

**Coalition confirms its total opposition to Malaysia plan**  
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**By Phillip Coorey**

THE federal government's chances of breaking the policy impasse over asylum seekers are remote, with the opposition to reaffirm today its own position and insist that a regional solution be based on deterrence, not setting up a regional processing centre.

The opposition will not support the government's Malaysia plan, a regional solution designed as a deterrent, claiming it is bad policy.

After Parliament failed six weeks ago to agree on a policy to try to stem the record arrivals of asylum seekers by boat, the Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, asked three eminent Australians to spend the winter break consulting all parties and to report to Parliament, before it resumed, on a preferred policy.

The group has prepared a range of options containing the various policy ideas espoused by Labor, the Greens and the Coalition. It then cites the options it believes will be the most effective and it is understood it favours a hardline approach, such as the Malaysia plan.

Parliament resumes next Tuesday and federal cabinet is scheduled to consider the report on Monday. With the Greens implacably opposed to sending asylum seekers offshore, the government will try to pressure the Coalition.

It is prepared to send asylum seekers to Nauru for processing if the Coalition allows it to send back to Malaysia 800 asylum seekers as a deterrent, an option the Immigration Department says is drastic but necessary if the boats are to be slowed or stopped.

But in a speech today to the Lowy Institute, the opposition's immigration spokesman, Scott Morrison, will draw a line under the Coalition's policy, which involves Nauru, temporary protection visas and using the navy to turn boats around.

While all parties agree that ultimately the best solution is a regional one, Mr Morrison will also argue that this should not entail setting up a regional processing centre.

"The Coalition believes that Labor's internationalist regional processing approach runs the risk of creating a regional asylum magnet that will only further encourage secondary movement and undermine the integrity of

existing regional resettlement programs, of which Australia is the primary participant," an extract of his speech says.

The Bali process, a regional dialogue established under the Howard government to deal with asylum seekers, should be refocused on deterrence, he will say.

He will accuse the government and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees of trying to recast the process "to focus on a regional processing agenda tied to resettlement opportunities, regardless of regional origin".

"Today's asylum seekers are secondary movers from Central Asia engaging in what the UNHCR refers to as 'forum shopping'," he will say.

Regional deterrence is as much about stopping planes from Malaysia arriving in Indonesia as it is about stopping the boats then coming to Australia, but the Coalition will never support the Malaysia plan because it is flawed, he will say.

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