We, the undersigned,

1. **Recalling** the universal, interdependent and indivisible nature of human rights, including the right to seek asylum, as outlined in the 1951 Refugee Convention, the right to health, as outlined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and foregrounded in the Constitution of the World Health Organization, as well as those outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

2. **Recognising** that an asylum seeker, by fleeing persecution in their homeland and in attempting to arrive in Australia, is exercising their right, under international law, to apply for asylum, and that returning them to places with questionable human rights records places them at further risk;

3. **Noting** that Australia benefits enormously from the economic, social and cultural contribution that asylum seekers (most of whom are found to be genuine refugees) ultimately make to our society;

4. **Express concern** that asylum seekers, including children continue to be held in off-shore detention. We note that extensive scientific research tells us that asylum seekers in detention have significant health problems and the longer people are detained the poorer their health outcomes, both mental and physical. The impact of detention on children is more severe. People seeking asylum are at risk of mental health problems based on specific risk factors, including loss and trauma both prior to, and following, arrival. The experience of extended periods of immigration detention means that detainees suffer an ongoing sense of insecurity, and long-term psychological harm, including difficulties with relationships, depression and demoralisation, concentration and memory disturbances, and persistent anxiety, sometimes leading to suicide or intentional self-harm; and;

5. **Call on** the Australian government to:
   a. End off-shore detention and processing of asylum seekers and process all asylum seekers in Australia;
   b. Ensure asylum seekers have access to health services, social security, legal representation, interpreters, case management, paid work and appropriate education for the duration of their assessment;
   c. Ensure that initial health assessments of asylum seekers be conducted with care and dignity and that all health care in the period of assessment is of the highest standards; and;
   d. End extended periods of detention as they greatly add to the physical and mental health problems of asylum seekers.
   e. Avoid detention of children.