

## **Media Advisory**

8 March 2002

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### **Secretary General Irene Khan to respond to Woomera Incidents**

*Melbourne:* On the penultimate day of her mission to Australia, Amnesty International's Secretary General Irene noted that the current reported situation in Woomera Immigration Detention Centre was symptomatic of the ongoing damage detention is doing to asylum seekers.

" It is obvious that the prolonged periods of detention, characterised by frustration and insecurity, are doing further damage to individuals who have fled grave human rights abuses"

"The detention policy has failed as a deterrent and succeeded only as punishment. How much longer will children and their families be punished for seeking safety from persecution?"

Ms Khan will be available from 10.30 - 11.00am tomorrow morning to sum up the outcomes of her mission to Australia and to respond to the current situation in the Woomera Immigration Processing Centre. Due to long-standing commitments, she is unable for interview before then.

#### **Press Conference Location:**

Saturday March 9, 2002  
10.30 - 11.00am  
Melbourne Marriott Hotel  
Cnr Exhibition and Lonsdale St  
Melbourne

**For further information, contact Damien Spry on 0413 028 191 (Australian media) or Maya Catsanis on 0419 800 928 (International media)**

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