News from our network: Winter 2013

Alumnus providing a voice for refugees

We are proud to announce that alumnus **Abdul Hekmat** joined the Australian representative team at the UNHCR consultations in Geneva. Abdul contributed to June forums on Hazara refugees whose lives have been devastated by a spate of terrorist attacks in Pakistan. He and the team also gave voice to the struggles of Afghan refugees and asylum seekers in Iran, Greece and Christmas Island.

During the consultation process, they set in motion important agendas for executives to act upon in September, and they networked with key people from the UNHCR. Abdul said it was an experience of "*incredible and committed organisations coming together from around the world. I have networked with organisations from many countries that deal with Afghan refugees, Iran, Pakistan, Italy and a few others. Hopeful signs to continue to work in the future. I am very fortunate to be part of a very committed team from Australia, Graham Thom (Amnesty International), Paul Power (Refugee Council of Australia), David Manne (Immigration and legal Centre in Melbourne) and staff of Refugee Research Centre UNSW. We are the most effective and organised team at UNHCR and our work is really a standout here.*'

An article about the situation of Hazaras in Quetta written by Abdul Hekmat appeared in Online Opinion. **http://www.onlineopinion.com.au/view.asp?article=14591**

An interview with Sharon Rundle

Are you an Australian fiction writer with a South Asian background or heritage who has published a novel or short story collection during the past decade or will publish in the near future? Perhaps you are a publisher or reviewer of fiction by South Asian-Australian authors? If so, I am keen to interview you for my PhD research. I am asking for voluntary participants to assist me in researching the dynamics of local production of South Asian-Australian fiction over the past decade. My research has been approved by UTS. If you contact me, I can send

further details including information sheet and consent form. Please contact me at Sharon.P.Rundle@student.uts.edu.au.