

Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative

47th Regular Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council

Item 6: Universal Periodic Review - Outcome Adoption of Nauru

Oral statement delivered by the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI)

Thursday, 8 July 2021

The Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) commends The Republic of Nauru for supporting 132 out of the 156 recommendations received during this UPR cycle. We welcome the positive developments highlighted in the National Report such as efforts towards legislative reforms, domestication of human rights treaties, tackling gender-based violence and climate change.

However, we regret that Nauru has noted 24 recommendations on issues that have been widely raised by Member States and other stakeholders.

First, we acknowledge the decriminalisation of consensual same-sex relations between adults is a step towards ensuring dignity and equality to all. However, Nauru has noted all recommendations on the issue and has stated that it does not recognise same-sex partnerships or accept alternative sexualities and gender identities. We urge Nauru to reconsider its position and take steps towards adopting a comprehensive law prohibiting all discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Secondly, we reiterate that prohibitively high visa fees for foreign journalists and existing immigration regulations have the effect of obstructing access to media and civil society. We call on Nauru to enact and implement an access to information law to supplement the work of the Government Information Office (GIO) and facilitate transparency and independent reporting from the country.

Thirdly, we join States and other stakeholders in raising concerns over the rights of the existing refugees and asylum seekers in Nauru pending transfer. We regret that Nauru has not responded to the visit requests from the UNHCR throughout 2019 to monitor the situation. We urge Nauru to guarantee and strengthen the protection to asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, including access to quality health care.

Lastly, we urge Nauru to expedite the process of ratification of the ICCPR and ICESCR, and of establishing an independent National Human Rights Institution in accordance with the Paris Principles.

Thank you.