

REPUBLIC OF NAURU

CRIMES BILL 2016

SECOND READING SPEECH

Honorable David Adeang MP

12th May 2016

Mr. Speaker Sir,

I have the pleasure of introducing to the House today a Bill for the *Crimes Act 2016*.

The criminal laws of a country establish a standard of conduct by which all people must abide. It provides a means to maintain public order, protect people and their property and, for those who violate it, the Crimes Bill ensures they are punished in a just manner. Therefore it is important that Nauru's criminal law reflects the standards of conduct and morality that are not only appropriate for today's society, but reflective of the society we want to have. The current *Criminal Code 1899* was written in Queensland to reflect both a different time and context. The time has come for Nauru to replace this Code with a law that is adapted to our time and our culture.

The Crimes Bill simplifies, modernizes and strengthens the criminal offences in Nauru. A major inclusion in this legislation is greater protections in relation to sexual offences, particularly where children are victims. New offences have also been included to address the criminal misuse of modern technologies and emerging trends of criminal behavior.

The modernization and strengthening of these offences supports compliance with our international legal obligations under core human rights treaties. All the offences in the Bill will apply equally to men and women, reflecting the gender equality towards which we strive.

Changes have also been made to update criminal penalties by removing punishments that are inconsistent with international human rights standards and out of touch with our sense of justice. Penalties for sexual offences, particularly relating to children, have been increased to protect those that are most vulnerable from being abused.

Mr. Speaker, there is a detailed explanatory memorandum accompanying this Bill which explains the provisions in more detail.

This Bill promotes more effective and efficient law enforcement, while protecting the human rights of victims and defendants. Therefore by passing this important Bill we take a great stride towards a more just and secure country.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the Bill to the House.