



# LAW & SOCIETY TRUST

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PUBLIC DISCUSSION ON

## **“Stop the Boats!”: Australia’s border control practices in Sri Lanka**

***Emily Howie***

*An Australian lawyer and an intern with the Law & Society Trust. She has conducted research in Sri Lanka on the recent wave of boat migration to Australia. The research is funded by the David W Leebron Fellowship at Columbia University in New York.*

***Date : Monday, 04th March 2013***

***Time : 4.30 pm – 6.00 pm***

***Venue : Law & Society Trust, No. 3, Kynsey Terrace, Colombo 08.***

For at least three years the Australian and Sri Lankan governments have co-operated to combat people smuggling in Sri Lanka. This has included Australia providing resources, training and information to Sri Lankan authorities to assist in policing efforts and the interception of boats at sea. Australia also has a media-based awareness campaign warning people of the risks of migrating by boat.

Despite these measures, in 2012 an unprecedented number of Sri Lankans migrated to Australia by boat; over 6500 arrived in Australia in 2012, compared with just 211 arrivals in 2011. Three years after the end of the civil war, there is no simple explanation for the massive increase in the number of people leaving the country.

How do Australia and Sri Lanka cooperate to stop people smuggling? And why did so many people leave for Australia in 2012?

**For further Information please contact:**

Name : Harshani Connel

Tel. No.: 011-2691228/ 2684845 (Ext. 208)

E-mail : [lst.library2@gmail.com](mailto:lst.library2@gmail.com)