

Consular Privileges and Immunities (Amendment) Bill 2012

SECOND READING SPEECH

Hon Dr Kieren Keke MP

21 December 2012

Mr Speaker,

It gives me great pleasure to introduce to the House today the *Consular Privileges and Immunities (Amendment) Bill 2012*.

This Bill proposes to amend the *Consular Privileges and Immunities Act 1976* to give further effect to Nauru's obligations, responsibilities and rights under the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, which was acceded to by Nauru on 3 December 2012.

Although the Act was certified and commenced operation in Nauru on 29 October 1976, it gave only limited effect to the Convention. By acceding to the Convention Nauru is now in a position to not only give full effect to the Convention in Nauru, but also to be entitled in other nations to the rights and benefits of being a State party to the Convention.

The Convention establishes the international framework for the operation of consulates, the functions of consular officers and the privileges and immunities granted to consular officials. Consular relations are an important part of international relations between States. In simple terms, consulates and consular officials promote social, cultural, economic, commercial and scientific relations between States in a practical and personal way. These are extremely important relations which Nauru will be able to establish with the status of a State party to the Convention.

As a party to the Convention with domestic consular laws in operation, Nauru will be entitled to receive consular officials in Nauru, but also to set up consulates and consular officials in other nations that will be entitled to the rights and privileges accorded by the Convention. In this way Nauruans, both in Nauru and other countries, will benefit.

The Bill proposes to incorporate into Nauruan law the Articles of the Convention that are listed in the Schedule to the Bill. The incorporation of those Articles is subject to any interpretation in accordance with the Act as is currently exists.

Mr Speaker, the explanatory memorandum describes in detail each provision of the Bill.

I commend the Bill to the House.