyond reach for many people.²³

²⁰ Loop PNG, *Soldiers rampaged through detention centre: police*, 16 April 2017, <http://www.looppng.com/png-news/soldiers-rampaged-through-detention-centre-police-56881>; see also Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary, *Media Statement: PNG Defence Force soldiers rampaged through Manus Detention Centre... PNG government officials, police and asylum seekers injured in attack*, 11 (sic) April 2017.

²¹ Raymond Numa DMS MBE Colonel, Chief of Staff, 15 April 2017, *Media Statement: Incident at the Manus Regional Processing Centre on Friday 14 April 2017*, Royal Papua New Guinea Defence Force.

²² Sch. 1 C12, Defence Act (PNG) 1974.

²³ Amnesty International, *Outlawed and Abused: Criminalizing sex work in Papua New Guinea*, May 2016.

Refugees and asylum seekers have been plagued by violence both within the centre and in the community since the centre reopened. This latest incident is not the first time in which the centre was attacked from the outside, making the risk of violence to refugees at the centre both predictable and preventable. The Papua New Guinean government has a responsibility to protect refugees and asylum seekers in its territory. If it cannot do so, it should not be considered a safe option for the resettlement of refugees. Papua New Guinea should co-operate and expedite all rights respecting officers of international assistance, including resettlement to third countries.

RESPONSE BY AUSTRALIAN OFFICIALS

In a statement to the Guardian, the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection downplayed the incident and injuries arising from the attack, stating that an ‘incident’ had occurred and that PNG military personnel ‘discharged a weapon into the air’. The Department stated one refugee was receiving treatment for an injury from a thrown rock.²⁴ It is significant to note similar claims of shots being fired ‘into the air’ were made by the Australian government from violence in February 2014, even though one asylum seeker was shot and treated for a bullet wound.²⁵

Amnesty International’s digital and military experts have confirmed video and photos showing apparent bullet damage to walls and a fence came from the Manus Refugee Centre on 14 April 2017. This directly contradicts initial statements to the media by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection and PNG Police that shots were only ‘fired into the air’.

In an interview with Sky News on 20 April 2017, Australian Immigration Minister Peter Dutton responded to the incident on Manus and suggested the violence was triggered by an unrelated incident where a young boy visited the centre, suggesting the child was at risk of harm.²⁶ Dutton said “There was difficulty, as I understand it, in the community. There was an alleged incident where three asylum seekers were alleged to be leading a local five year old boy back toward the facility and there was a lot of angst around that, if you like, within the local PNG community.” When pressed further, he added, “Well, because I think there was concern about why the boy was being led or for what purpose he was being led away back into the regional processing centre. So I think it’s fair to say that the mood had elevated quite quickly. I think that some of the local residents were quite angry about this particular incident and another alleged sexual assault”. A transcript of this interview is available on the Minister’s website.²⁷ Dutton did not make any claims regarding who fired the shots, how many shots were fired or whether they were fired at the centre in the Sky News interview. However, he added, “But I’d make this point; I mean it’s unacceptable if firearms have been discharged unlawfully. That is unacceptable by anybody’s standard.”²⁸

Refugees have now lodged a formal complaint with the Australian authorities about Dutton’s comments and are pleading for the authorities to release the CCTV footage which they say will exonerate them.²⁹ The boy’s visit to the centre, to be offered food, took place weeks before the 14 April shooting incident. In addition, the PNG Provincial Police Commander David Yapu has said there is no police investigation into the child, who he says is 10 years old, visiting the centre to obtain fruit, as no complaint has been made.³⁰

Papua New Guinea authorities (both the police and the defence force), a former Member of Parliament (MP) for Manus Province, Ronnie Knight,³¹ and refugee Berhooz Boochani³² have all refuted Dutton’s claim as to the causes of the incident on 14 April 2017.³³ There is significant evidence to suggest that the cause of the

²⁴ The Guardian, *Manus Island Asylum Seeker Injured After Group Tries to Storm Detention Centre*, 15 April 2017, available at <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/apr/15/manus-island-asylum-seeker-injured-after-group-tries-to-storm-detention-centre>

²⁵ Amnesty International, *This is still breaking people*, May 2014, available at <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa12/002/2014/en/>

²⁶ Ben Doherty and Helen Davidson, *Dutton alleges Manus shooting rampage sparked after refugees seen with boy*, The Guardian, 20 April 2017, available at <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/apr/20/dutton-alleges-manus-shooting-rampage-sparked-after-refugees-seen-with-boy>

²⁷ Minister for Immigration and Border Protection The Hon Peter Dutton MP, *Minister – Interview with David Speers, Speers Tonight*, 20 April 2017, available at www.minister.border.gov.au/peterdutton/interview-with-david-speers-tonight-sky-news.aspx

