The Hon Clare O'Neil MP
Minister for Home Affairs
Minister for Cyber Security

Ref No: MC24-008835

Mr Paul Power
Chief Executive Officer
Refugee Council of Australia
410 Elizabeth Street
SURRY HILLS NSW 2010

Dear Mr Power Paul

Thank you for your correspondence of 28 March 2024 concerning regional processing arrangements in Nauru. I greatly appreciate the time you have taken to write to me as the Minister for Home Affairs and Minister for Cyber Security and bringing this matter to my attention.

While a humane approach to irregular migration is required, we must also ensure that new people smuggling ventures do not reach our shores. As such, the Government has committed to maintain strong border protection measures, including regional processing. Under this approach, people who attempt to travel to Australia irregularly by boat will not be settled in Australia. These policy settings have successfully stemmed the flow of irregular maritime ventures to Australia, disrupted people smuggling operations in the region and prevented loss of life at sea.

The Government of Nauru is responsible for the implementation of regional processing arrangements in Nauru, including the management of individuals under those arrangements. Australia supports Nauru to implement arrangements through the provision of contracted service providers.

Individuals in Nauru have access to health and welfare services and supported to engage with durable migration options. Clinical assessment and treatment is provided by a multi-disciplinary team of health practitioners, including general practitioners and nurses. Additionally, where there is a clinically indicated need for specialist medical treatment that is not available in Nauru, mechanisms are in place for treatment to be provided elsewhere.

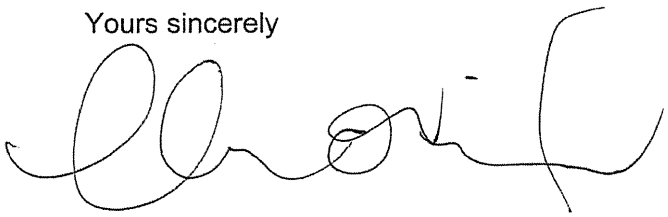
The Government of Nauru is responsible for the assessment of protection claims for people transferred to Nauru under current regional processing arrangements. Australia supports Nauru to develop this capability by the provision of contracted services providers. The Department currently contracts Craddock Murray Neumann Lawyers to provide support to individuals in preparing their protection claims and engaging with durable migration outcomes.

Decisions regarding the freedom of movement and accommodation of individuals in Nauru, including the legal basis for such decisions, are a matter for the Government of Nauru. Subject to the decisions of the Government of Nauru, individuals will generally transition to accommodation in the Nauruan community after an initial reception and quarantine period.

Regular updates regarding unauthorised maritime arrivals and transitory persons under regional processing arrangements, including statistics, are made available at: https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/about-us/what-we-do/border-protection/regional-processing-and-resettlement.

Thank you for bringing these concerns to my attention.

Yours sincerely



CLARE O'NEIL

25 / 7 / 2024