



21 June 2021

**Mr. Felipe González Morales**

Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants

By email: [migrant@ohchr.org](mailto:migrant@ohchr.org)

Dear Mr González Morales,

The Australian Human Rights Commission (the Commission) is pleased to have received the [call for input](#) and relevant reports to inform your forthcoming report to the United Nations General Assembly on the impact of COVID-19 on the human rights of migrants.

I draw your attention to a new Commission report released last week, [Management of COVID-19 risks in immigration detention](#), which is relevant to your forthcoming report.

**Management of COVID-19 risks in immigration detention**

This report outlines the findings and recommendations of the Commission's targeted review of the policies and actions taken by the Department of Home Affairs and its contracted detention service providers in response to COVID-19 risks in immigration detention facilities.

The report recommends new and improved safety measures be introduced to protect migrants in detention facilities in Australia, and the wider Australian community, from the risk of COVID-19. These include urgent measures to reduce numbers in immigration detention facilities, significant changes to enable physical distancing in facilities especially in bedrooms, and further steps to protect those assessed as vulnerable to COVID-19.

It also recommends less restrictive alternatives to some current COVID-19 measures, where those measures unnecessarily or disproportionately limit human rights. For example, we recommend modifications to the location and circumstances in which quarantine is used in immigration detention facilities.

**Upcoming webinar**

The Commission will be hosting a public webinar on Monday, 5 July 2021 from 10-11am AEST targeted to Australian-based civil society representatives and

academics to further discuss the report's key themes. At this stage, I will be joined on the panel by Dr Nadia Chaves, a leading public health and infectious diseases expert in Australia, whose expertise the Commission drew on to inform our recent review and report.

We would welcome any interested OHCHR colleagues or others in your networks to attend if the time difference permits. My Executive and Research Assistant, Natasha Rose, will share further information on the event and registration details shortly.

I hope that this report is useful to inform your forthcoming report, and ongoing work to protect the human rights of migrants.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Edward Santow". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Edward Santow  
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