²⁸ Minister for Immigration and Border Protection The Hon Peter Dutton MP, *Minister – Interview with David Speers, Speers Tonight*, 20 April 2017, available at www.minister.border.gov.au/peterdutton/interview-with-david-speers-tonight-sky-news.aspx

²⁹ Ben Doherty and Helen Davidson, *Manus refugees who fed child lodge complaint about Dutton’s false allegations*, 27 April 2017, available at <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/apr/27/manus-refugees-who-fed-child-lodge-complaint-about-duttons-false-allegations>

³⁰ Josh Butler, *PNG Police cast more doubt on Peter Dutton’s account of Manus detention centre attack*, 5 May 2017, Huffington Post, available at http://www.huffingtonpost.com.au/2017/05/05/png-police-cast-more-doubt-on-duttons-manus-story-about-the-you_a_22070583/

³¹ Eric Tlozek, *PNG police dispute Peter Dutton’s account of Manus detention centre attack*, ABC News, 21 April 2017, available at <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-04-21/no-link-between-manus-detention-centre-attack-and-sex-crime/8460948>

³² AAP, *Reference to child rejected after Dutton weighs in on Manus Island Shooting*, 20 April 2017, available at <http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2017/04/20/reference-child-rejected-after-dutton-weighs-manus-island-shooting>

³³ Ben Doherty and Helen Davidson, *Dutton alleges Manus shooting rampage sparked after refugees seen with boy*, The Guardian, 20 April 2017, available at <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/apr/20/dutton-alleges-manus-shooting-rampage-sparked-after-refugees-seen-with-boy>

incident was a dispute related to the use of the soccer field, and Dutton has not provided any evidence to support his claims.³⁴

The allegations by Dutton are not only reckless and irresponsible, the former MP for Manus Province, Ronnie Knight, has said that they are likely to further flame tensions between asylum seekers and locals.³⁵

RECOMMENDATIONS

Both Australia and Papua New Guinea are responsible for protecting refugees and asylum seekers on Manus Island. Amnesty International is calling for:

- A prompt, independent, impartial and effective investigation into what happened on 14 April 2017, including the causes and responses. Both the Papua New Guinean and Australian authorities must ensure full co-operation, with the findings of the investigation to be made public.
- The Australian and Papua New Guinean governments to shut down the offshore processing system and immediately bring all refugees and asylum seekers to Australia and ensure that all those who were granted refugee status have the right to settle in Australia.
- The Australian and Papua New Guinean governments to co-operate and expedite all rights respecting officers of international assistance, including resettlement to third countries.

³⁴ Paul Karp, *Manus Island controversy, who said what and when*, The Guardian, 25 April 2017, available at <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/apr/25/manus-island-controversy-who-said-what-and-when>

³⁵ AAP, *Reference to child rejected after Dutton weighs in on Manus Island Shooting*, 20 April 2017, available at <http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2017/04/20/reference-child-rejected-after-dutton-weighs-manus-island-shooting>

