



Nauru Bulletin

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Nauru consultations for UPR shadow report

The Justice Department in partnership with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community Regional Rights Resources Team (RRRT) organised and facilitated the Universal Periodical Review Shadow Report Consultation workshop for civil society organisations this month (2-6 March).

Romulo Nayacalevu from the RRRT conducted the consultation workshop and encouraged the participants to be broad with suggestions and to use the opportunity to help strengthen local laws and mechanisms in regards to human rights issues in Nauru.

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a unique mechanism of the Human Rights Council (HRC) aimed at improving the human rights situation and addressing human rights violations in each of 193 Member States of the United Nations (UN) – including Nauru.

The UPR has a four and a half year cycle for each review. Three reports are involved in each review. There is the State prepared report, and the second is the Shadow Report from civil society organisations, non-government organisation and national human rights institutions; the third report comes from the United Nations and recommendations from other government's on each country report.

Several reports from CSO and NGO's were already presented to Mr Nayacalevu at the time of the shadow report consultation (2 Mar). They include reports from Aiwo Community; the Nauru Disabled Peoples' Association; Evergreen Concern Group; Seven Day Adventist church; and a joint submission by the Nauru Island NGO, Community

Paralegals, Catholic Women's group, members of the Nauru Provident Fund and Superannuation Fund.

At the opening, Solicitor-General and Acting Secretary for Justice Graham Leung said under the mechanism of the UPR, "the human rights situation of all UN Member States is reviewed every four and a half years where the states

are progressively drafting the CRC and CRPD state reports. This will form part of government's overall report to the Human Rights Council.

Mr Leung urged the participants to use this opportunity to tell their story and to fully highlight areas of concern where they felt human rights can be improved but "more importantly how your organisations can assist government with the greater realisation of human rights in Nauru."

Nauru has ratified the refugee convention and four of the nine core UN human rights treaties. Those treaties are the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the convention against torture (CAT), and the convention for people with disabilities (CRPD).

Ratifying a treaty does not mean it becomes law of that country; however countries are reviewed by the UN for compliance. Countries may also amend local laws to incorporate the conventions.

The country reports are due by mid-2015 before the presentation to the UN in Geneva in November this year. There Nauru will have the opportunity to share its human rights story with the international community. Nauru will also highlight any challenges, constraints and problems it has faced in the implementation of its human rights obligations.

This years' consultation and reporting will review the reports made in the last cycle of the review in 2011•



Romulo Nayacalevu from RRRT facilitated the consultation workshop for the UPR shadow report

declare what actions they have taken to act upon the conventions they have ratified and how they have implemented the agreed recommendations for the previous rounds of reporting."

"By submitting a shadow report to the Human Rights Council, non-government organisations such as yourselves and ones that you represent can highlight issues that were or have not been raised by Government in the State Report. This balances the responsibility of the civil society and Government in gauging and monitoring progress (or lack thereof) in human rights," Mr Leung said.

"Presently, various Nauru government departments are in the final stages of completing the CEDAW state report and

Asylum seekers participate in open centre program

The Government of Nauru commenced its Open Centre arrangement that allows a select number of asylum seekers from the Regional Processing Centre (RPC) access across the community for certain hours of the day.

Initially this access will be for three days a week, from 9am to 5pm.

On the first day – Wednesday 25 February up to 20 asylum seekers were involved with the new program, up to 20 on Saturday 28 February and up to 50 on Monday 2 March. The number of asylum seekers participating each week will be determined as the weeks progress.

Women with children aged four and below were the first to take part in the program on 25 February.

The number of participants in the open centre on each of the three days varies and according to the program organisers there have been good feedback from participants who have been enjoying swimming, catching up with friends already with refugee status and generally moving about the community.

The highest number of participants so far was 52 on Monday 9 March.

The idea of Open Centre came about following discussions about the effects of extended time spent in the camps. Hence, the Government of Nauru will trial the Open Centre in the hopes it will ease some of the tension and frustration and prepare the asylum seekers for a future in the Nauru community if they are to be deemed genuine refugees through the status determination process.

Prior to participating in Open Centre, all asylum seekers will have been given training and education about Nauruan culture, general behaviour and conduct, and boundaries around private



Anibare Bay harbour is one of the most frequented by locals, refugees and asylum seekers where members of the Nauru Surf and Life Saving Club keep watch most of the day.

homes as well as restricted areas such as the airport runway, fuel farm and the power station.

All participants of the Open Centre will agree to and sign an Open Centre Code of Conduct agreeing to their responsibilities and conduct outside camp.

