TO THE MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AND INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS
THE HONOURABLE SENATOR AMANDA VANSTONE
PETITION TO THE MINISTER FOR A FAVOURABLE DECISION ON HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS IN THE CASE OF MR PETER QASIM TO ALLOW HIM TO REMAIN IN AUSTRALIA

We, the undersigned residents of Australia, hereby petition the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs regarding the case of Mr Peter Qasim, who has been in Immigration detention for close to 6 years. We believe Peter's physical and mental safety to be in grave danger if his detention continues.

The circumstances of Mr Qasim's case are as follows:

- Peter was born in the disputed region of Kashmir in India in 1974. When he was a child, his father was murdered by the security forces because of his peaceful political activities. As a young man, his own peaceful opposition to the government's brutal policies in his region led to him being detained and tortured by the security forces, and after some years in hiding and on the run, it became necessary for Peter to flee his country;
- On 9 September 1998, Peter arrived in Australia. The delegate of the Minister for Immigration who assessed his claim accepted that he was an Indian citizen from Kashmir, and that he had been tortured, but did not believe that he faced a risk of persecution. He appealed to the Refugee Review Tribunal, but in January 1999 was again refused;
- Since January 1999, Peter has pursued no further appeals, and has been liable for removal from Australia. While he believes that he would face the risk of arrest and torture if returned to India, he would prefer that possibility rather than dying in detention in Australia. However, because Peter has no passport, birth certificate, or other official document from India, the Indian government has so far refused to accept that he is a citizen of that country;
- Peter believes that the Indian authorities will continue to refuse to provide travel documents to him. The state government of Jammu and Kashmir, busy with the ongoing conflict there, might not have the resources to make time-consuming investigations to establish his identity. Also, because there are 20 million people living illegally in India who come from neighbouring countries such as Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Pakistan, it is difficult to persuade the Indian authorities to accept anyone as a citizen without definite proof;
- Peter has applied to almost 80 countries, asking if they might accept him, but he has received no positive replies.
- On 6 August 2004, the High Court ruled that the Migration Act allows people who cannot be deported to be held in immigration detention indefinitely. This means that the personal intervention of the Minister is Peter¹s only prospect of freedom.

We therefore respectfully request the Minister to arrange for the prompt issue, on humanitarian grounds, of the necessary instructions and documents for Mr Peter Qasim to be granted permanent residency in Australia.

NAME (PLEASE PRINT)	SIGNATURE	ADDRESS

Please return to: PETITION, 12 NEWRY ISLAND DRIVE, URUNGA, NSW , 2455
by 9th September 2004. Thankyou.