APPENDIX 1

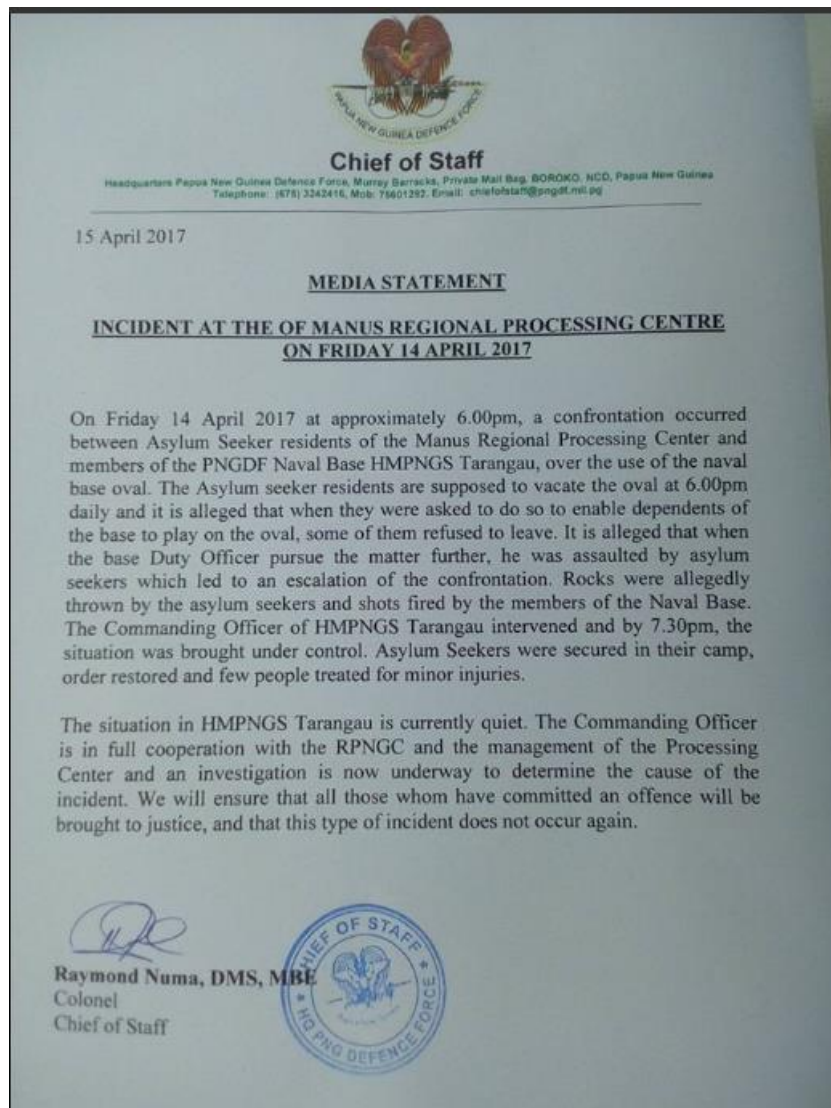


Image: Media statement released on Twitter by the Royal Papua New Guinea Defence Forces on 15th April 2017 [Posted by Shane Bazzi on Twitter on 19 April 2017, available at <https://twitter.com/shanebazzi/status/854938206617206784>]

APPENDIX 2



ROYAL PAPUA NEW GUINEA CONSTABULARY

Media Statement

Tuesday 11th April 2017

PNG Defence Force soldiers rampaged through Manus detention centre ...PNG government officials, police and asylum seekers injured in attack

Papua New Guinea Defence Force soldiers based at the Lombrum Naval Base on Manus Island went on a rampage at the asylum detention centre on Good Friday firing several shots into the air and indiscriminately assaulting policemen, PNG Immigration Officers, other service providers and asylum seekers.

The incident occurred on Friday April 14 at about 6.30pm at the Manus Regional processing centre.

Manus Provincial Police Commander Senior Inspector David Lapu said a group of drunken soldiers in retaliation for one of their colleague who was allegedly assaulted by an asylum seeker entered the centre shouting and throwing any objects that they could lay their hands on at the asylum seekers.

He said the soldiers also assaulted his policemen on deployment at the centre, PNG immigration officers, other service providers and damaged several vehicles and properties worth thousands of kina.

PPC Yapu said the soldiers removed keys from a hired car his officers were using at the centre and drove away and also damaged it.

PPC Yapu said the Commanding officer of the Naval Base, Mr Begsy Karaki intervened and stopped the incident from getting out of hand.

A senior PNG immigration officer and an asylum seeker were treated at the international health medical service at the centre and discharged.

PPC Yapu is concerned about such unethical and unacceptable behaviour of the drunken soldiers. He said only a day ago the PNG Defence Force Chief of Staff Colonel Numa addressed the Commanders parade and made some good comments to the soldiers to maintain high level of discipline, professionalism and leadership.



Image: Media statement released on Twitter by the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary on 11th (sic) April 2017 [Posted by Shane Bazzi on Twitter on 19 April 2017, available at <https://twitter.com/shanebazzi/status/854938206617206784>]

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
IS A GLOBAL MOVEMENT
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS.
WHEN INJUSTICE HAPPENS
TO ONE PERSON, IT
MATTERS TO US ALL.**

CONTACT US



info@amnesty.org



+44 (0)20 7413 5500

JOIN THE CONVERSATION



www.facebook.com/AmnestyGlobal



[@AmnestyOnline](https://twitter.com/AmnestyOnline)

IN THE FIRING LINE

SHOOTING AT AUSTRALIA'S REFUGEE CENTRE ON MANUS ISLAND IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

At around 6:30pm on 14 April 2017, tensions quickly escalated between refugees and soldiers over the use of a soccer field. Shots were fired by Papua New Guinea Defence Force soldiers into the Manus refugee centre, placing refugees, staff and government officials at serious risk.

Videos and images at the centre analysed by Amnesty International's Digital Verification Team confirmed that the images were most likely captured at the centre on 14 April 2017 as claimed by refugees. A military expert confirmed that bullet damage and sounds captured on video are consistent with the use of firearms.

The violence that left up to three asylum seekers and one Papua New Guinean Immigration official injured, must be investigated promptly, independently, effectively and impartially, with the findings to be made public.

This latest incident highlights that the safety for refugees on Manus Island (sent there by Australia) cannot be guaranteed. Australia must immediately bring all refugees and asylum seekers to Australia and ensure that all those who were granted refugee status have the right to settle in Australia.