Additional community liaison officers are stationed in each district to cater for the Open Centre.

The total number of asylum seekers involved in the program in total will be determined soon by the Minister of Justice in consultation with community leaders and government.

Local churches hold luncheon for participants

On Saturday 7 March, a lunch was provided by the local churches for the 50 asylum seekers who were participating in the Open Centre program.

Unfortunately no asylum seekers came to the lunch despite personal invitations. A church leader said locals - who had prepared a feast and had practised a special song of welcome - were “disappointed but would continue to extend the hand of welcome”•

Independence day congratulatory messages

[Note these two extra messages were received after the special edition for congratulatory messages was published]

A Message from Her Excellency Marie-Louise Coleiro Precca

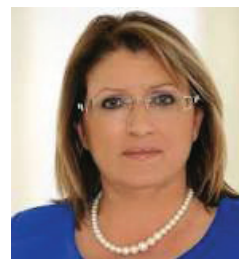
President of the Republic of Malta

Excellency,

On the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of Nauru, it is with great pleasure that I convey heartfelt greetings and felicitations on my own behalf and on behalf of the People of Malta to Your Excellency as well as to the Government and the People of Nauru.

The coming months will offer us the opportunity to exchange ideas in the context of talks leading to concrete decisions being taken to foster renewed cooperation of the Commonwealth at the Heads of Government meeting to take place in Malta in November.

I avail myself of this opportunity to wish Your Excellency good health and serenity as well as continued progress to your island state. I also express my confidence that the excellent relations that exist between our two countries will continue to be strengthened for the benefit of our citizens•



A Message from His Excellency Dr Tony Tan Keng

President of the Republic of Singapore

Your Excellency

On the auspicious occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of Nauru, I wish to extend on behalf of the people of Singapore, my most sincere congratulations and best wishes for the peace, progress and prosperity of your country and people•



Government urges community to be calm amidst refugee protests

Refugees living in the Nauru community have staged several protests in the past month prompting the Nauru Government to call for calm among the community and “let the police do their job.”

Following initial protests by refugees on the island Nauru’s President Baron Waqa has told refugees that the Government is sensitive to their grievances but will not accept violence or any refusal to obey the laws.

Around 150 refugees staged their first protest on Friday 27 February walking a couple hundred metres on the main road before being stopped by police to avoid disrupting traffic.

Refugees threw stones at police resulting in injury to three officers and damage to a police vehicle.

Nauru’s Minister for Justice Hon David Adeang is calling for calm by sending a message on local media for Nauruans to keep calm and let the police do their job.

There have been no reports of violence among locals and protesting refugees and police are ensuring law and order is maintained on the island.

In an earlier statement the government said the Nauru Police will uphold law and order and the Government of Nauru condemns the actions of those who are wilfully breaking the law.

Furthermore the Government is disappointed in the actions of these few people, when they have been welcomed as guests in Nauru and provided them with a safe environment.

The priority of the Government is the safety of its citizens and expects its laws to be upheld.

During initial protests refugees disregarded requests by government settlement workers and the police in keeping to the guidelines allowing them to conduct peaceful protests.

Those guidelines involve a written submission advising the number of people that intend to participate, the venue, time and date.

This information serves to assist police in escorting the protesters and conduct crowd control during their requested times. Those guidelines have been ignored.

“They had the opportunity to stage peaceful protests but refused. They were asked to respect our Christian culture and not protest on a Sunday, but they refused,” Minister Adeang said.

“Instead they insisted on breaking the law by blocking traffic and refused police requests to move, even goading police to arrest them.

The Minister said reports of children being arrested were wrong, however some refugees were placing their children in front of them, using them as shields when police tried to arrest them.

“These troublemakers are not innocent victims and should not be portrayed as such. They are trying to manipulate the media and public, and we will not play their game.”

On Wednesday 4 March 183 refugees were arrested following another protest that day. However, all 183 were released on bail.

One Nauruan national was arrested and charged with assaulting a refugee.

However refugees have been advised and messaged again about keeping inside their grounds. This resulted in the most recent demonstrations being conducted within and around the perimeter of their accommodation area.

Nauru’s Justice Minister has also revealed that refugees who do not wish to participate in unlawful protests are being threatened by other refugees.

Mr Adeang said physical threats have been made to many refugees and their children who “simply want to enjoy a peaceful life on Nauru”, including several who are employed by the Government.

At least one refugee has been moved from his accommodation to an undisclosed location for his safety after he was visited by four other refugees who threatened him physically if he did not take part in protest activity and did not quit his job.

Police are currently investigating the threats.

“It should be known that most refugees living on Nauru are peaceful and law-abiding, but as we saw with the riots in 2013 when the processing centre was set on fire, and as we have seen over the past few days of civil disobedience, some have a blatant disregard for the law,” he said.

The Nauru Police will continue to uphold law and order and maintain peace for the community.

In a police statement on 6 March, it stated that “the Nauru Police continue to liaise with refugees and hope that this situation can be resolved without further conflict. This however, is a matter for the refugees themselves. Police have no choice but to act if the law is broken.”•

Nauru Airlines operates for SolAir

Nauru’s national carrier Nauru Airlines commenced operating services on behalf of Solomon Airlines last week, Wednesday 11 March.

The airline said in a media statement the service will continue while the Solomon Airlines aircraft is positioned overseas for a planned heavy maintenance check.

Nauru Airlines will fly all of Solomon Airlines services to all its international destinations of Brisbane, Honiara, Vila and Nadi for the next three to four weeks, totalling some 33 hours each week of extra flying operations for Nauru Airlines.



“We are pleased that the Management of Solomon airlines have chosen Nauru Airlines for this important work and we are also pleased to be able to assist one of our closest neighbouring countries in this way,” CEO Nauru Airlines Geoff Bowmaker said•

Nauru and Australia reaffirm commitment to RPC arrangements

The Government of Nauru met with Australia's new immigration minister last month reaffirming both governments' commitment to regional processing arrangements and resettlement of refugees as well as open camp arrangements.

Shortly after arriving on the morning of 18 February the Australian Minister for Immigration and Border Protection Peter Dutton, met with President Baron Waqa followed by separate meetings with Minister for Justice and Border Control Hon David Adeang and Minister for Education Hon Charmaine Scotty in relation to development and assistance for education.

Mr Adeang said Peter Dutton's first visit to Nauru as Australian immigration minister is positive and reiterates existing plans and ideas surrounding the RPC.



Australia's Minister for Immigration Peter Dutton (R) and Lieutenant General Angus Campbell in a meeting with President Waqa and Nauru officials

Current assistance and support from the Australian government are ongoing with additional talks on a five-year plan for Nauru.

Minister Adeang said a five-year plan will provide the government certainty around planning and budgeting for the nations' future.

The five year plan will be jointly owned by the Government of Nauru and Australia and reflect the commitments and understandings between the two governments relating to the processing and settlement of persons transferred to Nauru in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding between Nauru and Australia.

The plan constitutes a commitment between the Governments of Australia and Nauru on the nature and level of resources to be provided by the two governments between 2015 and 2019 for services and infrastructure in Nauru.

Mr Dutton also visited the RPC and is pleased with the good work being done by Nauruan staff at the RPC and is keen to see that develop.

Mr Dutton said that Australia will provide support to Nauru in what has been very responsible action by Nauru and Nauruans in relation to the RPC.

Mr Dutton and his delegation which included Lieutenant General Angus Campbell, Deputy Secretary Cindy Briscoe, and media advisor John Wiseman arrived on 18 February on a private jet.

The delegation also went on site visits to the Republic of Nauru Hospital and shown refugee settlement lodgings. They departed Nauru on Thursday 19 February.

HR holds training for middle management

The Human Resources & Labour office engaged the Australian Human Resources Institute (AHRI) to conduct a capacity and professional development training as part of the Nauru Government's commitment to strengthen its human resource capacity in the public service to enable the delivery of effective and efficient service to its people.

Phase one of the training was conducted from Monday 23 to Friday 27 February covering four modules of strategies for attraction; recruitment and retention; interviewing skills for managers; communications - having difficult conversations; and managing people performance.



Trainer Scott Bourke (centre back row) with program participants

Scott Bourke of the AHRI conducted and facilitated the week long course and enlightened the participants that the course was world class training from a world class institution – the AHRI.

At the opening of the course His Excellency President Baron Waqa said "the need to train staff and develop existing talents within NPS has never been demanding ever before given the challenges and speed of change evolving around us today."

"It is my firm belief that through this integration you all will take something away from this program hence champion NPS as an employer of choice where our principle undertaking is to serve our people," President Waqa said.

The government's Senior Human Resources Adviser Maritino Nemani urged the participants to fully engage in the course and ask questions so the benefits and capability building gained from the week are maximised.

The 25 participants from different departments involved middle management level such as managers, directors and a secretary level employee.

