

## Terror expert responds to claims terrorists are masquerading as asylum seekers

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ELIZABETH JACKSON: Indonesia's President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono might travel to Australia next month to nut out the details of what has been dubbed the Indonesia solution.

Australia is expected to provide at least \$50 million to its northern neighbour to boost its ability to intercept, process and accommodate asylum seekers headed for Australia.

Liberal backbencher Wilson Tuckey sparked outrage this week when he suggested that terrorists could be passing themselves off as asylum seekers.

But Singapore-based terrorism expert Rohan Gunaratna says Australia might have something to learn from Canada's recent experience with a boat of asylum seekers from Sri Lanka.

He spoke to our Indonesia correspondent Geoff Thompson.

ROHAN GUNARATNA: The ship Ocean Lady that was seized in Canada in Vancouver, the ship has now been identified as a Tamil Tiger owned and a Tamil Tiger operated vessel.

A number of individuals who were on board have been identified as Tamil Tigers. So at this point of time the Canadian Government is screening the individuals who are on board Princess Easwari.

GEOFF THOMPSON: This is the ship that's been renamed the Ocean Lady?

ROHAN GUNARATNA: The Ocean Lady and what has happened at this point is that the Canadian authorities are investigating how the ship came to Canada, the ports of call, from where the journey originated and who is basically running the Tamil Tiger shipping network that is engaged in human smuggling operations.

GEOFF THOMPSON: If one was to categorise the Tamil Tigers as terrorists, as they are in some parts of the world, would this give some credence to Wilson Tuckey's allegations that one of the dangers of people smuggling is that terrorists could be on board?

ROHAN GUNARATNA: Certainly in the case of the ship that has been seized in Canada, it is now clear that it is a Tamil Tiger owned and operated ship, and the individuals who are wanted on board that ship that have (inaudible) in acts of terrorism and violence.

Certainly not all ships that are transporting people are managed by terrorist, but in the case of the Ocean Lady it is a Tamil Tiger ship that had been also used in the past to smuggle weapons from North Korea to Sri Lanka.

And there are other Tamil Tiger ships that are currently in operation in South East Asia.

GEOFF THOMPSON: So, do you have knowledge of there being Tamil Tiger ships being used for people smuggling in and around Indonesia?

ROHAN GUNARATNA: At this point of time the only instance where we have confirmed information is the

ship that has been seized by the Canadian authorities.

ELIZABETH JACKSON: That's Singapore-based terrorism expert Rohan Gunaratna speaking with our Indonesia correspondent Geoff Thompson.