

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

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Nauru: Amnesty International Regrets Nauru's Continued Refusal to Allow International Access to the Island

Human Rights Council adopts Universal Periodic Review outcome on Nauru

At its review in November, Nauru acknowledged the value of the UPR in addressing human rights challenges and accepted the majority of the recommendations made to it by other states.

Amnesty International is concerned, however, that despite its commitments during the review to welcome the media to Nauru,¹ the government has since 2014 refused to grant access to international monitors, including Amnesty International, other NGOs and independent journalists. The organisation is therefore disappointed that Nauru has rejected recommendations to allow international media organizations and independent observers' access to Nauru, and to reduce prohibitively expensive visa fees.²

Amnesty International has made two requests for permission to visit Nauru since the review last November; however, our requests have been met with silence.

On 19 February 2016 Nauru suspended all Australian and New Zealand visitor visas until further notice, reportedly as a reaction to a journalist attempting to enter the country without the appropriate visa. Amnesty International calls on Nauru to deliver on its commitment to allow access to the country for the media.

Amnesty International also remains seriously concerned about the risk of human rights violations and abuses against refugees and asylum-seekers on Nauru, in light of credible reports of sexual violence and harassment against them. The organisation has repeatedly called on both Australia and Nauru to live up to their international obligation towards people seeking international protection.³

Amnesty International is therefore very disappointed to note that Nauru rejected recommendations to respect the rights of asylum-seekers and refugees by ending its arrangement to provide offshore

¹ Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review – Nauru*, A/HRC/31/7, 5 November 2015, paragraph 43.

² A/HRC/31/7, recommendations 87.14 (Germany), 87.15 (New Zealand), 87.16 (Timor Leste), 87.20 (Spain) and 87.21 (France); Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review – Nepal (Addendum)*, A/HRC/31/7/Add.1, 14 March 2016, paras. 21, 22 and 25.

³ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/asia-and-the-pacific/nauru/report-nauru/>

detention and processing of asylum-seekers and refugees,⁴ and to provide the necessary protection and support to asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, particularly unaccompanied children.⁵

Finally, Amnesty International regrets Nauru's rejection of recommendations to strengthen the independence of the judiciary,⁶ as well as to guarantee access to the internet, including social media.⁷

Background

The UN Human Rights Council adopted the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review of Nauru on 16 March 2016 during its 31st session. Prior to the adoption of the review outcome, Amnesty International delivered the oral statement above. Amnesty International also submitted information in advance of the review in November 2015:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa42/2279/2015/en/>

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⁴ A/HRC/31/7, recommendation 87.27 (Kenya); A/HRC/31/7/Add.1, para. 25.

⁵ A/HRC/31/7, recommendations 87.19 (New Zealand) and 87.26 (Fiji); A/HRC/31/7/Add.1, para. 25.

⁶ A/HRC/31/7, recommendation 87.18 (Costa Rica); A/HRC/31/7/Add.1, para. 24.

⁷ A/HRC/31/7, recommendation 87.14 (Germany) and 87.18 (Costa Rica); A/HRC/31/7/Add.1, para. 21 and 24.