



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

DEC 9 2016

The Honorable
Charles E. Grassley, Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your November 22 letter expressing concerns regarding U.S. resettlement consideration of refugees located in Nauru and Papua New Guinea.

The United States has agreed to consider referrals from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) of refugees who are of special interest to UNHCR now residing in Nauru and Papua New Guinea through the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP). Our arrangement to accept these refugee referrals does not require a legally-binding international agreement or any changes to the size or scope of the USRAP; in fact, these numbers will be charged to the region of their country of origin discussed in our consultations with Congress and issued in the Presidential Determination.

Regarding your concern about considering refugee referrals from the countries highlighted in your letter, these nationalities are not new to the USRAP. The United States already considers UNHCR referrals and resettles refugees from all of the countries noted in your letter both in East Asia and worldwide.

The USRAP continues to implement thorough security vetting procedures for refugees of all nationalities, and the United States will not accept any refugees for resettlement, under this arrangement or otherwise, unless they pass all required security vetting.

We have also provided additional details on this arrangement in a classified briefing with your staff on November 30.

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We hope this information is useful. Please do not hesitate to contact us for further information on this or any other matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Julia Frifield". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Julia Frifield
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs