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REFUGEE TRANSITIONS

A Publication of the *Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors*

Issue 34

Yemen

The invisible war

Let hope triumph over horror
Nyadol Nyuon

—

Multiculturalism Revisited
Panel Discussion

—

A reason for hope interview with Geoffrey Robertson

REFUGEE TRANSITIONS

Refugee Transitions exists to report on a broad range of human rights issues, focusing attention on the impact of organised violence on health, analysing international conflicts and reporting on the latest clinical research findings, the innovative interventions that support the settlement of refugees, and their stories of survival.

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Cover Image
Yemeni children peer out of a window of a historic building in the old quarter of Sana'a, Yemen, 04 July 2019. YAHYA ARHAB / EPA / AAP PHOTOS

CEO's Message

Welcome to the 34th edition of of *Refugee Transitions,*

2018 marked the 30th anniversary of STARTTS. Since its humble beginnings in 1988 the organisation has grown and expanded greatly in the last three decades. This storied milestone has created an opportunity for us to reflect, look back at our history and take stock of our enduring achievements. It is also a time to decide how we want our role to continue to evolve in order to meet the current and future challenges that face our client group and STARTTS as an organization.

Our 30th anniversary celebratory event will be held from 10:00 am to 12 noon on the 20th of September 2019 at the Imperial Paradiso venue at 58 Spencer Street, Fairfield. We hope you will all take the opportunity to join us at this free event!

Thirty years of uninterrupted growth has opened up opportunities for organisational transformation, innovation and international collaboration. It has also placed us in a position where we have much to share in terms of expertise and innovative interventions, not just with our colleagues working in the rehabilitation of torture and trauma survivors, but also with those working in the broader trauma field.

One new forum created to do that is the Forum of Australian Services for Survivors of Torture and Trauma (FASSTT). Its biennial International conference, which STARTTS spearheaded so successfully in 2017 in Sydney, was followed by another successful conference last March, organised by our Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma colleagues in Brisbane, who managed to not only attract local, national and international participants, including many notable speakers, but also put on a fantastic show. The conference was as extensive as it was interesting, and this issue includes an interview with a keynote speaker, the internationally recognised, human-rights barrister, Geoffrey Robertson, who shared his thoughts and views about the practice of torture in a modern world, the various initiatives to combat it and the efficacy of international human rights law.

The next issue of *Refugee Transitions* will feature a more in depth coverage of this wonderful event. Meanwhile, the challenge of hosting the next 3rd FASSTT International Conference has now moved to our Survivors of Torture and Trauma Rehabilitation Service colleagues in South Australia, and will take place in Adelaide in 2021.

The war in Yemen features prominently in this issue of *Refugee Transitions*. As I write these words, Yemen has already entered its fifth year of a brutal war that continues to rage unabated causing much pain and suffering to millions of Yemeni civilians. Described as "the worst humanitarian disaster in recent history", the conflict has intensified since the Stockholm Agreement ceasefire and there is no end in sight.

This issue of *Refugee Transition* also features interviews with internationally-renowned British professor of clinical psychology, Dr Paul Gilbert, the creator of Compassionate-Focused Therapy. Lawyer Nyadol Nyuon, a South Sudanese refugee shares with us her personal journey from a refugee camp in Africa to a Melbourne legal office. Salomon Janvier Lukonga, another refugee from Africa, now a well-known fashion designer in Brisbane, also shared his story in this issue.

Refugee Council CEO, Paul Powers, writes about the efforts made by refugee advocates and refugees to get their voice heard at international UNHCR meetings.

Other stories that feature in this issue include a traveller's perspective on CUBA, by Daniela Aroche who travelled to the island early this year and Kevin McGrath, who travelled to Poland to get to know his family left behind by WWII.

We are now in the process of organising STARTTS next Refugee Ball/Human Rights Dinner to take place this year at the Hyatt Hotel in Darling Harbour on the 1st of November.

I look forward to seeing you there supporting the work of STARTTS!

Jorge Aroche

Chief Executive Officer / STARTTS
President, International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims, (IRCT)

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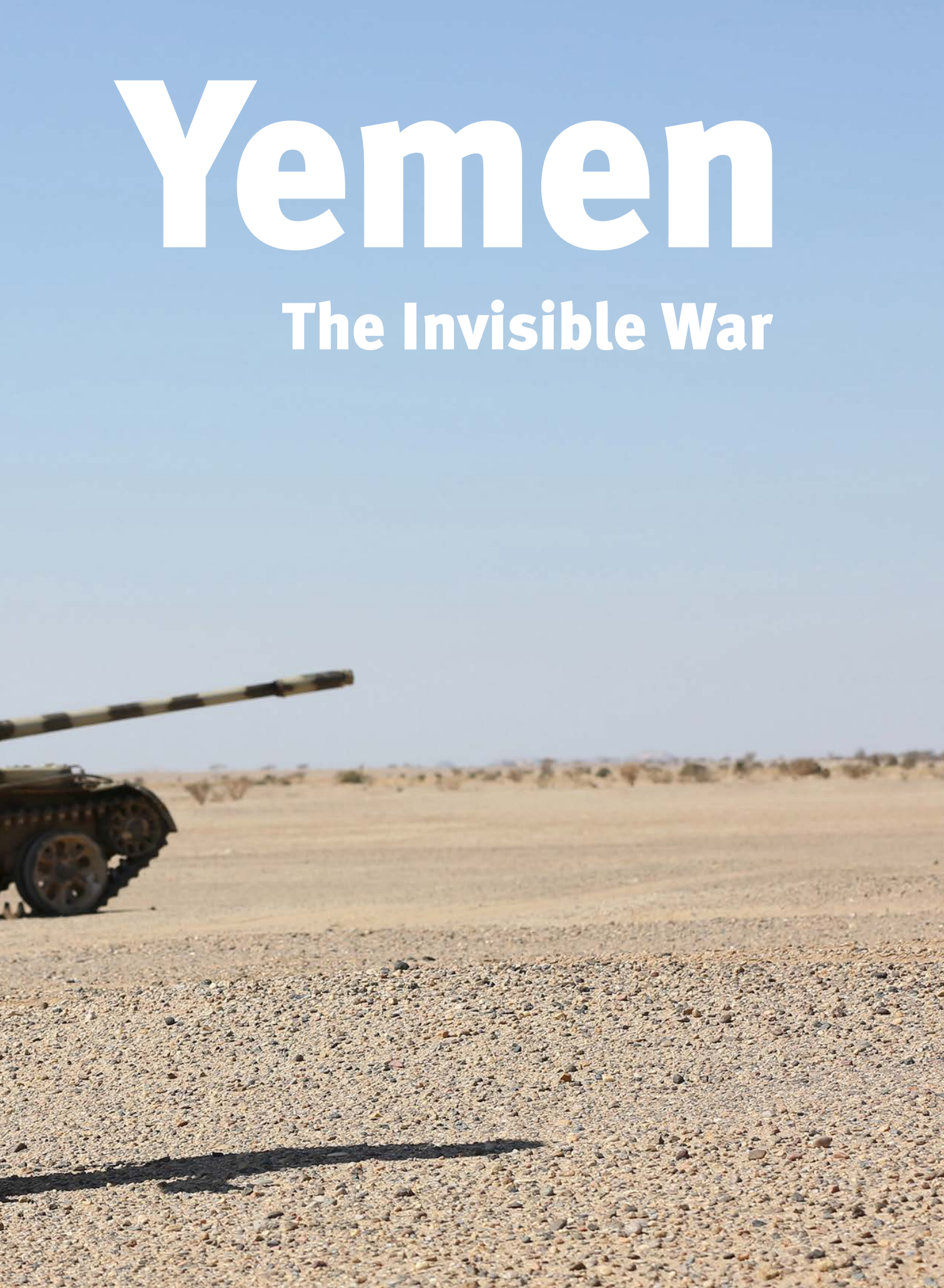


MODERN CONFLICTS

After four years of disastrous civil war, Yemen is at breaking point, with an estimated 233,000 casualties and 10 million on the brink of famine. Why is the silence of the international community so deafening? ***OLGA YOLDI*** *reports.*

Yemen's devastating conflict originated in the Arab Spring when a wave of popular unrest convulsed the Middle East. Protests against poor economic conditions, corruption and low wages triggered revolutions in many countries. Yemen's uprising ended up in a proxy war.

In 2011 protesters launched peaceful protests calling for the resignation of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, a dictator who had ruled Yemen for 33 years. After months of unrest, in 2012 Saleh was forced to transfer power to his deputy, Adrabbuh Mansour Hadi, who agreed to launch a democratic transition. He set up a transitional government, created a National Dialogue Conference as a forum to solve the country's problems and promised to call elections a year later.

But the National Dialogue soon fell apart. The new president struggled with economic challenges, corruption and constant military attacks from Saleh loyalists and al-Qaeda. As the economic situation deteriorated Yemenis became disappointed with Hadi and saw his rule as a continuation of the old regime.

Taking advantage of the situation, Houthi rebels (a

revivalist Shia movement with a strong base in northern Yemen and ties to Iran), reached Yemen's capital, Sanaa, and took control of it in 2014 and the coastal city of Aden soon after. Saleh allied himself with the Houthis and his supporters joined the rebels in the fight against President Hadi's troops, forcing the new government into exile.

Then the Houthi political leadership announced the dissolution of parliament and the formation of a revolutionary committee to govern the country. With Yemen slipping into instability Saudi Arabia feared Houthi insurgents were gaining control over Yemen, thus giving Iran a foothold in the region, and decided to intervene.

The conflict escalated in 2015 when, at the behest of Hadi, the Saudi-led coalition of Saudi Arabia and eight mostly Sunni Arab states – United Arab Emirates (UAE), Egypt, Morocco, Sudan, Jordan, Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar (which later withdrew) – and backed by the US, Britain and France, began air strikes against Houthi positions with the aim of restoring Hadi's government. The US and Britain provided intelligence and logistical support for the campaign, called Operation Decisive Storm.

This was the beginning of a conflict that has shattered Yemen. It was supposed to last just weeks, but has now marked four years. It has escalated, spiralled and fractured to such an extent that all attempts at peace building have failed.

Today, press reports describe a chaotic and multisided war with many actors and shifting agendas, being fought on several fronts: the civil war in the north between Houthi rebels and Hadi's central government forces; another civil war between the central government and the Southern Movement(SM) – a loose coalition of separatists centred on Aden; and a nationwide campaign and US-led war against radical Islamist terrorist groups, including al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), which has expanded to include an ISIS affiliate, Islah, an Islamist movement allied to the government. AQAP has set up local authorities over some areas in the south-east and Saudi Arabia has allied with AQAP in the fight against Houthi rebels.

"But there is also a regional conflict, pitting Saudi Arabia and the UAE against Iran, as well as UAE proxy forces and various different militias – some Salafi, some local and some closer to criminal gangs – all vying to grab and hold as much territory as they can," Gregory D Johnsen from the Arabia Foundation wrote in *Lawfare*.

The combined battles have inflicted serious damage on the economy and essential services and caused an unrelenting crisis with three-quarters of the population depending on aid to survive and 10 million people with no reliable access to food. UN Secretary-General António Guterres has described Yemen as "the world's worst humanitarian catastrophe".

While forces loyal to Hadi and the southern separatists have bombed swathes of the country, it is the Saudi-led Coalition that has caused the most damage. For the past four years it has bombed key centres, conducted a ground war, imposed air and naval blockades of its ports, destroying vital infrastructure and killing civilians, showing a total disregard for human life.

According to the Yemen Data Project, an independent collection of data on the conduct of the war in Yemen, Operation Decisive Storm conducted more than 16,749 coalition air attacks. Two-thirds have been against non-military and unknown targets, including places that are generally protected against attacks under international humanitarian law such as residential areas, vehicles, market places, mosques, boats, social gatherings and camps for internally displaced persons.

"The coalition isn't accidentally attacking civilians and civil infrastructure, it is doing it deliberately," wrote Jeff Bachman, a lecturer at the American University School of International Service, in *The Conversation*. According to Bachman these attacks, combined with the blockade, constitute genocide: "Genocide actions in Yemen amount to nothing short of what Raphael Lemkin, who coined the term 'genocide', referred to as a synchronised attack on different aspects of life."

The Saudi-led coalition would not have been able to commit these crimes without the material and logistical support of the US and complicity of the Obama and Trump administrations. Britain and the US sell Saudi Arabia and its coalition partners billions of dollars' worth of arms and provide logistical support, intelligence, expedited munitions resupply and maintenance, as well as the mid-flight refuelling of military aircraft, which was recently stopped. President Trump has been unwilling to cut the vital support that is fuelling this brutal and almost invisible war.

According to human rights reports, violations have been perpetrated by all actors in this conflict. Maggie Michael from the Associated Press (AP) investigated UAE-controlled prisons in Yemen in 2017, where disappearances and widespread torture is regularly perpetrated on people suspected of being members of al-Qaeda.

The Houthi insurgents have also been accused of engaging in torture, recruiting child soldiers, bombing the homes of local opponents, using weapons in unguarded residential areas and using civilians for cover.

The Saudi-led coalition says the Houthis are puppets

of Iran and Houthi insurgents (an army of about 100,000 fighters) say their war is a form of jihad against the US, but this is a battle that neither side is winning.

In 2018 the Houthi rebels escalated the conflict by firing long-range ballistic missiles across Saudi Arabia's southern border. Then Hadi's forces, supported by the coalition, began attacks to capture the key port of Hodeidah, controlled by Houthi insurgents and a strategic centre and entry point for the vast majority of food and lifeline for millions of people depending on aid for their survival. Since then Hodeidah has become the centre of gravity and the most active theatre in this complex war.

Following the Houthi attack the Saudi-led coalition imposed a naval and air blockade designed to restrict or stop the flow of food aid, which sparked fears of a catastrophic humanitarian disaster. The International Crisis Group warned that a decisive move on Hodeidah would have devastating consequences for all Yemenis, because such an assault would block all roads leading from the port to the central highlands – leaving an estimated 18 million people without food supplies.

According to the UN panel of experts on Yemen, vessels seeking entry to Yemen ports are stopped and inspected by the coalition to prevent, restrict and delay the distribution of food, fuel, medical supplies and humanitarian aid. Military scholar Martin Fink says the blockade causes massive delays and creates uncertainty about what products will be allowed to enter. "Imports are often held for a long time. In some cases the food that makes it through the blockade is already spoiled."

The food that manages to get past the blockade still needs to cross many military checkpoints. The World Food Program (WFP) has also collected evidence showing that Houthi rebels have diverted shipments of food sent to alleviate the crisis. WFP spokesperson Herve Verhoosel said their greatest challenge comes from the obstructive and unco-operative role of some of the Houthi leaders in areas under their control. "If we don't get the access and freedom to decide who gets this vital assistance, then we will have to take the hard decision of implementing a phased suspension in Houthi-controlled areas," Verhoosel said.

To make matters worse, the unrelenting bombing has destroyed much of Yemen's transport infrastructure, making it hard to transport food and other essentials to

"Yemen is the greatest famine atrocity of our lifetimes used by deliberately destroying the country's food-producing infrastructure". Alex de Waal

the different governorates. A Save the Children's report indicated that commercial imports through Hodeidah had fallen by more than 55,000 metric tons a month – which only meet the needs of 4.4 million people.

At the same time a lack of fresh water has caused outbreaks of cholera not seen in the past 50 years, according to the World Health Organisation. A recent UN-commissioned report by the University of Denver has revealed that more Yemenis are now dying of hunger, disease and lack of health clinics and other infrastructure than from fighting.

Save the Children estimates that 85,000 children have already died from hunger and disease. It bases its figures on mortality rates for untreated cases of severe malnutrition since the Saudi-led coalition joined the war. "For every child killed by bombs and bullets, dozens are starving to death and it is entirely preventable," said Tamer Kirolos, Save the Children Yemen's director. "Children who die of starvation suffer a prolonged agony as their vital organ functions slow and eventually stop." The report revealed that on average, one child dies from the war and its side effects every 11 minutes and 54 seconds.

This is not the first time food is used as a weapon of war, a bargaining tool and an instrument of genocide. Joseph Stalin used famine in 1932 causing the deaths of about 4 million Ukrainians. The Nazis Hunger Plan used hunger in besieged Leningrad where the population decreased in three years, and recently in Syria civilians were denied food and aid as a tactic of war carried out by the Bashar al Assad regime.

Alex de Waal, a renowned expert on humanitarian crises, in his book *Mass Starvation: The History and Failure of Famine*, writes that while the world almost conquered famine as a result of the spread of democracy, human rights and the ending of wars, it has made a comeback and he highlights the elements common to all of today's famines: "The weaponisation of starvation and the rollback of humanitarian norms."

He argues that UN agencies and the press have been coy about singling out Saudi Arabia, the US and Britain for their role in precipitating the food crisis. Often we believe famine is caused by overpopulation or climate change, yet 70 percent of famine deaths are man-made, according to de Waal. "The reason hat famine has not been outlawed under international law in a strong manner is that we ourselves – the Western powers, the US and UK – have used hunger and blockade as a weapon of war throughout the 20th century," he writes, "and for that reason the international law books do not contain prohibition on starving of the type that is really warranted." He describes Yemen as "the greatest famine atrocity of our lifetimes used by deliberately destroying the country's food-producing infrastructure".

While there has been wide condemnation of the Syrian government by the international community for starving its own people, no concerted action has been taken against the Saudi-led coalition to stop this in Yemen. "Nikki Haley, [then] America's ambassador to the UN has rightly condemned the Syrian government," de Waal writes. "But it is easy to call out villains, like President Bashar al Assad; it is harder to call out one's allies."

"One child dies from the war and its side effects every 11 minutes and 54 seconds." -Tamer Kirolos

In May last year the UN Security Council passed a resolution condemning the starvation of civilians. But the UN has been largely ineffective in ending the conflict in Yemen and the international community has been slow to respond. A media focus on the wars in Syria and Iraq may have eclipsed the tragedy in Yemen.

Press reports say it was the emergence of President Trump's son-in-law and senior adviser on Middle East, Jared Kushner, the Administration's key figure in Middle East diplomacy, that moved the focus towards Palestine and Israel, and away from Yemen. At the same time Kushner and Trump have warm relations with Saudi Prince Mohammed bin Salman, and that relationship, analysts say, has shaped US Middle East strategy. On the other hand Trump's enmity towards Iran has also shaped his policy towards Yemen as a key battleground for countering Iran.

"If under Obama support assumed the form of enabling the campaign under President Trump it has taken the costlier shape of encouraging and emboldening those who prosecute it framing the conflict as a battle against Iran." Robert Malley, president of International Crisis Group wrote in *The Atlantic.*

How the US became entangled in such a military misadventure and complicit in such a disastrous war is still hard to understand. Two administrations have given the Saudi-led coalition a blank cheque: even when there were signs the war would not be won, they continued to support the coalition. Four years later, the US has little to show for its investment but the horrors of a brutal and protracted war.

It took the murder of Saudi journalist Kamal Khashoggi in Istanbul to push Washington into issuing the ceasefire call. The US scaled back assistance, but did not stop it. Attempts to end US involvement in the Yemen war have so far failed. Last April the US Congress invoked the 1973 War Powers Resolution to pass a bill to end military assistance in Yemen. But President Trump vetoed the bill as "an unnecessary, dangerous attempt to weaken my constitutional powers … It would also imperil American citizens and brave service members today and in the future," Trump said.

Political commentator Simon Tindall wrote in *The Guardian* that Trump's actions amounted to flagrant defiance of the Act that checks a president's ability to

engage in armed conflict without the express consent of Congress. "Trump's veto over Yemen is a scandalous abuse of presidential powers," Tindall said. "It will prolong the suffering of millions in Yemen." Trump has said that cutting military assistance would be counterproductive because it would embolden the Houthi insurgents and Iran.

Last December the UN finally managed a meeting with the warring parties in Stockholm. The 2018 Stockholm Agreement signed at the meeting is described as a trust-building step aimed at averting a full-scale assault on Hodeidah. It is also aimed at stopping the war by restoring the internationally recognised Hadi government and paving the way for wider peace talks to set up a UN-led transitional authority. The withdrawal of troops was meant to have been completed by January, but the deadline passed without any forces leaving their safe havens or abiding by their commitments. Instead, violence has intensified.

Since May renewed clashes have broken out between Houthi rebel fighters and the coalition in Hodeidah breaching the ceasefire, and complicating the troop withdrawal agreement. Houthi rebels launched a bomb-laden drone into Saudi Arabia, hitting an arms depot in a military airport in Najran. Then Riyadh retaliated by launching strikes in Sanaa killing civilians. Last July Abha airport in Saudi Arabia also came under repeated missile and drone attacks wounding 26 civilians. Houthi rebels insist they will continue attacks as long as the Saudi led military intervention persists. This further increased tensions over the US-Iran standoff, with the US deploying an aircraft carrier and bombers to the Gulf after Washington accused Iran of shooting down a US drone over international waters.

UN envoy Martin Griffiths warned that the alarming intensification of violence could wipe out the progress made in Hodeidah: "War has a habit of trumping peace – its impact is more corrosive than the positive impact of ending wars. We must not let war take peace off the table."

Griffiths, who is working through a series of proposals for mutual redeployment, called on the UN Security Council to urge the warring parties to put in place the remaining actions as part of the Stockholm Agreement. The withdrawal of troops stalled over disagreement on who would control Hodeidah.

Convincing Houthi insurgents to abandon the port city in favour of a neutral force might be challenging, as Hodeidah is their primary source of revenue through customs and duties for funding this war. According to the BBC, the two sides are yet to agree on a sovereign council – the top tier of power where both want a majority. There may also be a need to include the Southern Movement in the ceasefire negotiation, so far they have been excluded.

Finding a dignified political exit for all parties will be difficult. Any chance of peace must also involve Iran suspending military aid to Houthi insurgents, and the US and UK stopping arms transfer and other support to the Saudi-led coalition and therefore giving up lucrative arm deals. Let's not forget that the Security Council's permanent members, the US, Britain, France and to a lesser extent China and Russia all supply arms to the Saudi led coalition.

"The US and UK officials are now under scrutiny," an International Crisis Group report said. "They have expended major political capital to defend arm sales and other support to the Coalition. The UK government has gone to high court to argue that licensing arms exports to Saudi Arabia for use in Yemen did not violate international law."

Concerted effort will be required to push with all parties to compromise. Mohammed Ali al Houthi, the head of the Houthi Supreme Revolutionary Council said recently on Twitter that the withdrawal of troops would start soon, but that remains to be seen.

What is clear is that Yemen cannot wait any longer for peace. It is hard to tell what the future holds for the country. A unified, democratic Yemen with all warring parties having an equal place in Yemen's future, commentators say, may be an unrealistic goal as there are too many factions that are likely to struggle for power.

"Yemen, which only unified in 1990, is broken and probably will be for years to come" writes Gregory D Johnsen in *Lawfare*. "No one peace agreement, no matter how comprehensive, will be able to end each of these three wars. There are too many armed groups in the country, none of which is strong enough to impose its will upon the entire country, but all of which can act as spoilers any time they don't like a particular decision."

However there may be alternatives. According to analyst Ariel I Ahman, the best outcome is for Yemen to resemble Somalia, Moldova or Cyprus, where weak central states coexist with territories of consolidated separatist rule. "De facto states like Somaliland, Transnistria or North Cyprus lack formal recognition by the international community, but they are not geopolitical black holes or anarchic zones," he wrote in *Lawfare*. "These arrangements are far from perfect, but they may be better outcomes than further war."

PROFILE

London-based human rights barrister ***GEOFFREY ROBERTSON*** *delivered an international keynote address to the 2nd Australia and New Zealand Refugee Trauma in Recovery Conference in Brisbane over four days in March. At the close of the conference, the founder and joint head of Doughty Street Chambers spoke with* ***KAREN COLLIER*** *exclusively for Refugee Transitions on how, as a movement, we can strengthen the efficacy of international human rights mechanisms. As he continues to traverse the globe defending human rights and leading the fight against torture, Robertson shared a few of his thoughts on where he finds hope during these dark times.*

A reason for hope

KC: How was your experience participating in the 2nd Australia and New Zealand International Refugee Trauma in Recovery Conference?

GR: It's a wonderful conference and it's terrific that people who are assisting immigrants and refugees can get together and talk about the importance of their work and to learn different tactics and techniques. There are problems within – for example, offering therapy to people who are naturally suspicious of authority figures, given their experience – that you only get at the sharp end. I'm a lawyer so I'm good with words, but words are not important when you are in a refugee camp. I mean the law is not important, It's what works in practice. It was wonderful to address an audience of 500 school students who were 16 or 17. They are the very people we must encourage, and I thought that was an innovation that I'd never had before at this sort of conference, so the organisers are very much to be congratulated for it.

Is the Convention Against Torture still relevant today?

It still is relevant, it's a great document, it's part of the international rules-based order that emerged after the Second World War when the most horrific tortures were seen – committed by the Nazis in relation to Jews, Roma, homosexuals in the concentration camps, and by the Japanese against, in particular, Australians, who were worked to death or marched to death.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which emerged in 1948, categorically condemned the use of torture. But the Declaration was not law and torture continued, first in Algeria by France, [which] widely tortured members of the anti-colonial movement barbarically.

France developed waterboarding and developed the use of electric shocks to the genitals. Then, of course, Britain used inhumane methods against the IRA. But I think the worst forms of torture came in Latin America, particularly by General Pinochet in Chile. It was widespread use of barbaric torture, against young leftists for the most part, that called into being the Torture Convention in 1984. As a Convention it is law and 165 states have now ratified it, which gives it a great deal of force. It defines torture and it prevents, for example, sending refugees or immigrants back to countries which will torture them or are likely to torture them. It's been quite effective in that respective.

You have said that Australia is behind the rest of the free world. In the *Australian Quarterly* you recently referred to the Magnitsky Act and said that "if all advanced democracies adopted such laws and pooled information and target lists, the pleasures available to the cruel and corrupt would be considerably diminished". What is the Magnitsky Act and why does Australia need one?

The Magnitsky Act is a law named after a man who was tortured to death in a Russian prison after exposing a criminal behaviour by the very policeman who put him in prison. The idea behind the Magnitsky Act is that they use local law, not international law, but adopt international law definitions in order to punish as best we can those people in foreign countries who have made their money out of abusing human rights, so that there are sanctions that stop them coming into the free world, using its banks, sending their children to its schools or their parents to its hospitals.

Particular kinds of Magnitsky laws have now been passed, first by President Obama in 2012. Trump has allowed them to continue and indeed has included the 15 killers from Saudi Arabia who killed Mr Khashoggi at the Saudi embassy in Istanbul.

Canada has a very good Magnitsky Act. Britain, after the attempt to assassinate the Skripals in Salisbury, has passed a Sanctions Act that enables human rights abusers to be sanctioned. The European Union has passed one. The hope is that over the next few years the countries of the free world will have sanctions bodies that cooperate and we will be able to draw up a list of human rights abusers who have no place in our society, and who are kept out and cannot spend their ill-gotten gains as they wish through our banks and casinos. Australia obviously should join this movement and there was interest earlier this year in parliament in doing so, and I hope whatever new government comes in will join the movement.

To this end, are there any updates in relation to Australia? I understand Dr Kerryn Phelps and Michael Danby are progressing this?

I spoke to Dr Phelps and I know Michael Danby had introduced it in parliament. I think everything has gone quiet with the [federal] election. But I hope after the election we can talk seriously about it.

How does the Magnitsky Act differ from the principle of universal jurisdiction? Does it supersede universal jurisdiction?

Universal jurisdiction is a legal principle from international law which enables torturers to be arrested wherever they are and extradited to a country that will put them on trial. The Pinochet case is an example. But Magnitsky laws are national laws passed by national parliaments, so there is no question that they are binding, but they use and rely upon definitions that have been developed in international law.

Your London firm, Doughty Street International [set up in 1990] has been working closely with Yazidi torture survivors. Tell us about your work with your colleague, Amal Clooney, and Yazidi torture survivor, Nadia Murad, since she was awarded the 2018 Nobel Peace Prize.

I'm joining Amal in New York next month to launch her TrialWatch Foundation and I know she's been very supportive of the Yazidis, and of course they have been victims of torture and, I think, genocide. Her work there has been outstanding. She's someone who uses her position to help the most downtrodden and does so with a legal ability that is quite extraordinary, which is why I invited her some years ago, before she was married, to join my chambers. The Yazidis have a very powerful supporter in Amal, but she is under great [pressure] – she's a mother with twins, she has many, many demands on her time and she has to ration her support, but she's been a great colleague.

Can you tell us about the TrialWatch Foundation and its purpose?

Yes, it's starting next month [April 2019], when it's being set up by George and Amal [Clooney] to observe trials because so many of them around the world are unfair. The idea is to project skilled observers who will be able to stay and interpret what is happening and spotlight unfairness in legal systems around the world. It was a job that started with Amnesty in the 1970s and 80s. I was an Amnesty observer of trials in South Africa and Vietnam and so on, but the problem is I was unpaid and could only stay a few days – you'd parachute in and parachute out, do your best to understand what was happening. But the idea of the TrialWatch Foundation is to have sufficient funds to enable experienced observers to stay and follow the trials – some go on for years – so you can have a much better appreciation of why they are unfair.

It sounds like a timely initiative. We look forward to hearing a lot more about the work of the foundation in the future. But for now – is the term genocide being used too loosely today? If so, why?

There are several challenges; one is definition. We still have arguments with Turkey, for example, over the Armenian genocide. If ever there was a genocide, it was the killing of one million out of one-and-a-half million Armenians by the Turks in 1915. Even the Pope says it was the first genocide of the 20th century. Popes aren't infallible; it was in fact the second. The first was the killing off of the Herero people in Namibia by the Germans. And of course genocide was committed by the Nazis, by the Hutus in Rwanda … we can see that in grainy footage of people of a different race being slaughtered by machetes. But genocide under the Genocide Convention doesn't require the death of most of an ethnic group or even most of an ethnic group; it means an intention to kill because of ethnic or religious hatreds. So we can see or identify genocide with intent in the attitude of Burmese generals to the Rohingya and others. So it can be the subject of misconception, but it can also be used too loosely. Mass murder is sometimes the appropriate term, rather than genocide.

Mass murder where there is no intention to eliminate a race is not genocide. Genocide is related to racial or religious hatred; it does not refer to political hatreds. We need a term such as "politicide" perhaps to deal with that. [For example,] there is Stalin's elimination of the Kulaks. Millions were killed, but that wasn't genocide; it was politicide. Genocide is the worst of all crimes simply because of our historical knowledge that racial and religious hatreds are the most inflammatory and that is why it is the worst of all crimes.

How is it possible today that states such as Saudi Arabia and Russia are going beyond their frontiers to kill citizens and perpetrate human rights abuses beyond their borders with impunity, as in the McKinsey-type contractors? Does this trend concern you?

Yes, of course. They're breaches of international law, gross breaches in the case of both countries, both leaders, and they will continue so long as international law is not enforced and so long as people like Donald Trump turn a blind eye to obvious evidence of implication of the [Saudi] Crown Prince, for example, so long as Western countries sell them weapons, allow their banks, their hospitals, their schools to be open to these killers.

Your dear friend, Justice Michael Kirby, once said of you: "He was always courageous, always ahead of his time." That you saw issues of White Australia, of Aboriginal neglect, the need for engagement with Asia and the rights of women before many people. He described you as "a very good communicator" from the beginning. What will be the focus of your time in the future?

Primarily, TrialWatch and the Magnitsky Act.

Are we any closer to a national bill of rights as put forth in your 2009 book, The State of Liberty: How Australians Can Take Back Their Rights?

Yes – a Bill of Rights for Australia. Firming up international law, making it more enforceable and I

think the future may be Magnitsky laws and developing them as a way of punishing human rights abusers and deterring human rights abuse through use of national laws. So that's my future.

What can we expect the theme of your next, and 20th, book to be?

I'm going to write a more philosophical book, perhaps, about who owns the past. It's about my work for the Greek government in getting back the Elgin Marbles, questions that have been raised about return of art stolen from African countries in particular, by colonialist powers. International law is at last moving towards the theory about the return of cultural property, so I want to say something about that: the International Criminal Court has convicted someone for blowing up historic mausoleums in the city of Timbouctou in Mali.

The protection of cultural heritage?

Yes. That's a developing area, of how international law may be able to strengthen it so I think a book on that subject.

We are convening at this conference at a time of regional despair in the wake of the Christchurch terror attack. Hate speech is on the rise.

Yes, I'll probably write something about it. Everyone today at the ceremonies is talking about forgiveness. I don't think a crime of that sort can be forgiven. While I appreciate the sincerity of people's remarks, I'm starting to worry about the trial. I'm a barrister, a taxi on the rank; I would accept a brief to mitigate, to plead guilty for this man who's obviously guilty, but the problem is how a court system – which is not devised for hate propaganda from the dock – can avoid that within its own traditional rules of fairness. I'm a great advocate of open justice, but I do believe the court system should not allow racial hatred spewed from the dock.

You once said that we can only do what we think is right at the time in relation to human rights atrocities and injustice. You touched on the imperative of hope in your keynote speech at the FASSTT Conference yesterday. Can we afford not to hope today?

People ask me: "Don't you despair?" I don't, because we have come a long way in a short time. International law, criminal law and human rights law did not exist until they were brought into being at the Nuremberg trial, a relatively short time. I remember – I'm getting so old now – in 1973 joining Amnesty and my very first task was to write a letter to General Pinochet, who had started his torture camps, asking him to close them. I'm sure he never read my letter, but 25 years later I acted for Human Rights Watch in a case that resulted in his detention and ultimate discrediting for the crime of torture. So I can say that in my own lifetime we have come a long way, and in a short time, because 25 years is a short time, so I don't despair. ꟿ

Street wise

Doughty Street is Europe's largest human rights practice, known for its commitment to pro bono work. It has a passion for defending freedom of speech, the rights of journalists to report in the public interest and a bill of rights in Australia.

The TrialWatch Foundation Courts are increasingly being used as a tool of oppression. In many countries, prosecutors and judges are used to imprison government critics and minorities. In other places, a judge's rulings can be purchased by the highest bidder. Judges can also be complicit in grave human rights abuses when they convict for "crimes" such as homosexuality or blasphemy, or when they ignore due process for defendants. Yet judges and prosecutors are rarely held to account. In some countries courtrooms are closed, and even where trials are open to the public proceedings can be long, convoluted and hard to understand.

In response to these pressing needs, the Clooney Foundation for Justice has developed an initiative focused on monitoring and responding to trials around the world that pose a high risk of human rights violations. As an esteemed US Supreme Court judge once noted: "Sunlight is the best disinfectant." The TrialWatch Foundation will therefore monitor trials in which the law may be used to target a minority or silence a government critic, meaning that there is a greater likelihood of a politicised, unfair trial. The foundation will work to expose injustice and rally support to secure justice for defendants whose rights have been violated.

International Metropolis Conference

AGENDA

More than 700 people gathered at the Sydney International Conference Centre last October for the International Metropolis Conference. The five-day event was organised by Settlement Services International, the Australian Multicultural Foundation and Multicultural NSW. ***OLGA YOLDI*** *reports.*

Global Migration in Turbulent Times was the theme of this conference that attracted participants from many nations, as well as international experts, NGO leaders, human rights activists, researchers, health professionals and politicians.

The presentations, panel discussions and workshops covered a large variety of topics, from global migration movements, displacement and resettlement to migration policy and the findings from the latest research.

With 258 million migrants, 25.4 million refugees and more than 60 million displaced people around the world, migration is one of the key forces shaping the world today – and this was the main message of the conference. Indeed, more people are on the move around the world than ever before. War, civil unrest, poverty and climate change are combining to create massive displacement. But as daunting as it may appear, we were reminded that migration has existed since the dawn of time, long before the creation borders and passports. Former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon defined it as "an expression of the human aspiration for dignity, safety and a better future. It is part of our social fabric and part of our make up as a human family".

The world as we know it today may not exist without migration. "It is our motivation and ability to migrate that has allowed our ancestors to escape famine, drought, pandemics, wars and other disasters and explore new opportunities to populate the planet," said keynote speaker Dr Ian Goldin, professor of Globalisation and Development, founding director of the Martin Oxford School, Oxford University, and co-author of the highly acclaimed book *Exceptional People: How Migration Shaped Our World and Will Define Our Future*.

Professor Goldin said migration is beneficial for Western economies. "It has made, and is making, an essential contribution to the economic wellbeing of many Western countries," he said. "But it is the growing politicisation of migration on a value basis, rather than an economic one, that is making it difficult to properly highlight the economic case for migration."

Professor Goldin's research shows that migration has had a substantial impact on recent aggregate economic

growth. "In Germany and the UK, we estimate that if migration had been frozen in 1990 their GDPs would have been around €155 billion and £175 billion lower respectively," he said. "In the US, too, immigration has made a substantial contribution to recent economic growth, especially since the financial crisis."

According to Professor Goldin, skilled migrants make a disproportionate contribution to economic innovation because they introduce diversity to the workplace, additional skills, new ideas and entrepreneurship, as migrants and refugees tend to be risk-takers. The McKinsey Global Institute notes that in the US alone, more than 40 percent of global patent applications are led by immigrants.

This finding mirrors UTS Professor Jock Collins' research on refugees, which shows they have the highest rates of entrepreneurship of all immigrant arrivals – even though they lack capital, credit history, assets, social and business networks, knowledge of Australian regulations and familiarity with the market.

Professor Collins said refugees reported a higher proportion of income from their own businesses, and this income increased sharply after five years of residence: "The agency, resilience of refugees, their determination to make a good life in Australia for their families, stood out in the research."

Several speakers agreed that migration had also become essential to alleviate urgent demographic needs. Migrants on average are younger than the host countries' population, while more than half of all countries in the world have fertility rates below population replacement levels. The ageing of global populations will result in a doubling in the number of people over 60, from 962 million to more than 2 billion by 2050. "Migration will help cope with this transition and easing the burden on care and social security systems," Professor Goldin said.

If migration brings prosperity, innovation and much-needed demographic renewal, it is difficult to explain the rise of anti-immigration sentiment spreading across the Western world. Speakers agreed that the emergence of nationalist, radical right-wing parties in Europe with strong anti-immigration platforms attract voters by promoting the belief that resources – particularly jobs – are limited, and that migrants and refugees are a drain on the welfare state and a threat to national identity.

UTS Professor Andrew Jakubowicz blames the internet for the spread of this thinking, because it has become the primary terrain of ideological contestation. "The internet is an out of control space," he said. "There are no global constraints and few international initiatives that are able to combat or constrain the spreading of racism and xenophobia."

Researcher Franck Düvell from Oxford University also blames the growing social and economic inequality and slow economic growth in Europe, as people become fearful of the future. He noted that the level of inequality in Europe is now at levels last seen in the 1920s and 1930s, which brought about an era of nationalism and populist leaders. This, combined with the changes in elite party politics and the way nationalism has become more central to political party competition, makes it difficult to eradicate these trends.

The conference addressed appropriate governmental responses to such complex and multifaceted issues, with speakers urging governments to exercise good leadership through policy and the creation of a narrative that is positive, instead of adopting restrictive policies and laws. It was agreed that enforcing policies such as detention is not conducive to positive outcomes, simply because policies that repress migration have not only not succeeded, but also continue to cause great suffering.

"Deterrence and detention have more of a political value than a policy value," said Paul Power, CEO of the Refugee Council of Australia. "They generate political capital for politicians and governments, because putting measures in place that are harmful, tough and punitive generate a lot of appeal. This has caused Brexit and changes in governments in European governments."

There was a unanimous consensus among speakers that addressing the root causes of political conflicts that lead to war and displacement should be the focus of all governments. "Over two-thirds of the 25.4 million refugees come from just five countries: Syria, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Somalia and Myanmar," Mr Power said. "Addressing the root causes of those conflicts is where the focus needs to be. Regional solutions, rather than a global one, are what is needed. We should think about what can be done to build peace in Myanmar, for instance. We should also include the voices of displaced people in our national debates."

Paris Aristotle, CEO of the Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture, said increasing funding for aid, development and education was also crucial: "Educating people all over the world has the potential for those countries to be far more productive, stable and democratic. One of the things our government could do is to triple Australia's aid funding."

While the aid budget has decreased over the past few years, so has the number of resettlement places achieved by the UNHCR, dropping by 54 percent between 2016 and 2017. "This has a negative impact

"In Germany and the UK, we estimate that if migration had been frozen in 1990 their GDPs would have been around €155 billion and £175 billion lower respectively." Professor Ian Goldin.

on the wellbeing of refugees," said UNSW researcher Dr Belinda Biddle. Of the 25.4 million of refugees displaced worldwide, only 1 percent is permanently resettled. "The vast majority of refugees are living in sustained displacement and uncertainty about their future," Dr Biddle said. "This has long-term impact on prolonged insecurity for their mental health, adaptation and settlement outcomes."

Lately, Syrian refugees have been a very visible by-product of regional power struggles. On the other side of the world, however, mass displacement is changing societies. Professor Brenda Yeoh of the National University of Singapore spoke of the "permanent transience" of Asian irregular labour, where migrants are allowed in for work but not to stay – a type of migration that breaks the family unit when parents leave children and the elderly behind, and where professionals are lost to jobs in the West, leaving those countries without the skills and expertise they need.

"Migrant workers are treated as disposable labour governed through revolving door policies, rather than socio-political subjects with rights to integration,"

Professor Yeoh said. In 2017, 110 million of the world's estimated 258 million international migrants originated from Asia, while 80 million international migrants also live in Asia. So Asia produces the largest share of international migrants on the move and the place of sojourn for the largest share of migrants.

The need for a global governance of migration was first brought up by then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in 2004, when he was charged with bringing the issue of migration to the forefront of the global agenda: Since the 1990s, migration had been called the missing regime. While the World Trade Organisation regulates the movement of goods and trade, no organisation regulates the movement of people.

Fortunately, new instruments called the Global Compact for Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe Orderly and Regular Migration have now been adopted by 120 countries. They form an intergovernmental framework under the auspices of the UN to manage migration at the local, national, regional and global levels and it is aimed at reducing the risks and protecting the basic human rights of migrants and refugees.

They are based on the principle that migration should be well-managed and safe, not irregular and dangerous, and that national policies will have a greater chance of success with international co-operation. No distinction is made between illegal, legal and economic migrants or refugees, but they do distinguish between regular and irregular migrants. The Compact also commits signatories to preventing irregular migration, but does not mention non-refoulement.

The Global Compact was described by most speakers at the conference as a much-needed progressive framework. There are 23 objectives listed, such as collecting data to develop evidence-based migration policy, ensuring all migrants have proof of identity, enhancing the availability and flexibility of regular migration, encouraging co-operation for tracking missing migrants and saving lives, and ensuring migrants can access basic services as well as full inclusiveness for migrants to promote social cohesion.

The Global Compact is gender-responsive, with a focus on safeguarding children's rights, a commitment to ending child detention, protecting migrants in vulnerable situations and promoting workers' rights. It also covers the needs of refugees fleeing the effects of climate change and the natural disasters that will continue to create displacement and mass movements. This is a significant step, as currently international law does not grant such people the right to enter and remain in another country.

The Compact is non-binding and is described as "a set of political commitments that carry moral rather than legal authority". As UN General Assembly President, María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés said: "No state, no matter how powerful, can solve by its own means the challenges of international migration."

"The level of inequality in Europe is now at levels last seen in the 1920s and 1930s, which brought about an era of nationalism and populist leaders." Professor Franck Düvell.

The adoption of the Global Compact last December in Marrakesh was hailed as a victory, defying the fear-mongering tactics of extreme right movements in the US, Europe and other parts of the world.

It will be interesting to see to what extent it will be implemented by the states. The UN has committed to helping to build mechanisms for states to contribute technical, financial and human resources and the UN Network on Migration will assist states in the implementation process. The US and Australia are not signatories to the Global Compact, although some 120 nations are. "The Global Compact will be as good as its implementation," said Carolina Gottardo, of the Jesuit Refugee Service in Australia. "Then we will be able to see the real effects on the ground." So In other words, the real work to right the wrongs starts now.

By the end of the conference it became clear that in the era of globalisation, criminalising migration and closing our borders means not only keeping out those we need to protect, but also as Professor Goldin said: "We keep out not only the brains that will help us build a better future, but also we close ourselves off from the ideas and understanding that we require to manage in an increasingly interdependent and complex world."

Multiculturalism Revisited

AGENDA

The choice between multiculturalism and nationalism is becoming increasing stark in Australia. What does "multicultural" really mean in our time? This was the topic of a panel discussion held at the Metropolis International Conference in Sydney. The pace of migration to Australia, the pressure points of multiculturalism and the economic and socio-political arguments for and against it were discussed by a panel including: Randa Abdel Fattah, author and a fellow at Macquarie University researching the impact of the War on Terror on Muslim and non-Muslim youth; George Megalogenis, journalist, political commentator and author; Ghassan Hage, author and professor of Anthropology and Social Theory at the University of Melbourne; Andrew Markus, foundation research professor of Jewish Civilisation at Monash University and Fellow of the Academy of Social Science in Australia; Nancy DiTomaso, author and Distinguished Professor of Management and Global Business at Rutgers Business School Newark and New Brunswick, in the Pratt Foundation; and Linda Burney, a former NSW Government minister in several portfolios, and the first Indigenous person to be elected to the NSW Parliament and later the Australian House of Representatives. It was chaired by ABC journalist ***EMMA ALBERICI.***

EA: The minister [for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs, David Coleman] recently said the success of Australia is built on multiculturalism. He said: "Those that play by the rules do well here." I wanted to get everyone's take on that comment.

GH: The problem is that your rules might be very different from my rules. The problem with that reductionist language is that it describes something very complex. People make their contribution in different ways.

EA: I wanted to ask you about the language used, because the minister was saying that people predominantly should come here to make rather than take a contribution.

RAF: That's a typical speech about multiculturalism where migrants are valued purely in terms of their contribution. One often hears that Australia is a successful multicultural society, the greatest country on earth, that multiculturalism is working well. Yet those arguments seem disconnected from the reality of what it means to have a truly equitable, multicultural society. If we are so successful, why is it that less than 20 members of parliament [out of 200] and only 5 percent of our CEOs come from CALD [culturally and linguistically diverse] communities? Why only one vice-chancellor in Australia is not from an Anglo background? There is that idealisation about what multiculturalism stands for, but equal opportunity and access is left out of the discourse.

EA: Linda, you mentioned that you and the minister have neighbouring electorates where migrants are disproportionately represented. How do you balance that, particularly when you talk about promoting multiculturalism against the needs of all the Australian community.

LB: The minister and I share electorate boundaries. Between the two electorates we have the highest Chinese population in the country, and other [ethnic] populations. As an MP you are absolutely conscious that those are the people who trust you and will re-elect you to the parliament and you ensure you are absolutely respectful and attend public events the various communities organise. You support the right of people to keep their stories, their dreams, their culture, their language and pass it on to their children, always in the context of the Australian society.

EA: There was also a conversation about a disconnect between the profile of those migrant students who go to our selective schools, and how that doesn't translate into leadership and positions of power in this country.

LB: if you go to any selective school or elite school, you go to those classrooms and students are from the Subcontinent, mostly from Asia, particularly China and India, but you do not see that reflected in the boardrooms or in parliament. We have to recognise that we are doing a bad job of it. These bright, capable young students in the classrooms are not getting a fair go

GM: First I need to explain to the audience that the title of the documentary Making Australia Great preceded [Donald Trump's] trademark of "Make America Great Again". In the show, former prime minister John Howard goes to his former selective high school in Bankstown. The scene shows Howard walking into a very multicultural school. The students can see with their own eyes that even he was comfortable with the cultural diversity he found there. He spoke about his time at the school during the 1950s, when there were mostly northern Europeans and some Greeks.

There is a very clear pattern over half a generation after the arrival of the European migrant wave in the 1950s when the Australian-born kids were the under-achievers while many migrant students did well. In the 1950s it was the Australian-born kids of Jewish extraction that arrived after World War II, children of refugees, then from the 1960s the Greeks and Italians and in the 1990s the Vietnamese.

When you look at what is successful about the Australian model is that the achievements of Australian kids of CALD communities is off the chart compared with the rest of the world. We are one of the few countries where if you measure your peer group, the over-achievers you find are kids from CALD communities. Yet the federal parliament does not look like that. Since Whitlam only two prime ministers were born overseas, Julia Gillard and Tony Abbot.

The level of success has been extraordinary and we can be proud of it. There are lessons for the rest of the world. But it is time parliaments, boardrooms and institutions were filled with members of CALD communities, which is where most of the talent is.

... by 1946 only 10 percent of the population was born overseas. Five of that 10 percent was from Britain, so that is the least-diverse Australia we had outside of the First Fleet and Australia had the worst-performing economy in 50 years.

EA: Given what Linda, George and Randa have said, why the rise of nationalism ? What is driving it? From any dispassionate view of the evidence, we should be anything but concerned about multiculturalism and migration.

GH: From my research on migration around the world, I found that Australian Lebanese migrants who return to Lebanon, they plant an Australian flag on their garden and say "Australia is the best place in the world." So Lebanese returning from Australia seem to be nationalistic. The only defining element about this nationalism is that these are not white people and are not talking about the need to follow any rules. It is a type of nationalism free of this kind of pressure which is the biggest problem for social cohesion in Australia. Every time we talk about migration, we talk about social cohesion. There is no data that demonstrates that migration is the biggest problem for social cohesion in Australia. But there is plenty of data that shows that white nationalism is the biggest problem for social cohesion. We should be discussing why [white] nationalism is a problem for social cohesion rather than multiculturalism.

RAF: I often visit schools and lead workshops about

what it means to be Australian growing up in the context of the War on Terror. When I ask them the question about what it means to be Australian, I see a great difference in the way students respond to that question in predominantly Muslim areas compared with other schools. Australian-born Muslim students don't know what it means to be Australian. One response is very poignant. They said: "I don't know what it means to be Australian because the rules keep changing." It encapsulated the biggest problems with identity in this country. We keep moving the goalposts. One knows what the rules are and what happens when you break them. But when you speak out and don't play by the rules of "whiteness", you encounter a form of structural racism that attempts to contain your agency, and that is when you see the break in identity. It worries me, what is happening to an entire generation of young people who want to belong to the country where they were born and raised yet don't know how to belong, because every time they want to belong in a way that it is respectful of their own agency, identity and personality, they are quickly shut down by the normative rules of white nationalism. That is a huge problem.

EA: I'll return to issues of identity and what it means to be Australian, but now I want to talk to Dr DiTomaso about something that she has been thinking about a lot – that the economic prosperity of the host nation that is almost guaranteed by migration.

NDT: There is much research in the discussion of multiculturalism that contrasts with colour blindness. In general dominant groups say "we are all the same, we should be all one together". So it is difficult to talk about inequality. One thing I want to address in my study is why racial inequality in the US continues to be so pervasive, yet whites were not particularly concerned about that. So I researched how people got jobs, and what I found was that it wasn't what whites did to non-whites, but what they did for other whites. Whites helped whites get jobs and that is what produced inequality, not so much whites trying to keep blacks out of jobs.

EA: Could I just pick on that? When I was a European correspondent and Norway wanted to have 40 percent women on [company] boards, the politicians opposed the way a chairman chose board members. He would go to his own networks – the golf club, the dinner party circle – and ask people that looked like them if they knew anyone that could be appointed. So it wasn't about exclusion, but favouritism.

NDT: This is an issue. It is not just about representation: getting to be part of a board is extremely lucrative, you get stock options, you get paid a substantial amount, so when you help your friends get into a board you are also enriching them. It's about putting people in positions of privilege. In the past seven decades the West which has become more prosperous, which has facilitated women in the labour force and has also allowed families to invest more in the fewer children they now have.

So in Western countries white population growth in particular has been flat. Australia and many countries in the developed world would be substantially poorer if they hadn't had immigration in the past few decades – and immigration has to come from non-white areas. Donald Trump made a very rude comment about why [the US] didn't have Norwegian immigrants. The reason is Norwegians do not want to migrate to the US. America's population growth will have to come from the developing world: the economic viability of the country depends on them. And the footnote to that is that many countries, including Australia, want skilled migrants. As countries become more prosperous people from all types of backgrounds will need services, and in order to supply services migrants – skilled, but also unskilled – are needed. The prosperity and quality of life of a country depends on immigration.

EA: Andrew Markus, you are a researcher in this field. How big is racism in Australia?

AM: We have a good indication of that. We are probably talking about 10 percent of the adult population. This is quite large because it will be concentrated within certain demographics in certain regions. If you travel to certain parts of Australia, the rhetoric, the perceptions will be very different. We are a very diverse country now. The danger is if we talk in terms of negatives.

In terms of the opportunities the first generation of migrants had, if you look at data from the EU and see the barriers experienced by the first generation of migrants in European countries, you will see that we don't have those here.

Yes, there is a significant segment of the population that is intolerant of diversity, but the risk we face is that social media provides a platform for the intolerant that was not there previously.

EA: At one level it is a small minority, at another level it is a huge problem.

When you say it is 10 percent of the population how do you measure it?

Through different questions in surveys, we have a range, depending on the question, where a hard negative attitude might go from 5 percent to 40 percent. One of the characteristics of Australian society that is not true

of all societies is that we have a notion of the rules that is deeply embedded in our minds, but we don't embrace cultural diversity in any fundamental way. While we embrace it with food, festivals, dancing, we don't accept governments supporting cultural maintenance. If we ask in a survey, do you think government should support the cultures and traditions of migrants? A small percentage will agree with that, about 30 percent. We want to learn about other cultures, but we want other cultures to come towards us, we get very nervous when we see the maintenance of cultural diversity. For example, there are high levels of negativity towards Muslims: probably about 40 percent of people will say they feel negative or very negative about Muslims. I would say that according to research, the level of racism is about 10 percent.

NDT: We need to be careful about how we use the term "racism". Based on the work I have done, the ultimate white privilege is the privilege not to be racist, but still to benefit from racial inequality. Many whites have certain levels of privilege but will say they aren't racists, that they don't have any hostile feelings towards other races, so I would say we have to be very careful as to how we introduce ourselves into that conversation.

RAD: In conversations about race and racism we very often confuse prejudice with the structure of race. I just think it is laughable that and we are still wondering if Australia is a racist country. Australia was founded on dispossession. How can we think we are post-race when we still don't have a treaty with the First People of this country? Everything stems from that. I am a daughter of a dispossessed Palestinian father, a second-generation migrant. The same imperial power that stole the land from Indigenous people in this country set the stages for my father's country to be stolen from him. My mother came to this country from Egypt after the nationalisation of Egypt by Nasser, again by British interference in that region. I am very well aware that I am here because of the crimes of the British Empire. But I am here complicit in dispossession as well. It is wrong for us to focus on racism happening on a public bus or in the Outback. We need to go back to the structures that maintain whiteness and privilege in this country. The fact is that I go to classrooms and students tell me they don't know much about Indigenous culture and that they are learning about European history only. That is racism. That is what we need to confront.

EA: The polls say that by May next year Labor will be in government. What do we need to do to address that federal issue?

LB: There is a lot that has been done. There are things I want people to understand. Is Australia from the first sunrise a multicultural nation? There are many Aboriginal nations that have been here since the beginnings of time and we have always been a multicultural nation. We all speak different languages, dream stories and have different cultures and connections. I think we have one of the most powerful institutions to bring about that sort of change and understanding – our education system. States and territories control curriculums, and there is a national curriculum, and there has been debate about why Western civilisation should be part of a course which was established to exclude Aboriginal studies. Every child coming through the educational system should get an understanding of the truth: it is about truth-telling. If we were a good government there would be a truth-telling commission established not only about First Peoples, but also about all of us. It would achieve one of three outcomes from the Uluru Statement from the Heart [May 2107], which were: constitutional reform, establishing an Indigenous voice in parliament; a truth-telling commission at a local level; and the establishment of the Makarrata Commission, which is about devolving treaties where people could explore together the true history of each area. If you look at places like Bingara in north-western NSW, where there was a commemoration to a massacre, that is one. There should be more across our nation, since this enables local people to explore the truth, learn about the whole story and recognise it in the way it should be recognised.

EA: George, you have looked at the "White Australia" policy, which was largely an attempt to improve the Australian economy and engender social cohesion. Did it achieve that?

GM: It is a big question. The answer is clearly not. We have literally a migrant personality that wants change by moving on, but it is prone to forgetting other people's stories. It is always seeking compliments, but when [they are] given it does not know how to accept them. It is a chip on the shoulder that Australians have. One thing to remember about the history of Australia in the late 19th century is that when Australia was most open was between 1835 to the late 1880s. Before the land bust and the depression in the late 1890s and 1900s, Australians were, per capita, the richest people on Earth and in the 50 or so years from 1835 to 1891 our capital income quadrupled. We passed the US in capital income. Open borders meant Chinese could easily come into the Northern Territory. What happened by the end of 1880s is that they started to get worried about the Chinese influx and also worried about migrant labour undermining Australian labour, because we were a very high-wage

The level of success has been extraordinary and we can be proud of it. There are lessons for the rest of the world. But it is time parliaments, boardrooms and institutions were filled with members of CALD communities, which is where most of the talent is.

society. So what motivates the establishment of the "White Australia" policy was not only stopping the Chinese coming over the border, but also to deport Pacific Island labourers that had been kidnapped from the South Seas and brought to plantations in Queensland. The theory was to maintain the living standards of the Australian worker – and it was something that both sides of the very nascent political parties would agree on.

What happens in the next 50 years is that by 1946 only 10 percent of the population was born overseas. Five of that 10 percent was from Britain, so that is the least-diverse Australia we had outside of the First Fleet and Australia had the worst-performing economy in 50 years. We also had falling birth rates and our population stagnated. This happened not only through the closing of borders, but also by the raising tariffs.

You would think that all things being equal, an Anglo-Irish society would be more cohesive than the open borders' society of the late 19th century, but when you look at Australia's political history – especially the conscription debates of the First World War – sectarianism takes off

and we enter the most divisive period with the most inflamed political rhetoric we ever heard from our federal politicians – the English versus the Irish. It is almost as if they didn't have any new arrivals to pick on and had nothing better to do that pick on each other. By the way, if Trump had any historical sense he would look at the Australian example of the early 20th century and he would realise he has been doing all this wrong and would open the borders again, because it is guaranteed when you close a country down it doesn't function as well as when you keep it open.

The economic argument I make here is by 2001 we are 10 years out of a recession, we avoided global recession in 2001 then later we avoided the global financial crisis, the unemployment rate goes from 4 percent to under 6 percent then comes back to 5 percent again. The political language that I see today in Australia has echoes of the late 19th century. It is about stopping this group and that group. While the immigration debate is about sustainability, infrastructure and population pressures, it is identical to the types of things that Henry Parkes was talking about the Chinese in the 1880s: "There are too many of them."

EA: Ghassan, it is worth reminding the audience of the research Nancy was quoting – that leading OECD economies are worse off without the contribution of migrants to economic growth. In the UK, if immigration had been frozen in 1990 the GDP in 2014 would have been around £175 billion lower, and in Germany €155 billion lower. The study finds that migrants continue to contribute disproportionately to innovation and economic growth. How do you explain the fear towards migration?

GH: The problem starts when we start thinking of migrants in terms of the value they bring to Australia. We do not judge local people according to how much they contribute to Australia. We don't say to someone, "I know you were born here but you have contributed zero dollars to the economy, so go away". The issue is that you create two principles for inclusion. Refugees have taken many risks to flee violence and get here. They are human beings like any other, and they are in Australia. Migrants and refugees should not have to legitimise their presence by producing numbers about their contribution. They should not have to justify themselves. This is the basis of the problem we have to deal with. There are people who have a sense of entitlement because of the colour of their skin.

EA: The minister made reference to the fact that social cohesion can be encouraged and assisted by the adoption of the local language. How important is it for new arrivals to learn the language and to what extend should they learn?

There is no data that demonstrates that migration is the biggest problem for social cohesion in Australia. But there is plenty of data that shows that white nationalism is the biggest problem for social cohesion.

RAF: It's one thing to concede citizenship to migrants and refugees, it is another to pontificate about the need to learn English. You provide the facilities for them to learn. The conversation about the need to do so does not help at all.

[Audience question]: What has changed in Australian policy with the focus on skilled migrants?

GM: There hasn't been a major shift. Today immigration policy is driven by the marketplace. The largest numbers of migrants today are from China and India. At the beginning of the new century migrants were 60 percent family reunion and 40 percent skilled. The person that makes a choice for someone to come to this country is not the minister, it is primarily the private sector, the education sector, institutions and state governments. It is an employment-driven migration program and since about 2001 the family reunion program has been flat, but skilled migration is going up. So the permanent settlers program has doubled over the past 15 years or so: from an average of up to 190,000 of permanent residents, 100,000 are skilled migrants who are predominantly from Asia.

While our families from Greece and Italy after World

War II would have started at the bottom and the success was the second generation. The first migrant generation achieved home ownership, they didn't go to university but their kids did. Since the switch to skilled migration, skilled migrants land at the middle or the top in the existing social structure rather than at the bottom.

This is something we had not experienced in Australia outside the gold rushes in the 1850s and is one of the unstated reasons for the backlash and why it is more subliminal than stated. People against immigration tend to talk about congestion and worry about property prices rising because they believe the new arrivals price them out of the property market, or the newly arrived kids are pushing theirs out of private schools. This is not only Australia's problem, because most migrants to developed countries are skilled migrants. For the UK's pro-Brexit voters, migration was the issue.

At the same time fertility rates are also important. We have reached the point in Australia where the retirees outnumber the people leaving the workforce, the local population is exiting the workforce and there aren't enough people to replace these workers. According to Peter McDonald's research, if you held migration at zero for the past five years there would never have been enough men entering the workforce to replace the Baby Boomers who left. On the female side of the labour force there would have been some job creation as female participation is rising, but now participation is tucked up at 65-70 percent and it is falling because more people are leaving than arriving. These are the types of complications we have when you look at the skills. There are gaps in the labour force that can only be filled by the new arrivals and new arrivals that start at the top.

We had 27 years without a recession and we are used to running big migration programs since World War II. Germany today is where we were in the 1950s, thinking about opening the door. Japan does not want to do it. The US is where we have been and don't want to do that any more

[Audience question]: It is hard for Middle East refugees and migrants coming from a culture built on community, rather than individualism. So for someone from the Middle East, what is multiculturalism about?

RAF: I often hear that question from young people. How are we expected to be? There are so many competing tensions and expectations. You are part of Australia, but if you do not speak English you are punished. My grandmother has lived here all her life, over 50 years, and her English is very poor but she identifies herself as an Australian Egyptian. She should not be treated in any different way. What you are talking about reflects the Neoliberal pressure of individualism. If you are not succeeding in this meritocratic society it is your fault, it's not because of whiteness and structural racism, it's not because of who you know or don't know, it's not because you lack networks of influence, it's not because of a lack access and opportunities – it's because you have not worked hard enough. This is what migrants and newly-arrived people often experience. When I speak with young refugee students this is the story that I get, they tend to say "we have so much potential, talent, energy and ambition, but the doors to opportunity are closed". They are told "you will succeed if you try". But one must acknowledge the glass ceiling and all the structures they need to tear down. I say to them, "anger is productive, it is about recognising, building solidarity with other communities also under this pressure. As Ghassan mentioned, anti-racism must come from a position where one says, "it is not just happening to me, I need to understand the structures of racism and the logic of race" and that helps.

EA: Is there a solution? Because the economics makes sense, but at the same time the cohesion cannot come from one side alone. It is not all about what makes the resident population happy. It has to be about what the incoming population feels, too.

GH: There is logic about the way a society functions. The issue is if discourses about multiculturalism are also supported by different political tendencies, then discourses are not only parallel but in conflict with one another. There tends to be two tendencies: one is welcoming of refugees and is infused with social justice; and another one that is devoid of social justice. If you link multiculturalism to social cohesion, regardless of whether you are for or against it, you have already succumbed to the defeat of social justice multiculturalism.

EA: Linda, is there any country in the world that has demonstrated best-practice behaviours from politics to accommodate the better integration of new arrivals?

LB: It is a very important point. If you don't have good political leadership on issues of identity, multiculturalism, helping communities grow and acceptance, then it is extremely difficult.

I don't recall Bill Shorten talking about immigration in economic terms.

I haven't heard many people talk in economic terms. What I think exists in Australia, and it is a reflection from what we have seen around the world, is a tendency

towards the Right and a belief that migration causes problems. I think it is a terrible situation for us to be in. Look at the number of refugees and the movement of people around the world and some of the horror that is going on, yet somehow international political leadership does not exist to address those issues.

[Audience question]: Multiculturalism has had a troubled history in my country, Canada. While policymakers consider it to be fundamental for prosperity and peace, multiculturalism has had varying degrees of acceptance in Canada. Migrants feel it doesn't address access and equity issues. In the current political context of right-wing populism, what change of direction would you suggest is needed to make common citizenship more meaningful?

RAF: One of the things missing in the discussion is why Western powers are ignoring the reasons why so many refugees are escaping to Western countries. I believe our direct involvement in the current wars and conflicts, through arm deals, are destroying other nations. That is why they flee. The fact that we are complicit in that is something that is missing in the current discourse. The idea that we are part of policies and arms deals that are destroying developing countries and then we complain to those people that dare to leave those countries to seek protection elsewhere. When we start to understand who we are as a nation, then we can start to talk about what it means to have a multicultural society.

There is so much idealisation about who we are as an Australian society, what values we represents – respect, prosperity, diversity and tolerance. The question is, at

The "White Australia" policy was not only stopping the Chinese coming over the border, but also to deport Pacific Island labourers that had been kidnapped from the South Seas and brought to plantations in Queensland.

what expense? And at whose expense? The last question by a Syrian refugee got me thinking about what right we have as a country to deny her access to opportunities when we are involved in wars that destroyed her country. We have no moral high ground to stand on, then we act as if we did.

NDT: Too often, when we talk about multicultural policies we focus too much on prejudice and getting along and don't address issues of the material realities across groups. What constitutes meaningful multiculturalism? From my view it will be a real representation of groups across different institutions, the rights that are available to each one and access to resources. When that occurs in such a way that who you are is not important, to me that would encompass a truly inclusive and diverse society. ꟿ

Compassion-focused therapy

Compassion improves our mental health and helps recovery from loss and trauma. This is the message Professor of Clinical Psychology ***DR PAUL GILBERT*** *delivered at a workshop organised by STARTTS in Sydney last February. Dr Gilbert is the author of The Compassionate Mind: A New Approach to Life's Challenges and Overcoming Depression. He spoke with Nooria Mehraby and Olga Yoldi.*

NM: How would you describe compassion-focused therapy? And what is different about it?

PG: Compassion-focused therapy helps clients to develop competencies to be compassionate with themselves and others. It involves understanding the nature of compassion, how it operates as a motive, how it evolves, the physiological parameters, and how to train people to practice compassion. In other words, compassion needs to be an important part of the engagement process with the client. It involves evidence-based processes, collaboration, guidance, building emotional tolerance, engaging in specific behavioural practices and mindfulness. Many therapists will say they try to be compassionate and that the relationship between the therapist and the patient must be empathic, it is true. Yet few use compassion as the focus of their therapy.

NM: How did it develop?

I was trained in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, where you help people be aware of the negative thoughts that are causing them difficulties, such as depression, feelings of being inferior or helplessness, then stand back and take a different perspective to help clients generate alternative thoughts that will help them feel better. We found that while some clients could generate alternative thoughts, their tone was still very hostile. So I realised we couldn't rely on people just changing their thoughts, we also had to change the emotional texture of their thoughts, and that proved to be more difficult than expected because clients just didn't want to do it. They resisted engaging in feelings of compassion because they perceived it as a sign of weakness.

Compassion-focused therapy gradually developed from the fact that many of our clients couldn't generate genuine compassionate undertones. When they tried to, they ran into all sorts of difficulties. Many clients hate themselves for being depressed and miserable. The role of the therapist is to focus on the tone, not only the content, and try to change the emotional tone to help clients engage with their own pain, their own emotions and be compassionate to the self.

OY: You mentioned in your presentation that some people change as they overcome their problems quite naturally, so when is therapy needed?

Not everyone needs therapy. Therapy is quite a recent invention. There are many approaches to help people with their minds. The Buddhist approach, which is more than 2000 years old, is about focusing and cultivating one's mind. We must not think that therapy is the only way in which people change, because people change in lots of different ways.

I am interested in the emotional systems that provide the basis of change. People come to therapy because of what they feel – anxiety, depression – not what they think. They will need therapy if they get stuck in their grieving process. Sometimes when the person feels ambivalent or angry towards the loved one who died and a sense of loss, that is a sign that the grieving process has got stuck and therapy can help. When traumatic events happen due to natural and man-made disasters, most people are best left to recover by themselves. If

they are still struggling a year later, have flashbacks and haven't settled down, those are indicators that perhaps it is time for them to get external help.

You also find that some people don't have the physiological resources to move on even though they have gone to the therapist. It is like getting fit. Some people will be able to climb a mountain, while others can't because they are unfit and need to get fit before they can do it. In the same way, we regulate our emotions not only cognitively but also by using a series of psychological systems. Some people need training to increase their abilities and understand how their frontal cortex works, so that they can stand back and find solutions to their problems based on compassion. Many clients find and suggest their own solutions. I like the way people can shift their mental state, their physiology and be able to move on. It is quite remarkable: they are quite courageous, but just get stuck along the way.

NM: You have spoken about grief and compassionate-focused therapy. How about complicated grief?

Complicated grief occurs when an anxious person with a dependent personality loses a partner who was his or her protector, the one that always made all the decisions. So when the loved one dies, the surviving partner must now face the world alone and can really struggle because there is nobody to take care of her or him. Another problem is unresolved ambivalence that can result in guilt. People say to me: "When I look back I should have done much more for my father, I should have been with him when he died." There are all kinds of problems that can make overcoming grief tricky.

If people feel anger they cannot really grieve. Here is an example of a woman who had anorexia and was living with her mother and they were having constant arguments. Then one day out of the blue the mother was taken ill and was rushed to the hospital and my client was busy and didn't go to the hospital and obviously she did not anticipate anything serious was about to happen. Unfortunately her mother died overnight. When my client got to the hospital she was already dead. She couldn't get it out of her mind that her mother had died alone, so what we did was work the anger she felt against herself and towards the hospital because she thought the hospital had made mistakes as her mother was fine the night before she died. She was getting flashbacks of her mother being in the hospital dead, alone. We had to work through those emotions, and the next thing was allowing herself to work on forgiveness.

I helped her through the flashbacks. I suggested to do a video play. I said: "Just imagine now that you are with your Mum and what happens next is the undertakers come, then there is the ceremony and the cremation. I just want to make you work through that process. Now just imagine your mother could come back to you and talk to you. What would you mother say to you? How would she like you to live your life now?" She then did this imaginary dialogue with her mother, then I said: "How would your mother like you to remember her? Would your mother like you to remember her as a dead person? Or as a vibrant, caring mother?" She said: "Yes, my mother would like me to remember her, at her best." I said: "That is the most compassionate thing you could do for anybody, to remember them as they would like to be remembered." She cried a lot. Then she created images of her mother as she would like to be remembered. That facilitated a lot of grieving, so rather than getting stuck on the arguments they had and feelings of guilt, she was able to say every time she looked at her mother: "I will remember you as you would like to be remembered".

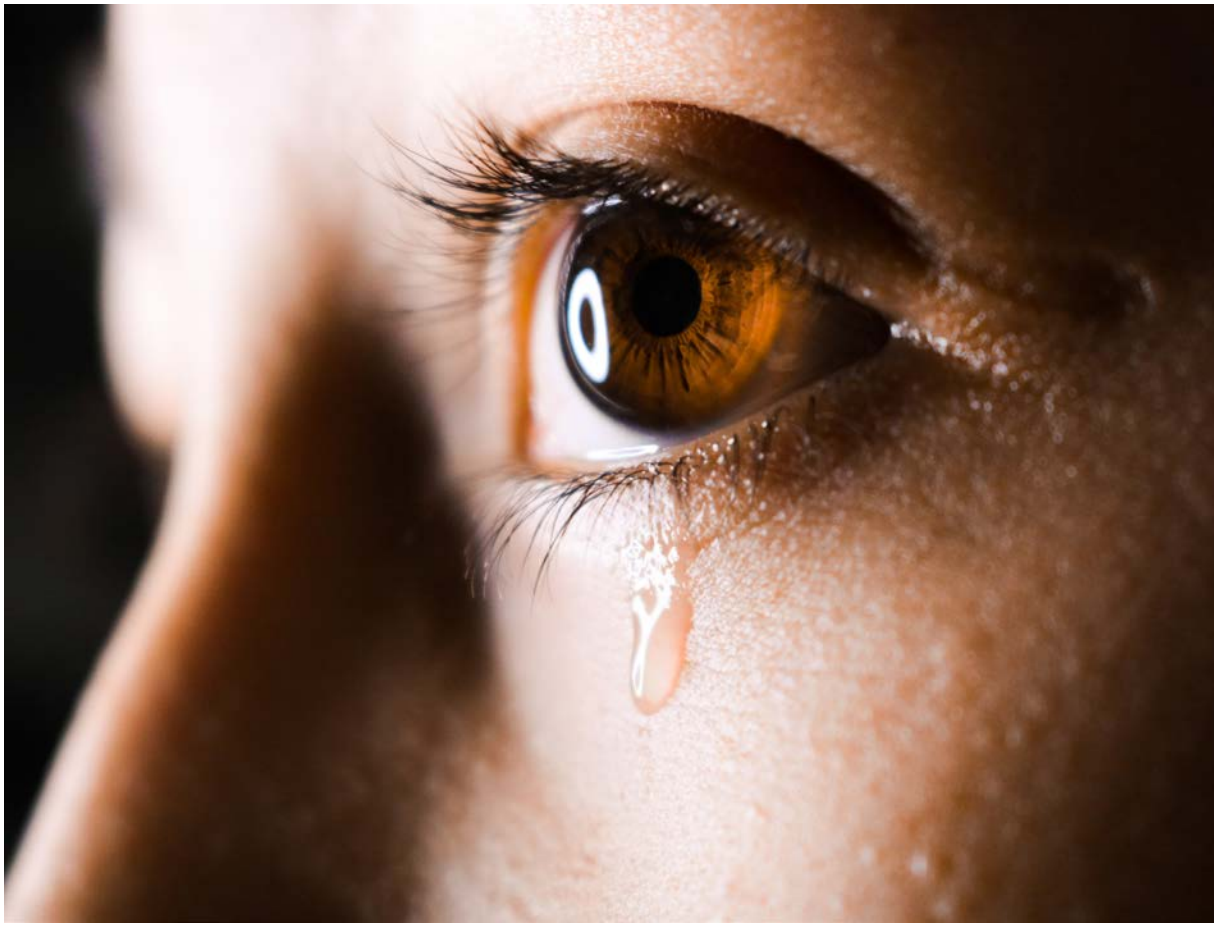
OY: You mentioned the human mind can be terribly dangerous.

The human mind is the most dangerous thing we have. Psychologist Rick Hanson says the mind is like Velcro for the negative and Teflon for the positive. The negative sticks more – because the mind is all about threats, which is important from an evolutionary point of view – but we can get trapped ruminating about what has happened to us. We have a multi-mind. This is a mind that has different programs, a lot of motivational systems planted into it, and can take you into different directions.

When people say "I am trying to find the real me, you are wasting your time", there is no real you. It doesn't exist. The mind is like water: it can contain a poison or a medicine.

The brain can do amazing things, we have the capacity for language and human awareness, but sometimes our thoughts can drive us mad. When it chooses, the mind can be vindictive, as our long history of tribal violence shows. Millions have been killed by other humans. Tribalism is the curse of humanity and right-wing parties play on it all the time. Now we don't have politicians who are orientated to be peace-makers. At the moment many are creating tribal boundaries, which is terrible. Brexit is a good example.

The history of humanity shows there is a dark side. I am interested in the Roman Empire, the cruelty of it. The Roman games were horrendous. Thousands of people were killed in the Coliseum just to entertain others. They had



to be killed slowly. It is unimaginable something like that happening today.

OY: Why do you think there is so much depression and suffering? Is it because most people live in urban competitive environments?

Yes, and also environments where some people are very poor in a sea of plenty. Depression is much more common in poor communities than in wealthy communities. Depression is more common in women due to a lack of external employment, a lack of confidence, being trapped in the house with small children with nobody to talk to, with an absent husband who is gambling or drinking, with no family support and struggling on their own. Certain types of lifestyles increase the risk of depression. Loneliness is a huge issue, as is the sense of disconnection. More young people are now living alone and have only short-term relationships.

When we are confronted with the enormous suffering in the world, we question why we suffer. We need to explore suffering in terms of the flow of life and our common struggles. You are built by your genes and your genes are built to do certain things. You did not design your brain. It has been built for you, not by you. You did not choose to have a brain that triggers rage and depression. It is not your fault, so try to work out what would be helpful. I would say that while life is full of suffering, what makes it bearable are the joys that we bring in our relations with each other.

OY: Should children be trained to manage their emotions? And should this be part of our education system, because once we are adults it is more difficult?

There are many approaches in which this can be done through mindfulness, emotional resilience and emotional education and training for children. It would be important to build it into the school curriculum. This way bullying could be better addressed and children could learn how to be respectful and compassionate towards themselves and others. Unfortunately, we only teach them to compete and prepare them to be successful in a career. We don't teach how to be compassionate

You did not choose to have a brain that triggers rage and depression. It is not your fault, so try to work out what would be helpful.

citizens, how to care for others and themselves. We need to teach children that the mind is very tricky and can easily take them to dark places.

NM: Most of our clients present with survival guilt for having left family and friends behind. Some feel a desire for revenge and hatred towards the perpetrators or the regime that caused so much suffering. How can you use compassion or forgiveness in these cases?

There is some wonderful work by Dr Robert Enright, the director of the International Forgiveness Institute in the US. He did work with Holocaust survivors and found three different groups. The first had forgiven the Nazis because it was part of their religion, they believed God wanted them to forgive their enemies, but they were struggling and had difficulties with it.

The second group had not forgiven the Nazis 30 years later and they were really struggling with it.

The third group had forgiven, because they realised that if they didn't forgive they would forever be chained to the Nazis so decided to free themselves from those early experiences. For those individuals it was the freedom from the self which was essential to move on, which is the great spirit of forgiveness.

In some cases people believe that if they forgive the enemy they will betray the memory of the people that were killed. They would say: "I cannot forgive them because that would be a betrayal. I have to keep fighting to keep the memory of the people alive." As a therapist you need to work that dynamic of treason, perpetrator and forgiveness, the fears clients may have that if the victim knew they had forgiven the perpetrator they would feel betrayed. The therapist has to work in that triangle and again there is a lot of grieving.

OY: Do you think the relationship with oneself is the most challenging?

Yes It is. Every day I see the extraordinary suffering some people go through and their courage. The most important thing is the wisdom of compassion. It is the emotional understanding of their problems that contributes to the healing process, but it is a tricky and a bumpy road. The key issue is to understand that the mind has different motivational systems. It is important to understand the patterns of brain activity and then getting these patterns into position to better regulate threats and emotions.

NM: What are the key messages participants will take from your training workshop?

I would advise them to spend some time creating an image of how they would like to be best in their practice. In sport it's the same. You have a vision of the shot you want to play in tennis and you practise it. If you don't know what shot to play you cannot practise it. If you say "today I am going to practise patience" and whenever I notice myself becoming impatient I practise and breathe, or "today I am going to practise tolerance and whenever I notice intolerant thoughts coming into my mind I am going to practise bringing myself back to the position of tolerance". The key thing is having some kind of idea about what it is you are trying to become, because generally speaking we are not taught how to practise and build these qualities into habits. Your mind is like a garden: if you leave it alone it will grow, but you may not like the way it turns out. Your mind will grow, change and develop according to what you do with your life. But if you don't practise cultivating the good in you, you might not like the way your mind turns out. It is the same with our bodies: if you let it go you might not like the way it turns out, but if you spend time cultivating it through a good lifestyle you may have a nice body.

I would say therapy is not an easy profession. People come with pain. Focus on what is helpful. One must choose to live as a compassionate person, adopting the motto: "I will live my life to be helpful, not hurtful, therefore I need to be mindful that I am being kind to myself and others." ℟

HUMAN RIGHTS

***NYADOL NYUON** is a Sudanese lawyer that grew up in a refugee camp. She told her story at the 2018 Refugee Ball organised by STARTTS.*

Let hope triumph over horror

On Sunday we were sitting around my older sister's living room, when her phone rang. I noticed she had answered it with the same laughter she normally greets my little sister with: "How are you doing?" Shortly after she went quiet and began to cry. I asked her what was wrong and she looked at me and said: "Grandma". I knew from how she had said it that my Grandma had died in Ethiopia.

You will see, as I give this speech, pictures of my grandmother kneeling and praying. I took them in 2013. That was the first time I had seen her in 20 years.

When I shared these pictures with the organisers of this event, she was still here and I thought I had time. I thought I still had time to learn more about her after 20 years of separation. I thought I still had time for my children to see her, so that she can bless them and she can love them. I thought there was still time for my children to learn about this formidable woman – this fierce woman, who had raised 20 grandchildren and now had 10 great-grandchildren. I had hoped she would hear the voice of my husband and the laughter of my child, but none of that will happen. Instead, my grandmother is dead and she died without any of her immediate family around her.

Mostly, I blame war and conflict. War had robbed my grandmother of a dignified death. It has scattered most of her children and grandchildren around the world so that we could not wrap our arms around her in her final moments and we could not bury her. We will never get to see her for the last time and the only thing that will be left is a grave marking where she laid.

This is what war does. It normalises what should not be normal. We are here today because of what war and conflict does – what it does to nations, cities, towns and communities; what it does to families and, in the case of torture and harm, what it does to individuals. The wounds it leaves behind can go so deep that they shatter the most inner pieces of who we are.

We are here to remember the humanity of those whose humanity may have been diminished, and to support and find ways to help restore that humanity. It is the reason I accepted the invitation to speak here because I believe stories are important and if we tell stories well, we are able to change perceptions and create an environment where empathy can thrive. And if by telling my story I can assist in this way, then it is worth telling it.

I have to admit, however, that I am still quite nervous whenever I am invited to these events, because it's a little over a decade ago since my family and I arrived in Australia. So often when I find myself in a room like this, with much more distinguished people than I am, I often feel that maybe this is just a dream.

Having been born and raised in refugee camps, nothing in my early circumstances would have suggested I would be standing here today. It is never lost on me that only 13 years ago my family and I lived in an overcrowded refugee camp in northern Kenya; and only 13 years ago many of my dreams and goals were distant and appeared impossible.

Thirteen years ago I was stateless because since my birth, the life of my community, my family and I had been disrupted by years of war and for a long time we knew no other life. We were considered to be displaced people – then homeless people – without a country to protect us or claim us. Like many people my age, I ended up in Kakuma refugee camp where I spent most of my childhood. That refugee camp had no running water, no electricity and barely met our basic needs for survival. My family depended on food rations distributed fortnightly by the United Nations.

My mother – a single mother of seven children – was desperate to get us out. I believe my mum never wanted to leave her people and her culture behind, but she knew that without escaping the conditions of Kakuma, we would never have a future. It is not an exaggeration to say my mother sacrificed her life – at least the life she would have had – so that we could grow up with some dignity and hope; and the thing she wanted most was for us to have an education.

I attended Kakuma secondary college, one of the three secondary colleges serving a refugee camp of over 90,000 people. I recall sitting in a classroom of 60 to 80 students crunching each other on small desks, trying to see the blackboard. There were only four girls in my class and I was the loudest. I think I am still the loudest in most rooms. But it was not the overcrowding in the overheated classrooms that was the main problem. It was the fact that each day in suffocating heat and occasional dust storms, I would walk for nearly an hour to get to school and my mum thought that was enough, so she bought me a bicycle. You have to remember that we had little, very little, but still my mother decided to buy me a bicycle and for me, it felt like she took food from the table and placed it as wheels beneath me so that I could fly. It was a moment I recall often, a moment that shows the length that any parents would go to, to make sure that their children survived even in the harshest of conditions. It was also my mum who had the fortitude to apply to bring us to Australia and in doing so, she was leaving her language, her identity and her status behind to give us a new life.

We commenced our application to come here in about 2000 and as we waited to hear from Australian immigration officials. I recall my mother singing Gospel songs and praying each night, pleading that our application be approved. Sometimes I sang along with her, but mostly I listened silently waiting for my turn to persuade God of the wisdom of letting my family come to Australia.

When my mum stopped completely and had prayed and gone to bed, I then took over. I had waited until Mum had finished singing and praying because I believed that God would be in a better mood. When all was quiet, so quiet that I could hear my thoughts, I began the negotiations and I pleaded and promised God that if I made it to Australia, I would get a university education, I would be a very, very good Christian and I would always be grateful and never complain.

I also made the worst promise of my life, which was that I would always faithfully listen to my mum. I was desperate as you can see and at the time, I was in my final year of secondary school and I knew that if I didn't get out of that camp it was going to be very hard for me to pursue further education. There was no university in Kakuma and I knew that Mum could not afford to pay for a university out of the camp, but I was very lucky. I stand here as one of the very lucky people because I did finally make it to Australia and I did get a university education. However, I have found myself complaining when the Melbourne trams run about two minutes or so late. So, I haven't really stuck to all my promises, have I?

Since arrival, our lives have changed dramatically. Within 13 years we have moved from being stateless and refugees to enjoying the privilege and protections of being Australian citizens. I now have a passport and I recall a moment at Melbourne Airport where one of the immigration officers looked at my Australian passport and said: "Welcome home." I finally had a home. Within those 13 years, I have moved from sitting in overcrowded classrooms to graduating from the University of Melbourne and on May 2016 I achieved a long-held dream of becoming an Australian lawyer, something that I had wanted since I was 14 years old.

I know very well that all these dreams would have not been possible without the generosity of so many people who have supported me since arrival; but more importantly, they are dreams that would have not been possible without the opportunity to have resettled in Australia – an opportunity that I am well aware millions of people around the world are hoping for.

I share my story today because I think it demonstrates what many refugee stories have shown before, which is that given a small window of opportunity, many will turn it into a lifetime of achievements. In the current political climate across the world, where people fleeing persecution are vilified and prevented from seeking asylum, are regarded with suspicion and subjected to punishment, we cannot lose sight of the fact that it is people just like me – people, not numbers, not statistics or headlines – that we are talking about here today.

I have often wondered about the children in detention centres in Australia who would, if given the opportunity like me, make their big, impossible dreams come true. How many like many refugees in the past could have become businessmen or doctors who might find the next cure for cancer, or change this very country for the best? I wonder about how many never get the chance to try and instead remain those terrible numbers and statistics.

I know from personal experience that many refugees take the dangerous road to safety, that many cross dangerous and unpredictable seas for the chance of having their children thrive; and as put so eloquently by the British Somali poet Warsan Shire, this is not an easy decision to make because as she writes:

"No one would leave home unless home is the mouth of a shark. No one would leave home unless home chased you to the shore. No one leaves home until home is a sweaty voice in your ear saying: 'leave, run away from me now. I don't know what I have become, but I know that anywhere is safer than here."

You only run for the border when you see your whole country running as well, fire under your feet and hot blood in your belly. You have to understand no one put their children in a boat unless the water is safer than the land."

What Warsan Shire writes is painfully true, but so is the resilience of so many refugees. I stand here today as an example of what the generosity of a nation can afford someone who was once considered stateless. I stand here today as a statement of what, given a chance, many can do and are able to achieve. I hope for those who continue to do this very difficult job – many of you sitting in this room today – that events like this are able to renew your spirit and inspiration to keep doing this job. For we must keep on speaking for and on behalf of those whose voice remain unheard.

I say purposely unheard, because everyone has a voice. However, we still live in a world where we are yet to value all voices equally. We must continue to advocate for the displaced, for the vulnerable, because in the current environment it is vital that we do not lose hope.

I often recall a quote by one of my favourite authors,

"No one leaves home unless home is the mouth of a shark. No one would leave home unless home chased you to the shore". Warsan Shire

Toni Morrison, when times are dark and I feel a bit defeated, and it goes: "There is no time for despair, no place for self-pity, no need for silence, no room for fear. We speak, we write, we do language. That's how civilisations heal."

I also urge you to remember that those who continue to do this work and who are here today, that we are made for these times and here again I borrow the words and language from people who say it better than I can. I want to end with an encouraging essay by Clarisa Bencomo, where she writes, "My friends, do not lose hope. We were made for these times. I have heard from so many recently who are deeply and properly bewildered. They are concerned about the state of affairs in the world now. Ours is a time of almost daily astonishment and often righteous rage over the latest degradation of what matters most to civilised and visionary people.

"You are right in your assessment. Some have aspired too well in doing acts so heinous against children and elders, everyday people – the poor, the unguarded, the helpless; yet I urge you and ask you gently, to please not spend your spirit dry by bewailing these difficult times. Especially, do not lose hope, most particularly because, the fact is that we were made for these times. In any dark time, there is a tendency to veer towards venting of how much is wrong or unmended in the world. Do not focus on that. There is a tendency, too, to fall into being weakened by dwelling what is outside your reach, by what cannot yet be. Do not focus there. They are spending the winds without raising the sails. Ours is not the task of fixing the entire world at once, but of stretching out to mend the parts of the world that are within our reach.

"Any small, calm thing that one soul can do to help another soul, to assist some portion of this poor suffering world, will help immensely. It is not given to us to know which acts will cause the critical mass to tip towards an enduring good. There will always be times when you feel discouraged. I, too, have felt despair many times in my life, but I do not keep a chair for it. I will not entertain it. It is not allowed to eat from my plate."

I hope you will forgive me if I sound so aspirational. I have tried to share my story, not because it's the most important story or the most interesting story, but merely to demonstrate how people who come from some of the harshest situations can rise and I think it's partly what we are doing here today – to remember those who have survived and to find ways of making sure we help others in the future.

I am also aspirational because in some ways I am still that refugee girl. I am still that child who used to lie on her back daydreaming about the impossible, yet I stand here having had the great fortune of having many of those impossible dreams and goals come true. For to be a refugee, in so many ways, is to still have hope in the face of crushing impossibilities.R

Najeeba Wazefadost of ANCORW speaks at the Global Summit of Refugees in Geneva in June 2018. PHOTO: Riccardo Pareggiani.

Refugees advocate for their rights

Years of advocacy by the Refugee Council of Australia for greater community representation in international policy discussions has culminated in the Global Refugee led Network.
***PAUL POWER** reports.*

When 13 refugee representatives from six continents gathered in Amsterdam in January this year for a three-day meeting, they knew they were making history.

They had travelled from Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Turkey, Algeria, Uganda, Germany, Netherlands, Argentina and the United States to discuss the next steps for their nascent international movement of refugee-led advocacy.

Seven months earlier in June 2018, the group worked together as a steering committee to organise the first Global Summit of Refugees in Geneva. This summit, held on the two days before the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 2018 Annual Consultations with NGOs, brought 72 refugee advocacy leaders from 27 countries together to discuss how refugees could have a greater collective voice in decisions affecting them.

The outcome of the Amsterdam meeting was the Global Refugee-led Network (GRN) – the first body initiated and led by refugees to promote the advocacy goals of the world's refugee communities. The decision was timely, coming just a month after 181 United Nations member states had voted at the UN General Assembly to adopt the Global Compact on Refugees, which recognises refugees' rights to be seen as important stakeholders in decisions about refugee policy and programs.

The formation of the GRN is a beginning for refugee-led advocacy, but it is also the culmination of years of work in which refugee representatives from Australia have played a critical role.

One Australian politician who inadvertently played a small role in encouraging international refugee-led advocacy was Philip Ruddock. As Australia's immigration minister, he attended UNHCR's Executive Committee meeting in Geneva in October 2001 to defend not only his decision two months earlier to turn away asylum seekers rescued by the MV Tampa, but also to promote Australia's hard-line response to people seeking refuge as a model for other countries. This prompted a group of Australian NGOs to decide to fight back by actively participating in the UNHCR's Annual Consultations with NGOs, then held just before the Executive Committee meeting, to ensure that the true impacts of Mr Ruddock's policies were understood by the world.

From 2002, a group of Australian NGOs, including the Australian National Committee on Refugee Women (ANCORW) and the Centre for Refugee Research (CRR) at the University of New South Wales, began participating actively in the UNHCR Annual Consultations with NGOs. Led by Associate Professor Eileen Pittaway, the CRR team supported ANCORW to take the concerns of Australia's African refugee communities to Geneva through Olivia Wellesley-Cole (2002-05) and Juliana Nkrumah (2003). In 2004 CRR supported the participation of Phun Lal and Naw K'nyaw Paw of the Women's League of Burma.

When I attended the 2006 UNHCR Annual Consultations with NGOs a few months after joining the staff of the Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA), Tenneh Kpaka, a member of Sydney's Sierra Leonean community, was representing ANCORW and appeared to be the only person of refugee background at a global gathering of 329 NGO representatives meeting to discuss refugee policy. Despite our limited resources, we at RCOA decided that we would do everything we could to work with ANCORW, CRR and others to ensure a stronger voice for refugee communities at this important annual gathering.

This need was spotlighted by RCOA's regular consultations with refugee communities. While these talks were convened primarily to gather views on Australia's refugee program, we heard regularly from refugee community members wanting to raise significant protection concerns on behalf of refugees in Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Dialogue with UNHCR was one way in which these issues could be raised. We knew that our collective advocacy would be more credible and effective if we, as RCOA staff, worked in partnership with refugee community representatives as advocates.

In 2007, RCOA supported Tony Ogeno Oyet from Adelaide's South Sudanese community and Dr Melika Sheikh-Eldin, an AMES staff member of Eritrean refugee background, to participate in that year's UNHCR consultations. They joined four other refugee representatives supported by Australian organisations: Tenneh Kpaka

and Nava Malula of ANCORW, Aguil Deng of Canberra's South Sudanese community and Blooming Night Zan of the Karen Women's Organisation. Tenneh spoke on a panel discussion about forgotten refugees and three of the Australian refugee women representatives were invited to read the formal NGO statements at the following week's UNHCR Executive Committee meeting – new ground being broken at both events.

In subsequent years RCOA, CRR and ANCORW worked together to support delegates and speakers of refugee background at significant UNHCR events. Our expectation was that NGOs in other countries would do the same, but progress was slow. Some even questioned why refugees were being invited to an event aimed at NGO representatives.

In 2010 and 2011, CRR worked with UNHCR to hold a series of dialogues with refugee and internally displaced women in camps and urban settings in Thailand, India, Jordan, Uganda, Zambia, Colombia and Finland, before bringing 10 refugee women representatives to Geneva to present to UNHCR's Standing Committee meeting and its Annual Consultations with NGOs. This event, held to mark the 60th anniversary of the Refugee Convention, was unprecedented. Never before had refugee women come directly from refugee and IDP camps to Geneva to speak directly and so powerfully to members of UNHCR's governing body.

"We are really shifting from refugees being seen just as beneficiaries to the understanding that refugees need to be part of the solution". Arash Bordbar.

While the impressive advocacy of the UNHCR's 2011 Dialogues with Refugee Women clearly illustrated the impact of refugee representatives in international advocacy, it seemed that interest in supporting refugee representation at UNHCR meetings was generated mostly in Australia. Each year the number of participating refugee representatives from Australia grew as some settlement organisations began sending staff of refugee background and interested refugee representatives sought their own funding to travel to Geneva. From 2016 refugee-led organisations in New Zealand and the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN) began sending refugee representatives to the UNHCR consultations every year, influenced in both cases by Australian NGOs.

In 2011-12, Australia chaired the main international dialogue on refugee resettlement and worked with UNHCR to organise the 2012 Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR). Having participated in this event for years, RCOA believed that the talks between UNHCR, resettlement states, NGOs and the International Organization for Migration lacked the essential voice of people who had been through the resettlement process. We proposed to our co-hosts, Australia's Immigration Department, that Australia hosts a meeting in Melbourne in 2012 to showcase the post-arrival support offered by Australia to resettled refugees, while including refugee representatives as key contributors to the discussions.

The four designated refugee representatives all brought experience of working in settlement services – Wah Wah Naw from STARTTS, Daniel Zingifuaboro of Access Community Services in Queensland and Wafa Reyhani and Plaw To Poe Kunoo of AMES. Their input to the Melbourne meeting made such an impression to UNHCR that the ATCR dialogue partners agreed to include refugee representatives as delegates and speakers in all future ATCR meetings. This was a breakthrough: the first annual UNHCR meeting at which refugees were formally represented.

As UNHCR turned its attention to refugee youth at its 2015 annual consultations, the involvement of refugee representatives in its meetings began to change. Two refugee representatives from Australia featured as speakers on youth issues in the 2015 consultations – Dor Akech Achiek and Najeeba Wazefadost, with Najeeba giving the closing address on a panel flanked by UNHCR's two Assistant High Commissioners. In October 2015, UNHCR and the Women's Refugee Commission launched the Global Refugee Youth Consultations (GRYC), a process that involved 1267 young people in consultations in 22 countries over nine months. It culminated in a three-day global consultation in Geneva in June 2016, involving 24 youth representatives from the national consultations. The youth representatives then played a leading role in the 2016 UNHCR Annual Consultations with NGOs which followed. Arif Hazara from Australia was chosen to speak on behalf of refugee youth at the closing session, to an audience of close to 600 NGO delegates from 90 countries.

John Roc of Australian Karen Organisation speaks at the Global Summit of Refugees in Geneva in June 2018. PHOTO: Riccardo Pareggiani.

While the GRYC was a one-off event, UNHCR's involvement of refugee youth in its meetings was not. Since then, refugee youth delegates have been invited to Geneva to participate in many events, such as meetings of UNHCR's governing body, the annual High Commissioner's Dialogue and meetings to discuss the Global Compact on Refugees. In 2017, UNHCR chose to formalise the representation of refugee youth with the formation of the UNHCR Global Youth Advisory Council. Arash Bordbar, an Iranian refugee who had been resettled to Sydney from Malaysia only two years earlier, was chosen as the new body's co-chair with Foni Joyce Vuni, a South Sudanese refugee living in Kenya.

While the GRYC process was underway, RCOA was promoting talks in Australia about the role refugee-led advocacy networks could play in national discussions on refugee policy. From 2014, RCOA hosted local discussions with refugee communities in Melbourne and regional Victoria about the issues important to them and options for enabling communities to work together. In April 2016 RCOA and STARTTS hosted a similar forum in Sydney, at which the idea of forming an advocacy network of representatives of different refugee communities was discussed. Delegates to this meeting agreed to meet again the following month and at this second meeting the NSW Refugee Communities Advocacy Network (RCAN) was formed. The following week, RCOA hosted a meeting in Melbourne of refugee delegates from across Victoria at which the decision was taken to form a Victorian RCAN. In subsequent months, both RCAN groups worked on formalising their structures, developing advocacy plans and cooperating on national advocacy initiatives.

For nearly 20 years, Australia's Immigration Department had hosted a twice-yearly dialogue with national NGO networks on refugee issues. For years RCOA drew attention to the lack of refugee representation at these dialogues, but the department consistently resisted by saying that no formally organised, collective refugee community voice existed. Early in 2017, with the NSW and Victorian RCANs formalised and operating, RCOA again lobbied for refugee representatives to be included, gaining strong support from the other NGOs involved in the dialogue. In August 2017 the Department of Home Affairs agreed to expand the number of dialogue partners to include ANCORW and a nominated representative of the Victorian and NSW RCANs. In November Tenneh

Najeeba Wazefadost of ANCORW at the Global Summit of Refugees in Geneva in June 2018, with Summit co-chairs, Sana Mustafa and Mohammed Badran of the Network for Refugee Voices. PHOTO: Riccardo Pareggiani.

Kpaka of ANCORW and Parsu Sharma-Luital of RCAN Victoria became the first refugee community representatives at the Australian Government's formal dialogue on refugee issues. Representatives of ANCORW and RCAN have been included in all dialogues since.

In planning for the 2017 UNHCR Annual Consultations with NGOs in Geneva, RCOA, RCAN NSW and ANCORW agreed that the time was right to push even harder for refugee representation in international dialogues. Not only had the 2016 GRYC illustrated the valuable contribution refugee representatives could make at UNHCR meetings but the need for a greater voice for refugees in policy development and planning had been acknowledged in the UN's September 2016 New York Declaration for Migrants and Refugees. This Declaration outlined plans to develop a Global Compact for Refugees, nominating refugees as one of the key stakeholder groups to be included in a "whole of society" approach to improving the support and protection of refugees. The question then remained: If refugees are to have a greater say in international planning, how will that happen and who will lead?

RCOA's discussions with UNHCR about refugee representation led to four Australian refugee representatives being included as panellists during the 2017 UNHCR consultations. UNHCR also put RCOA in contact with a Geneva-based NGO, Independent Diplomat, which was working with an emerging refugee network led by Syrian refugees in Europe and North America, the Network for Refugee Voices (NRV). RCOA invited Independent Diplomat to co-host a side meeting during a lunch break of the UNHCR NGO Consultations on the topic: "Nothing about us without us: Getting serious about refugee self-representation." This side meeting, moderated by youth representative Arash Bordbar, featured speakers including Atem Atem of RCAN NSW, Najeeba Wazefadost and Tabitha Chepkwony of ANCORW, Yiombi Thona of APRRN and Shaza Al Rihawi of NRV. The idea of working towards an international refugee advocacy network was discussed. A key outcome of the meeting was an agreement between ANCORW, APRRN, NRV, RCOA and Independent Diplomat to work on drawing together refugee representatives from as many countries as possible for an international meeting before the 2018 UNHCR NGO consultations.

A steering committee of refugee representatives from

…the Global Summit created a great deal of energy and the strong view that refugees were starting to find a new international collective voice.

Argentina, the US, Uganda, Germany, The Netherlands, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand was drawn together to work with RCOA and Independent Diplomat on plans for the 2018 meeting. With funding support from UNHCR, several NGOs and governments, the idea for the event gained momentum and on June 25-26 that year the ground-breaking Global Summit of Refugees was held at the Geneva Press Club. With 72 refugee representatives from 27 countries in Asia-Pacific, Europe, the Americas, Africa and the Middle East, the Global Summit created a great deal of energy and the strong view that refugees were starting to find a new international collective voice.

One of the limitations of the Global Summit was that refugee leaders living in the most challenging situations were excluded, because they lacked the status and travel documents to travel to Switzerland. Several delegates from Africa and the Middle East who had documents and were invited were excluded at the last minute by Swiss immigration authorities, who feared they might not return to their country of asylum. Najeeba Wazefadost of ANCORW, who co-chaired the Global Summit with Mohammed Badran of NRV, and I began discussing how the global gathering could be followed up in the Asia-Pacific region in a way that included those unable to travel.

As we knew at least 35 refugee representatives from the region would be present for APRRN's biennial conference in Bangkok in October 2018, ANCORW, RCOA and APRRN agreed to work towards a one-day Asia Pacific Summit of Refugees that could include those able to travel to Bangkok and those who could not. We turned to technology, holding the seven-hour summit across cities in Iran, India, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Australia via video conferencing links. Despite some technical glitches the summit was a great success, connecting 104 refugee representatives from 10 countries of asylum or resettlement to discuss common concerns and ideas, and to explore the formation of an Asia Pacific Network of Refugees. When the Global Summit's steering committee members met in Amsterdam in January this year, their model for the Global Refugee-led Network was influenced by the success of the Asia-Pacific summit. The international structure was based on plans to build regional networks in five regions of the world.

The first three months of 2019 saw not only the formation of the Global Refugee-led Network but also the formalisation of a steering committee for the new Asia Pacific Network of Refugees and discussions at RCOA's Refugee Alternatives conference in Adelaide about the development of a national refugee-led advocacy structure in Australia. The Adelaide conference included a discussion of about 40 refugee representatives from around Australia, facilitated by RCOA policy officer Shukufa Tahiri, with participants deciding to form a steering committee to discuss a new national network.

The movement towards the new leadership of people of refugee background was confirmed in May last year, when members of APRRN voted to elect a new chair to replace Yiombi Thona, who three years earlier broke new ground to become the first refugee to lead APRRN. The newly elected chair is Arash Bordbar from Sydney. Aged 26, he has been a significant contributor to the movement to refugee-led advocacy in the four years since his resettlement in Australia.

Arash says that, in the three years since he became involved in international advocacy, he has seen a significant shift. "In the past, some larger NGOs and UNHCR have had structures which have excluded refugees," he said. "But, year by year, I have seen a change as more organisations have learned from RCOA, APRRN and others how to include refugees as key stakeholders.

"We are really shifting from refugees being seen just as beneficiaries to the understanding that refugees need to be part of the solution and, in the future, must be part of the implementation and evaluation of policies and programs which affect them. There is still a lot of work to do, to shift from symbolic representation of refugees to truly meaningful participation – but we are getting there.

"Because RCOA and others have worked at this for years and have pushed back when they have faced resistance, the narrative about refugees has changed. We are entering a very hopeful period for refugee participation." R

PROFILE

Sewing together a new future

Stripes and prints illuminated by runway lights met a wave of applause as the birth of clothing label MOJALIVIN was welcomed. ***DUNJA KARAGIC*** *reports*

The inspiring story behind the beautifully tailored garments at the show is one of a determined 19-year-old who now lives in Brisbane, Australia. But his smile and pride as all the planning pays off disguises a childhood tainted by memories of injustice and hardship.

Salomon Janvier Lukonga took his first steps on the red dirt of Nyarungusu Refugee Camp following his parent's harrowing escape from the Congo Civil War in 1996. Nyarungusu, in the western Tanzanian province of Kigoma, houses about 150,000 people. It was opened in 1996 by the UNHCR and the Tanzanian Government to help Congolese refugees fleeing genocidal rampages, the mass shelters don't offer its ever-increasing population a life of comfort and security.

As one of the largest refugee camps in the world, medicine, housing and other resources are often scarce, leaving those within its borders in a perpetual battle with thirst, hunger, fatigue and sickness. Common diseases easily cured in other parts of the world are a significant cause of death because of the difficulty in obtaining clean water, food and comfortable places for people to sleep.

Salomon recalls small childhood moments such as travelling far away with his friends to play soccer – a temporary reprieve from the arduous camp life. Then there are the memories of finishing school strained with hunger, only to be greeted with an empty dinner plate, arousing feelings caused by a deprivation of basic human rights foreign to many of those lucky enough to be living

in countries untainted by war and injustice.

In 2011 Salomon and his family were given the opportunity to leave camp and arrived in Australia to welcome a fresh start. Overwhelmed by opportunities, Salomon soon envisioned a purpose born of the enduring pain of knowing about the struggles that thousands continued to experience in Nyarungusu and around the world. Combined with the opportunities offered in Australia, they instilled in him a determination to give back to those in need.

At 17 he envisaged using his passion for fashion design to help fulfil this desire, culminating in the creation of his clothing label, MOJALIVIN – from which 30 percent of profits go to provide medical supplies to the Republic of Congo.

After more than two years, at 19 he has launched a collection and organised his first runway show, all funded through his own hard work, dedicating every spare dollar earned to creating the label and using a GoFundMe page created in during his final year of high school, he grasped every opportunity to realise his dream.

"Knowing the fact that I'm alive is a blessing, everything I do now has to be not only for me but for the people," Salomon says. "I am really passionate about people in need because I was once that boy with nothing. So I think life without helping the ones who are less fortunate is not really a life, it is not really living."

Currently building MOJALIVIN's website, he hopes to go back to the Congo to film his experience, to help others understand the struggles that not only tainted his childhood but the lives of thousands of others.

"It's so easy to come and just settle and pick up on the ways here," Salomon says. "There is nothing wrong with that, but I think going back there and showing people how it is will help them be more grateful for themselves being here and what we do here."

Salomon's personal story and sentiments are imprinted upon his creative designs. Abundant black-and-white stripes symbolise a closing of the gap between those privileged and those in need, while recurring vertical designs symbolise the strength to stand strong for what we believe in – "because we die when we choose to be quiet about the things that matter," he says.

"The way I see black and white is more than just colour. What I was portraying here was the rich and the poor, people with a lot of opportunity in Western countries mostly and people in Third World countries who are continuously struggling, and to put the two together. Black-and-white pretty much closes the gap between the two. That was my whole message, closing the gap between the less fortunate and the more fortunate. It portrays the message behind the brand: "look good while making a difference".

Salomon wants MOJALIVIN to be known around Australia and globally. Now he is brainstorming ideas aimed at creating two collections and two shows. But most importantly he wants to keep inspiring as many young people around him as possible. "I believe that if there are youth who are creating businesses that are there to help people in need, the future will be nothing but amazing. So my dream is to inspire as many young people as I can for a better future."

So MOJALIVIN is much more than an array of creatively crafted pieces: it is a social statement of struggle, determination and the enduring importance of giving back to our communities.

Many refugees fleeing conflicts in the Middle East are now resettling in regional NSW, ***LACHLAN MURDOCH*** *reports.*

Armidale welcomes new arrivals

Armidale railway station opened in 1883. Grahamec wikipedia.org

The NSW regional town of Armidale has become a resettlement location for people from refugee backgrounds, with the first arrivals making their way directly from Northern Iraq to this town in February 2018.

By June 2019 more than 250 people have made their home in what is the first new regional settlement location in NSW to be established in more than a decade. The journey from Erbil in Northern Iraq to Armidale takes a few hope and expectation filled days, as family groups make their way from a refugee camp to take the first steps in establishing a new life in the New England region of NSW.

That Armidale became a centre for refugee resettlement like Coffs Harbour and Wagga Wagga before is no accident. The decision to select Armidale was in large part a product of the efforts of members of the local Armidale community who highlighted the suitability of the town for refugee resettlement. This desire on the part of 'Armidalians' has combined with the stated commitment of the Commonwealth Government to resettle a greater proportion of the humanitarian intake in regional Australia and made resettlement a reality.

People arriving from refugee backgrounds are not new to Armidale. The town has a history of accepting refugees and migrants over many years. However, this is the first experience of refugee resettlement via a deliberate, planned effort on the part of Government to establish the town as a refugee resettlement location, and one that

"It is now almost eighteen months on from the first arrivals to Armidale and resettlement has been successful thanks to the efforts of the new arrivals themselves..."

will likely see further arrivals in the coming years.

The process of resettlement has been supported by Commonwealth, State and Local governments who co-ordinated initial arrangements through a steering committee that met in Armidale. The strong commitment to resettlement at the local level was exemplified by the Armidale Regional Council voting on two separate occasions to declare the town a centre for newly arrived refugees.

It is now almost eighteen months on from the first arrivals to Armidale and resettlement has been successful thanks to the efforts of the new arrivals themselves, the co-ordination and resourcing from government, the co-operation from the various services involved and the high levels of support from the local community. Indeed, a recently completed study undertaken by the University of New England into attitudes towards resettlement of newly arrived refugees in Armidale revealed an overall positive perception on the part of the Armidale community to the newly arrived refugees.

Many of those that have arrived in Armidale are members of the Yazidi community who have been heavily persecuted in Northern Iraq and Syria for their religious beliefs, and who have suffered very significant trauma in the context of that persecution. In response to high levels of trauma amongst this population and the need for trauma counselling and other support services, STARTTS established a new office in Armidale in July 2018 and employed a counsellor/project officer. Other STARTTS staff members within the rural and regional team with experience working with highly-traumatised clients have provided vital additional counselling support over the last 18 months through visits to Armidale made from Coffs Harbour and the Upper Hunter regions.

STARTTS has also worked closely with services in Armidale to offer support in schools through the School Liaison program and training to a range of health and adult education professionals and to others involved in the delivery of social services.

In more recent times STARTTS has expanded our services to include the delivery of Families in Cultural Transition (FICT) groups via training and capacity building of bi-cultural FICT facilitators from Yazidi background.

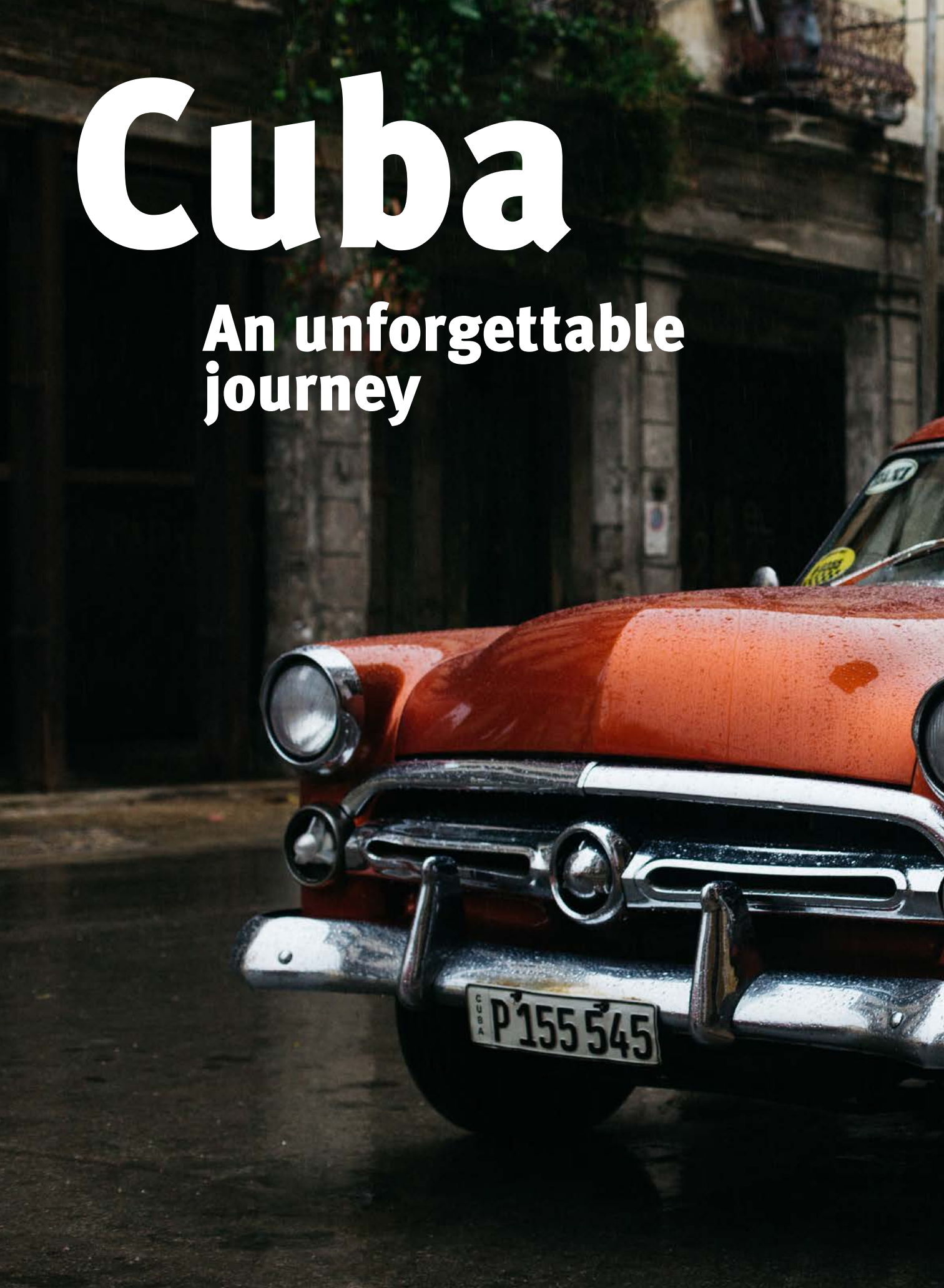
The resettlement of a new group of people who have experienced significant levels of trauma in a new location has not been without its challenges. In particular these are related to the lack of availability of interpreting services in the language of our clients, the challenges in learning a new language and the very real desire for family members to trace and be reunited with relatives who have been lost as a result of the persecution directed towards the Yazidi.

At the twelve month point of the settlement effort, the NSW Co-ordinator General for Refugee Resettlement, Professor Peter Shergold visited Armidale and reflected on the success of the work that so many have done and identified the Armidale experience as an example of what can be achieved through regional resettlement.

It is expected that STARTTS will further expand its services in Armidale to continue to meet what is anticipated to be greater demand for treatment as more people make Armidale their home in the coming months and years.R

Cuba

An unforgettable journey



AGENDA

Cuba is a paradox: political minefield, communist sanctuary and stronghold, emerging luxury destination and adventurer's paradise, all rolled into one. It has a turbulent past and its future is precariously uncertain. But, as ***DANIELA AROCHE*** *reports on her journey to the island, for better or worse it continues to capture the imagination of travellers.*

The initial decision any aspiring traveller needs to make before embarking on a trip to Cuba is to ask themselves what kind of holiday they want to have.

At a glance this might seem an obvious proposition. But anyone who knows anything about its revolutionary past, present battles and future challenges should realise before buying a ticket that this is a country in the midst of an intriguing and heady transition – and that this shift, which is already at full throttle, offers two very different paths to any prospective tourist.

Part of its history is well-known to most – after all, one can hardly think of the country without conjuring up the image of Che Guevara, the iconic Latin American revolutionary whose handsome face, haunting look and polarising legacy launched myriad merchandising licenses and trinkets around the globe.

If you haven't heard of him, then Fidel Castro will ring a bell: Guevara's comrade in arms, communist stalwart and the man who inspired a nation and led the 26th of

July Movement that toppled Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista.

Cuba's turbulent and fascinating past poses little mystery to most, but those who dig deeper will find its captivating history stretches much further – way back to Diego Velazquez, Gerardo Machado, Jose Gomez, Christopher Columbus, José Martí and up to the aforementioned Batista (although not in that exact order). Even the Italian-American Mafia had their day here and quite a large casino outpost for a while on this rugged strip of tropical paradise.

Yet, for all Cuba's awe-inspiring richness of character, the inherent warmth of its people and the vibrant tapestry that a melding of cultures has woven through the ages, there is another side to this island destination — a darker, more desolate and poverty-stricken underbelly that can only be described as an eerie, silent landscape, where the ghosts of rebels and socialist radicals are all that remain.

But back to the choice: that first trip, regular tourists muse, will lead you fine days, rum cocktails, sunset dinners by the sea and general jolly rambunctiousness. You'll also be in great company with the gaggle of American, Asian and European travellers already flocking to Cuba's shores in droves, and in greater numbers every year now that the communist curtain has lifted somewhat.

Choose this route, and what I can recommend is booking an airport pickup in an immaculately vintage classic car from the 1950s (online and ahead of time); followed by a check-in and stay at the brand-spanking new five-star Gran Hotel Manzana Kempinski or iconic Hotel Nacional in the capital, Havana.

Once you're settled in, take a relaxing stroll by Havana's seaside promenade Le Malecon; dine at one of the many restaurants in the central business district and chic urban hub of Vedado; then, if you're up for a nightcap, listen to jazz at the speakeasy La Zorra y el Cuervo or try any of the bars in the area for a taste of one the many top-notch rums produced all over the island (Havana Club Añejo 15 Años Gran Reserva is our pick).

If you have more time, then what many would recommend is a short day trip to Varadero, a resort beach town in the province of Matanzas (about two hours east of the capital); or the traditional and agricultural outpost of Viñales – a small town and municipality in the north-central Pinar del Río province of Cuba. There you'll find a beautiful, lush valley anointed by UNESCO in 1999 where cigar-chewing guajiros (Cuban rural workers) drive their oxen and ploughs through rust-coloured tobacco fields; where life seems slower, and you can buy the best cigars on the cheap that you'll ever get your hands on.

For an even more tranquil and pampering vacation, you can escape to any one of the stunning myriad playas (beaches) and cayos (keys) draped around the island, each more pristine than the next, boasting crystal clear waters and people sunning themselves on the golden sands, usually with fruity cocktails in hand.

It's a beautiful life and a magical experience if you choose this path – as most people will – particularly if you're after a little touch of luxury as part of your holiday retreat.

However, those who want adventure and to immerse themselves in the country, who want to get a real look at its people beyond the dancing and the drinking, should dare to take the road less travelled.

This journey, the one I took, is the revolutionaries' road – more sombre, perhaps, but ultimately all the more authentic.

It begins without a plan, a map, and on a shoe-string budget with a few local contacts scribbled down on a scrunched-up, grubby piece of paper, garnered from backpackers who had mingled with the locals and stayed with poorer families in posadas along the way before me.

My personal and slightly tougher trajectory took me across half of Cuba, stopping at Old Havana – the more decrepit corner of the capital – and into the cobbled streets and colonial towns of Cienfuegos and Trinidad; and through to Santa Clara, the site of Che Guevara's epic rebel battle and last showdown with Batista's troops back in December 1958. It's also the place where his bones now lie in a memorial and mausoleum on the abandoned outskirts of the city, laid to rest on October 17, 1997, after being returned from Bolivia, where he was summarily executed on October 9, 1967, while trying to bring revolution to rural workers there.

On this trip, my photographer, his parents and I shared the road with Noel – our (very round, very outspoken and stubborn) Cuban driver – and his caro (darling), a beat-up 1950s Chevy, a glorious old beast of a vehicle, all white and green and falling to pieces but his pride and joy. I've never seen someone who loved their car so much, nor took such care of it.

HAVANA: A TALE OF TWO CITIES

This hardy, resilient nation has, as mentioned, always stood out for its feisty history, and it's this aspect of the country's character that is particularly evident upon arrival at Havana's José Martí International Airport.

When you arrive the shift towards a very different society is palpable. Dressed in green military fatigues, the customs and security officers are mainly female and each – and every one sports sexy, close-fit uniforms and fishnet tights. It's not too far a statement to say that you feel

"… the most interesting and telling experience of the entire trip is one which encapsulates the true soul of the Cuban people and exemplifies the ethos behind their socialist ideals."

you've stepped into a Roger Rabbit cartoon.

Defiantly (the tights are not part of their official uniform) they flaunt their sexuality with a confidence most women wish they possessed, all while checking and ordering tourists around and letting them know who's the boss.

Getting a cab into town is another adventure. Pick whichever smiling assassin takes your fancy – you won't be able to get a good deal on your ride unless you've already booked a driver online as noted above. And make sure you change some money into "cucs" (the official tourist currency) before you fly if you can – otherwise you'll be at the mercy of locals on the exchange rate. Cubans use "cups", not to be confused.

Once you're in the glorious and bustling hub of Havana, the other thing you'll notice is the warmth of the smiles that greet you as you stroll through the city streets. Cubans are known for it and, regardless of their current struggles, this vanguard of their vibrant and hospitable culture remains in spades.

The key draws of the capital for most tourists are the impressive and expansive plazas, sprinkled throughout the city like majestic throwbacks to a time of plenty, before communism came and robbed them of their grandeur.

The most popular streets around them are lined with bars, shops and restaurants (which tell the tale that communism is easing its grip, even here), and many of the main buildings surrounding the plazas have been somewhat restored to their former glory with some weathered structures gutted and transformed into galleries or hotels, such as the Kempinski, on the site of the historic Manzana de Gómez (Gómez Block) building, an early 20th century building that was Cuba's first shopping mall.

Once you've seen that, and all the other tried and trusted hotspots – El Capitolio, Catedral de San Cristobal, Castillo de la Real Fuerza, Fortaleza de San Carlos de la Cabaña (also Che Guevara's former official command headquarters), Museo de la Revolución, etcetera; and walked in Hemingway's footsteps (La Floridita, La Bodeguita del Medio, and our favourite, the Hotel Ambos Mundos).

However, what I would recommend is exploring some of the lesser-known alleys, cultural spots and smaller bars and dining spots recommended by the locals. A few such spots are the Museo de Mexico, Finca Vigía (Hemingway's house); and Draquecitos, a tiny hole-in-the-wall restaurant in Old Havana that you'll definitely miss if you don't know what to look for.

Here a charming young Cuban by the name of Alexis and his partner Elianet cook up delectable Cuban fare with heart, soul and smiles. They also run a travel company – Blue Paradise Booking – and can organise a car to take you around (Noel is one of their contacts), accommodation with locals and pretty much anything else you need while you're in town. They helped us more than once out of the kindness of their hearts, and will remain our friends for life.

In essence, Havana is a paradox – one half boasting impressive, old-world opulence with its refurbished buildings, organised plazas, bustling streets and dining spots overrun with tourists; and the other side of it, where many Cubans live, looks like a shanty town of dilapidated edifices. The buildings are scarcely standing, just skeletons with crumbling walls housing locals who have barely enough to eat because they are restricted to rations of a bag of rice, a stick of butter and a handful of beans every month. This is the harsh reality for anyone who scratches the surface of this once majestic city.

It is still hauntingly beautiful, though, and very much fun after hours if you're a bit of a night owl, so head to the bars post-sunset if you dare: it's definitely worth your while.

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK: CIENFUEGOS, TRINIDAD & SANTA CLARA

If you have more time and want to see

something other than Viñales, Varadero, Bay of Pigs and all the beaches, then Cienfuegos and Trinidad are two perfectly preserved UNESCO world heritage sites that offer colonial charm by the bundle.

However, my favourite and perhaps the least visited location of all those I've mentioned here is Santa Clara, Che Guevara's beloved city and final resting place.

There's not much to see here for the regular tourist other than the Museo histórico de la Revolución and the Che Guevara Mausoleum, crowned by a massive bronze statue of the revolutionary leader under which Guevara and other fighters lie. But it is full of life somehow and truly left its mark, although we didn't stay long.

Here the spirit of the revolution seems stronger, for obvious reasons, and the people seem happier and seem to have more.

In the main square, on the only night we stayed, we danced in the moonlight with a troop of weathered musicians at the old Teatro de Caridad to the sounds of salsa and Afro-Cuban jazz, swept away by the talents of local artists revelling in their craft. In the morning we mingled with locals over coffee, packed our bags and took one last look at the Santa Clara Libre Hotel in the centre of the city where, more than 50 years ago, Che Guevara won the final battle of the Cuban revolution and clinched it for Fidel Castro, sending Batista fleeing from the country. The bullet holes are still there in the concrete walls.

But perhaps the most interesting and telling experience of the entire trip is one which encapsulates the true soul of the Cuban people and exemplifies the ethos behind their socialist ideals.

Somewhere along the way we got a flat tire, and Noel stopped on the dusty track to take stock of the damage. There, nestled along the curve of the desolate dirt road, a Cuban farmer was building a house, methodically cutting each piece of timber and slowly stacking it to make his home, piece by piece.

They greeted each other warmly, even though they had never met before, and Noel asked him whether he had a spare tire and some food. The man responded "yes" and asked Noel up to the main farmhouse on the hill.

Grabbing a bag of bananas from the back of the car, Noel turned and left us stranded and slightly confused as to what was going on, and an hour later had not returned. When he finally did grace us with his presence again, he had the wheel and a bag of oranges. No bananas in sight.

When we asked him about the exchange, and whether we had to pay for the wheel and the man's assistance, he simply looked at us and scoffed. "We don't do things that way here," he said. "He's my brother. He's happy to help me. He just asked me to swap him some bananas for the wheel, then he gave me some oranges for the road." Bananas, it seems, are quite hard to get your hands on in Cuba, so that was well worth the tyre and some oranges, too.

That simple exchange told me all I needed to know about capitalism, socialism and everything in between when it comes to Cuba.

Yes, as is often the case in revolutions, sometimes we must destroy the remnants of the past in order to usher


DROGUERIA
JOHNSON
MUSEO DE FARMACIA
AGUA
DE
COLONIA
GLACIAL
HEADACHE COLOGNE
DE JOHNSON
HABANA
AGUA VIOLETA
JOHNSON
JOHNSON

in a new era. But that doesn't mean we should abandon our foundations, our history, our dignity or the basic qualities that makes us all human, such as the simple exchanges from one person to another, that sense of solidarity where a helping hand doesn't come at a price.

The world has moved on, and perhaps so must Cuba in order to survive and thrive. Indeed, the people themselves seem to be crying out for a shift, economically at least.

Exactly how they decide to do it, however, will determine whether they honour the core ideals of their heroes, the combatistas y comandantes (combatants and commanders).

What I will say is that vultures are everywhere, figuratively and literally, circling overhead every city and every landscape. These haunting birds are a common sight, but they seemed to embody an omen of what could be as capitalist opportunists exploit Cuba, setting up luxury hotels and expensive restaurants across the island.

What of the future? In June the Trump Administration imposed major new travel restrictions on visits to Cuba by US citizens, including a ban on many forms of educational and recreational travel, which promises to cut off one of the main avenues for Americans to visit the Caribbean island and will likely deal a heavy blow to the country's fragile economy.

That simple exchange told me all I needed to know about capitalism, socialism and everything in between when it comes to Cuba.

A new president, Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez, who was inaugurated in April last year, was handpicked by Raúl Castro, Fidel's brother, an almost unknown candidate. According to the people we spoke to he is still a socialist with strong communist ideals, but is considerably more open-minded on the subject of economic development, international trade and tourism. He is also seen as a man of the people who has started initiatives to improve the country, including plans for a new transport system and buses. We shall see.

Vacation numbers are also up – and set to rise, despite the ban on Americans – with Cuban Tourism Minister Manuel Marrero announcing via Twitter in May that two million visitors had already arrived on the island, a figure reached 12 days earlier than in 2018.

The country's luxury appeal is also growing, with several lifestyle-led news outlets announcing that that Cuba is entering the market with gusto. The Kempinski conglomerate, for example, seems to thinks it's on a winner and plans to open a second location, a high-end facility in Guillermo Key, north of the central province of Ciego de Avila. Apparently, there is now also a shop selling a camera for more than US$25,000 (RM102,000) in Havana.

When you compare that to the daily life, run-down accommodations and meagre food rations of a local Cuban – in a country with a shady human rights record where the government reportedly (according to Human Rights Watch) continues to repress and punish dissent and public criticism, and the average wage is US$30 (RM122) a month – the statistics don't exactly add up.

Ultimately, the best advice I can give to anyone considering a Cuban travel adventure is two-fold: go quickly, before it changes; and go there with a clean slate, ready to have your opinions and preconceptions of the country and its people challenged.

For me, the lasting sentiment from my time in the country is that Cuba's challenge today is the same as it is for the rest of the world: it's not about socialism versus capitalism, but about finding an altogether new way forward.

FAREWELL: HASTA LA VICTORIA, SIEMPRE.

We made it back to Havana a little the worse for wear, but full of memorable experiences – and barely escaping the tail of a tornado that had swept through the city less than a day before our arrival.

Havana had once again been brought to its knees, the age-old shells of its ancient buildings ravaged by the forces of nature that are part and parcel of its tropical location on the continental shelf, smack-bang off the Gulf of Mexico. Yet there remained that air of resilience, the calling card of the Cuban people – standing strong, against all the odds.

All I can hope is that this unique spirit – which ultimately defines this wonderfully diverse, impossibly intricate and incredibly complex country with its impressive history – never changes. "Hasta la victoria, siempre."(Ever onwardto victory.)

I love you Cuba. X

DR KEVIN F. MCGRATH *is a Research and Evaluation Officer at the NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors. In June 2018, he flew to Poland to rediscover his refugee ancestry. In the process, he came to better understand the effects of intergenerational trauma.*

Poland after World War II: My refugee heritage

As the plane approached Warsaw, I was overwhelmed with emotion. The farmland that reached to the horizon had previously only existed in the stories my grandmother told me. In my mind, Poland was always two places: a beautiful country filled with wildflowers; and a land savaged by war.

My family resettled in Australia in 1950 as refugees after surviving World War II. About six million Polish citizens died in the war, the same population as modern-day Lebanon. Arriving on board the former military transport ship General W. C. Langfitt were my great-grandparents, my grandparents and my aunt. My grandparents met in a prisoner-of-war camp, later a refugee camp, in Germany, where they lived for several years, married and gave birth to my aunt. They had endured the hardships of a brutal war, years of separation and the harsh reality of being displaced persons in refugee camps.

Now, 68 years later and the same age as my grandfather (Kazimierz Zielinski) when he first arrived in Australia, I landed in Poland.

Standing in the long line of sleep-deprived travellers at customs, my excitement turned to anxiety. I had not heard Polish spoken since my grandmother passed away seven years ago. I knew a few words, but it was certainly not enough to answer the questions of the perplexed customs officer looking at my Polish passport. My mother never taught my brother and I how to speak Polish, to protect us from the isolation and discrimination she had faced for having parents who spoke a foreign language. They were referred to disrespectfully as "reffos" and "wogs". They were not "Australian". But when, like me, your skin is pale white and burns easily under the Australian sun, comments about being "fresh off the boat" were inevitable. Now, unable to communicate in Polish, I feared a similar isolation.

I breathed a sigh of relief as the customs officer gestured me through. I grabbed my backpack and made my way to the exit. Travelling light is something I've always preferred, yet my backpack contained more than my entire family had with them when they were sent to Bonegilla, a "Migrant Reception and Training Centre" in Victoria.

When they arrived at Bonegilla, they were greeted

PHOTO: Torun — DR KEVIN F. MCGRATH

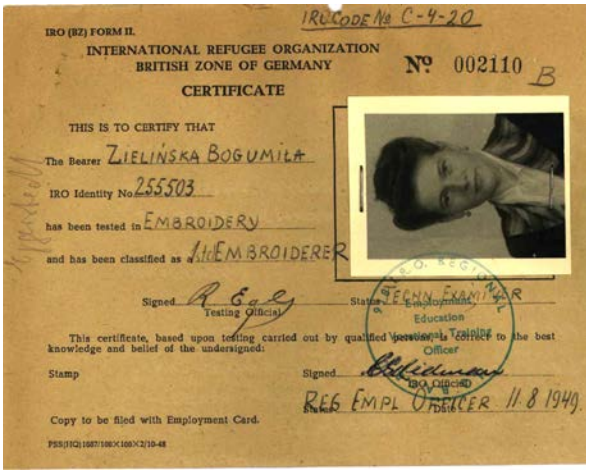
by armed guards and spotlights. Women and children were separated from men. They slept in hot, corrugated iron buildings and only knew what day of the week it was by the food they were served. After spending three months at sea, they believed this was yet another prisoner-of-war camp. When they were finally "discharged" from Bonegilla, they were separated once more and sent to live more than 700 kilometres apart. As new struggles began in a strange land with a strange culture and foreign language, it seemed as though the war would never truly end.

I didn't know it at the time, but as I exited Warsaw airport I was about to retrace the steps of my grandmother, who had returned to Poland 20 years earlier – the only time she would see her homeland again. Unfortunately, she could never truly return home: war shifted Poland's borders and the army base at Pinsk, where she grew up, is now part of Belarus.

Just as my grandmother's family friend, Ala, was there to greet her at Warsaw airport in 1998, so too did Ala greet me. Because we had never met, Ala planned to hold a sign with her name on it so I could find her. The plan failed when we ended up walking into each other instead, somehow recognising one another. Ala spoke to me in Polish and I replied in English, but I think we were talking about the same things: the weather, Warsaw University and the train station. Listening to Ala speak was like hearing my grandmother talk to me once more, and as I listened closely the more I began to understand. Ala introduced me to everyone she spoke to in Warsaw as if they should have recognised me: "This is my friend Bogumila's grandson", she told the young man at the newsagency, "he is from Australia."

My grandmother was perhaps the most influential person in my life and, as soon as I was old enough to drive, I spent as much time as I could at her house in Canterbury, in Sydney's Inner-West. Born Bogumila Dobrzycka and known as Mila, she passed the time in refugee camps by teaching children – a trait my brother and I both unknowingly adopted as we became teachers. She was the daughter of Polish officer Kazimierz Dobrzycki, who (in World War II) was captured by Germans and Russians, and escaped both times before joining the underground army.

As I followed her footsteps I discovered that my grandmother had left a trail of things for me to find:



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BRITISH ZONE OF GERMANY

No 002110 B

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IRO Identity No 255503

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and has been classified as a 1/c EMBROIDERER

Signed A Egly Testing Official

Status TECHN. EXAMINER Employment, Education Training Officer

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Stamp

Signed IRO Official

Status REG EMPL OFFICER 11 8 1949

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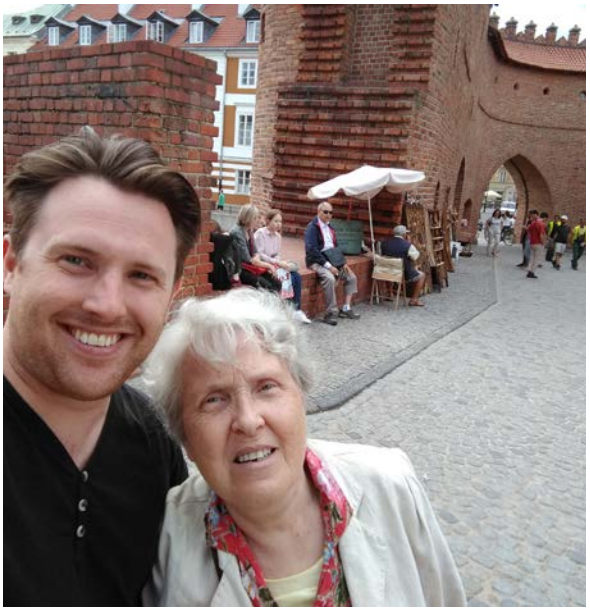


letters and photos of us both in a decorated box at cousins Ewa and Michal's house, her artworks on the walls of every relatives' home, and a small toy koala she had given another cousin, Marta, that sat proudly in a display cabinet with wineglasses. "Mila gave this to me when I was a child" Marta said in Polish, lifting the koala from the shelf, "I had to paint the eyes and nose back on." Places that had only existed in my grandmother's stories came alive before me: I stood atop the "mouse tower" at Kruszwica, walked along the "walls of salt" at Ciechocinek and stood at the "frog fountain" down the road from Copernicus's home.

I was struck by my ability to navigate the streets of Toruń, a city in northern Poland, without a map. Here, I joined with my parents who had been in Poland for several weeks. As we walked the cobblestone streets I felt as if I had walked those same streets many times before. The buildings, roads and monuments all seemed familiar to me. We stopped outside the door to a beauty salon. "This was once your grandfather's home," my mother said. "In the morning, he would carry his kayak down to the river." I couldn't help but smile as I recalled carrying my own kayak to the water from the house my grandfather had built north of Sydney. I never knew this – my grandfather passed away before I took up kayaking. Maybe this is why Toruń felt so familiar to me? Perhaps traces of my grandfather's life were somehow echoed in my own? As my father would later tell me: "To know yourself, you have to know where you're from."

While the streets of Toruń beckoned me, a place near the river concealed the source of my recurring childhood nightmares. It was there that my grandmother was separated from her parents, not to see them again until after the war. The Nazis used the large cellars of the ruined castle of Toruń as a type of concentration camp. Death still lingered in the cold air decades later. In one room, metal hooks hung from the ceiling. I recalled a time my grandmother had said she was warned not to eat the meat in the soup the German soldiers served them. The marks of ash and smoke still clung to the stones in the kitchen area above the cellars.

My grandmother was sent to work as a slave labourer for a German farmer to provide food for their army. The farmer fastened a saw to the side of a bike and demanded that she ride it to collect materials. The jagged blade cut into her leg as she pedalled. He whipped her to make her pedal faster, and later sent her to have the saw sharpened. At night she slept on the floor with the animals, waiting for the war to end. "The animals were badly treated too," she would say.

She also used to tell me that there were flowers everywhere in Poland. As we drove towards the small farming town of Orle, I believed her. This was the home of my great grandfather. The house he lived in and the church he helped to build still stand today, not far from where yet another cousin, Marilka, lives. Orle, with just a few houses and a cemetery, is hard to find on a map, but it is a place of incredible beauty. Here I swam in the lake that was once owned by my family, picked wild berries with my relatives and watched the squirrels leap between the trees at dusk. For the first time I understood why my grandparents built a house on the coast north of Sydney. "I always feel like I'm at home in Orle," said my mother.

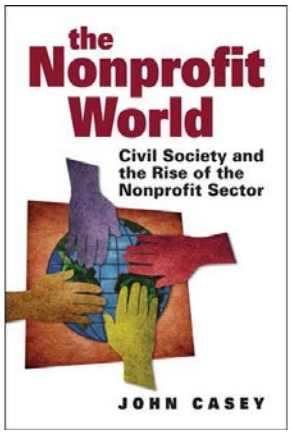
Now, back in Australia, Poland is no longer just a place in my grandmother's stories but also a place in my memories. Organisations such as STARTTS, where I now work, which help refugees to heal from trauma, didn't exist when my family arrived in Australia. What has now become known as "transgenerational trauma" was a concept unbeknownst to me, despite the horrors of war becoming embedded within my own nightmares. Being from a refugee background seems to be something that echoes through generations. The streets of Toruń and the flowers of Orle still call my family to return – and return we do, we must.

Of all the things I learned from my grandmother, her greatest lesson was that it is possible to endure tremendous pain and suffering and still be a good person.R

BOOK REVIEW

Mapping the third sector

The Nonprofit World: Civil Society and the Rise of the Nonprofit Sector By Dr John Casey, Reviewed by ***OLGA YOLDI***



The Nonprofit World: Civil Society and the Rise of the Nonprofit Sector is the title of the new book by Dr John Casey, a professor of Public Policy at the School of Public Affairs, Baruch College, City University of New York. This book provides a most comprehensive picture of the modern nonprofit world, its rise, evolution, characteristics, contradictions and its role in the development of civil society. It also provides detailed short case studies of a wide spectrum of nonprofits operating around the world.

The tone is engaging, easy to read as the author uses simple language to explain the concepts and terminology. His detailed analysis of the direct and indirect impacts of nonprofits on civil society in various cultures, geographies and political contexts provides an evidence-based appraisal of a sector that is constantly growing and evolving in an increasingly globalized and ever changing world.

The author has a long history working and researching the nonprofit sector around the world. As an academic, researcher, essayist and author, John Casey has published extensively and given numerous presentations on the fields of government and non-government relations, public policy, international policing and immigration. He has dedicated the book to his parents, Stephen and Agi Casey, who survived the Holocaust and Stalinism and went as refugees to Australia.

The book is a collection of thematic areas about the sector's rise, evolution and diversity. It includes an international comparative study, a description of the diverse work carried out by nonprofits, the growth of the sector and factors that contributed to it. Casey writes about the work of international nonprofits in humanitarian aid that advocate on global issues and foster global communities. He describes the various management and leadership challenges facing nonprofits and examines the major trends that will have an impact on the future evolution of the sector.

He writes that all countries have witnessed a boom in the number of nonprofits. Domestic and international nonprofits are becoming essential partners to governments and influence all aspects of policy making, from social justice, economic development, human rights, to the delivery of aid. But as their reach expands and international politics change, they face multiple organizational, political and economic challenges and it is those very challenges that will shape and redefine the nonprofit sector of the future.

Casey points out that the concept of assisting those in need is not a modern invention. It is as old as human civilization itself. All major contemporary religions embrace the concept of assisting the less fortunate. But as populations grew and more secular societies developed in modern nation-states, networks of confraternities, mutual societies, guilds and other collective and philanthropic endeavors emerged in the 18th and 19th centuries. He cites early initiatives such as St Vincent d Paul Society, the Anti-Slavery Society and the Aborigines' Protection Society as early examples of global humanitarian aid and advocacy organisations. However the sector was suppressed or simply ignored during much of the 20th century even in democratic countries. But nonprofits are no longer the poor cousins but significant actors in the world stage and a growing sector.

Casey sees the growth as the consequence of deliberate, top-down developmental policies by governments who see nonprofits as instruments for achieving their own objectives. "No single ideology has dominated the discussions in favor of expanding nonprofit activities," he writes. "Conservatives consider them a key

Dr John Casey

source of nongovernmental initiative for counterbalancing state power and introducing market forces into the delivery of public services. Progressives see them as the embodiment of grassroots activism that can help ensure that social services are effectively delivered to those most in need."

He writes that the work of nonprofits focuses on the services government and business are not willing or able to provide: welfare, health, education, culture, environment and leisure services, indeed by outsourcing services, governments' growing reliance on NGOs may only increase in the future.

He attributes the growth to the fact that people are disillusioned with traditional politics and the new organisations provide more rewarding style of political participation than membership of a political party. The impact of new technologies has made communication and resourcing easier. In many countries nonprofits enjoy more trust, loyalty and interest of citizens than other social institutions such as governments, unions, political parties or commercial businesses.

Casey writes about globalization, the globalization of ideas, the internationalization of the nonprofit sector, the US model and he dedicates a chapter to social enterprises (commercial businesses with social purposes and the revenue generating activities) and emerging trends.

This is a fascinating, must read book for those interested or involved in the nonprofit sector. It contains a wealth of information and valuable insights about the place of nonprofits in the global arena and the implication of their increasing importance in society.R

Whither the colonised after the colony?

SAUDADE By Suneeta Peres da Costa, Reviewed by ***JOSHUA BIRD***

The long shadow of the colonial legacy is a well-explored topic in literature. But what becomes of the colonised after the empire has fallen, receding back like a tide leaving behind a country transformed and often culturally damaged?

Post-colonial authors such as Chinua Achebe and Salman Rushdie have all explored life in societies touched by colonialism, often through the lens of the colonised. However, the novel Saudade by Australian author Suneeta Peres da Costa engages with the postcolonial question in a new, multifaceted way.

The novel follows the young Goan woman Maria-Cristina, living in Angola during the final years of Portuguese colonial rule. In the age of empires it was common for people from the Indian Subcontinent to be redeployed – often involuntarily – to serve imperial interests elsewhere. Sizeable Indian populations in modern-day Fiji, South Africa and Malaysia are the legacy of such policies.

In the case of Saudade, Maria-Cristina's father is a labour lawyer who works to shield colonial plantation owners from claims by indigenous workforces. Thus he represents an active force of colonial exploitation rather than a passive colonial subject – in effect, both colonised

and coloniser. How are we to understand colonial subjects who themselves become tools of colonialism?

As an Australian author, no doubt Peres da Costa drew some inspiration for this subject from Australia's own complex colonial legacy, as both a colony of Mother England and a force of colonial dispossession of the Indigenous. Just as generations of Australians were raised to see themselves as British despite being born on the other side of the world, Maria-Cristina's sense of national and ethnic identities sits uneasily within her.

Peres de Costa engaged with many of the same issues of cultural dislocation and colonialism in her debut novel, Homework, which explored the life of a second-generation Goan-Australian girl growing up in Sydney. In both works the Goans are a quintessentially colonised people, who adopted Catholicism and Portuguese cultural values, melding them with indigenous religious and cultural traditions to produce something unique. For Goans, the twin threads of empire and religion tie them to otherwise disparate countries from South America's Brazil to Australia's neighbour, Timor-Leste. The novel is peppered with detailed depictions of the food, music and languages of colonial Angola, each reflecting the cross-pollination of cultures facilitated by imperial reach. However, for Maria-Cristina and her family, their cosmopolitanism also brings fragility. Neither one thing nor the other, both colonised and coloniser, occupy a liminal state between many identities while never truly inhabiting one.

This sense of otherness is reflected in the mercurial concept of "saudade" in Portuguese. It is often described as a wistful longing or mourning for something lost, also something that perhaps had never been. For the Portuguese, the term became associated with the yearning for home experienced by the waves of emigrants that left the country after World War II to seek a better life. Saudade is also frequently applied to the sense of loss that characterised the decline and dissolution of the Portuguese Empire.

The situation of the central figure of Peres da Costa's novel represents a unique application of the concept, being an emigrant adrift from the cultural influences that shaped her, Goan and Portuguese, while being unable to put down roots in the only place she has ever called home. This yearning for a time and place never actually experienced is one that must resonate with many second-generation migrants.

As we follow Maria-Cristina from the childhood in colonial Angola to womanhood, the author vividly captures the spirit of the times, in particular the confusion of childhood when much of life seems mysterious and vague. The decades that pass represent the growth of both Maria-Cristina's body and mind. Just as she becomes more aware of her nascent sexuality, she also begins to question the foundations upon which her young life is built – family, church and state. As she tests the limits of her own sexual power, so she also begins to question the received wisdom of her upbringing. Like many teenagers she chafes at the values imposed upon her by her parents, each a metaphor for the twin cultural influences of Portugal and Goa: her father an uncritical proponent of Portuguese colonial rule; her mother traditionally sari-clad, her eyes stained with charcoal.

Soon small cracks in the veneer appear. The image of the morally just state she grew up in is slowly replaced by an appreciation of the social inequality and violence inherent in the colonial project. Similarly, her first- and second-hand experiences of chauvinism and sexual violence undermine her faith in the family construct.

Over time, Maria-Cristina sifts through these cultural inheritances to identify those of true value to her:

"For so many years, I had been like a little bird, gobbling the food, words and ideas that she put directly into my mouth, already half-masticated. Now I began to consider what was real and what was not, what pleased me and what did not."

Once Maria-Cristina's awakening is complete, the novel's final section is dedicated to her attempts to negotiate her place in a post-colonial world. This final section feels a little rushed, with the slow, languid atmosphere of the novel's preceding sections replaced by flickering vignettes that rush through the years. While this may be a deliberate choice to represent the frenetic changes in the lead up to Angolan independence, the change in tone is jarring.

Overall, the novel is adept at capturing a sense of cultural dislocation, perhaps the most persistent artefact of the post-colonial experience. The movement of cultures, peoples and identities caused by colonialism is a disruption that, once done, cannot be undone. In her interrogation of this idea, Peres da Costa uses a single story to transcend from the specific to the universal.R

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