On the final day President Waqa conferred the certificates of attendance and completion for each of the modules.

To conclude nurse Moralene Capelle spoke on behalf of the participants thanking Mr Bourke and expressed that the knowledge shared and learned over the week have been beneficial and was sure the benefits would go a long way with their respective jobs and departments.

Phase two of the training will be the accredited Australian Human Resource Management Certificate IV Qualifications and will be held in mid-2015.

The course was arranged by the Chief Secretary's Human Resources Office, funded by the Nauru Government and conducted by the Australian Human Resources Institute.

Partnership talks for UNDAF review

The Government of Nauru and representatives of the United Nations held partnership talks last week (13 March) to address Nauru's priorities against the National Sustainable Development Program (NSDP) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

The objective of the talks is to highlight UN program results achieved in Nauru against the NSDP and UNDAF, discuss program implementation issues and strategically develop way forward to improve program implementation in 2015.

"My government is happy to see the UN engaged in Nauru under various programmes and I would like to encourage all government departments to make use of the UN's special expertise. As a small island state, Nauru has its share of development challenges especially in capacity issues.

"The presence of the UN today is a reminder that various institutions exist to assist countries like Nauru and my government is thankful for this," President Waqa said.

UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative Ms Osnat Lubrani responded with words of thanks and highlighted that 2015 is an important year for UN countries as it is a time to measure how they fair in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Ms Osnat said Nauru has played a leadership role in climate change issues highlighting Nauru's then chairmanship of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) and the group of Small Island Developing States (SIDS).



H.E President Baron Waqa and UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative Ms Osnat Lubrani (centre) with UN representatives and officials from the various government departments that took part in the UNDAF review for Nauru

The review involves government departments that have implemented programs. Outcome documents were presented by several departments that covered environment management, climate and disaster risk management; gender equality; inclusive economic growth and poverty reduction; basic services (health and education); and governance.

Ms Lubrani said the UN sets and aligns priorities according to the needs of the people and while the UN is not a donor, it has a lot of expertise to bring to the member countries.

This review is an annual review similar to the process of the National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS), to see progress, achievements or look at the challenges as well as assess what has been set as Nauru's priorities for the coming year.

Ms Lubrani presents credentials as new UN representative

Ms Osnat Lubrani presented her credentials to President Waqa last week Tuesday 10 March, as the new UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative.

Following her presentation Ms Lubrani made courtesy calls on cabinet ministers, senior government officials and Australian High Commissioner Martin Quinn.

Ms Lubrani also toured topside, as well as the Republic of Nauru (RON) Hospital and the women's safe house•



H.E President Baron Waqa and UN resident representative Osnat Lubrani at the opening of the UNDAF Review

Signing formalises Nauru's participation in the NZ seasonal worker program

The Seasonal Worker unit within the Department of Foreign Affairs held a signing ceremony on Tuesday 3 March for the Recognised Seasonal Employment Inter-Agency Understanding with New Zealand officials formalising Nauru's participation in the Seasonal Workers Program (SWP) New Zealand.

Chief Secretary Bernard Grundler delivered opening remarks firstly thanking New Zealand for the employment opportunity and encouraged the Nauruan workers to be diligent and work hard for their employer and their own families.

Twenty workers have been selected to participate in this round of the scheme.

Nauru has been absent from the scheme for several years until two years ago when local officials from the unit - Director for Trade Masau Detudamo and SWP coordinator Miniva Harris reconnected with New Zealand to reintroduce Nauru's interest in returning to the program.



Chief Secretary Bernard Grundler and CEO for New Zealand Immigration Nigel Bickle sign the inter-agency understanding formalising Nauru's participation in the recognised NZ seasonal worker scheme

The program expands labour employment opportunities abroad for Nauruans as part of the government policy for SWP.

The two New Zealand officials that were on island for the signing were CEO for New Zealand Immigration Nigel Bickle and RSE Relationship Manager Lafaele Lupo.

Mr Lupo visited Nauru late last year with kiwifruit employer Aongatete who also represented another employer EastPack to meet and select the final 20 workers for this years' recruitment. Both employers are from New Zealand's Bay of Plenty.

In his response speech Mr Bickle shared success stories of other pacific islanders and said that Vanuatu has 3000 workers participating in the scheme collectively earning approximately \$40-million a year.

The Inter-Agency Understanding is reviewed every two years. The New Zealand government has increased the number of seasonal workers overall from 8000 to 9000•

The Nauru Bulletin is a fortnightly publication of the Government of the Republic of Nauru.

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