

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

**BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 22 May 2006**

IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

### **(148) Output 1.2: Refugee and Humanitarian Entry and Stay**

Senator Hurley (L&C 142 and written) asked:

1. Has a third country accepted the two refugees on Nauru to settle?
2. How many have been approached?
3. How were these approaches conducted?
4. What reasons have been given for the rejections?
5. Have these countries been informed of the adverse security assessments?
6. Given that it has been more than six months, do you think it is realistic that another country will take them? If not, should they be brought to Australia?
7. How long do you expect them to be on Nauru?
8. How long a stay on Nauru is acceptable? Would it be acceptable if Mr Sagar and Mr Faisal were to remain on Nauru for the rest of their lives?
9. Does DIMA consider the current situation as satisfactory?
10. Has DIMA, alone or in conjunction with ASIO, examined the possibility of bringing them to live in Australia, perhaps with some restrictions (such as reporting to police etc?)

*Answer:*

1. No.
2. The Australian government has approached a number of countries over time in relation to resettlement of residual groups of refugees on Nauru. In relation to the last two people, the principal focus of effort has been through UNHCR, as the expert organisation for world resettlement referrals, which has approached several countries on their behalf. In addition to UNHCR's efforts, Australia has approached a further country not approached by UNHCR.
3. UNHCR made its approaches through its usual processes. Australian approaches have usually been at official level, but have varied depending on the country concerned.
4. The countries did not give reasons.
5. Yes, those countries approached solely in relation to the two men have been informed.
6. The Department and UNHCR are continuing to consider options for a permanent resolution to the men's situation.

7. The men will remain in Nauru until their situation is otherwise resolved, through third country resettlement or voluntary return once it is safe.
8. The Department's preference is to see Messrs Sagar and Faisal's situation permanently resolved. The report by the delegation of experts is expected to be with the Minister shortly.
9. See answer to part 8.
10. DIMA has advised Government on a range of options available to resolve the status of the two men.