



MINISTRY OF IMMIGRATION AND BORDER SECURITY **OFFICE OF THE MINISTER**

MEDIA STATEMENT **BY**

MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND BORDER SECURITY
HON. PETRUS THOMAS, MP

ALL REFUGEES AND NON-REFUGEES NOW RESIDING AT NEW FACILITIES

The Minister for Immigration and Border Security Hon. Petrus Thomas, MP said today that the remaining 387 refugees and non-refugees at the decommissioned Manus Regional Processing Centre (MRPC) have all moved to the new facilities with the assistance of immigration officers and Police on 24 November.

"I would like to thank the refugees and non-refugees for moving for the best interest of their health and wellbeing. Immigration will work closely with the service providers at the new facilities to ensure that the basic needs and concerns of these people are catered for," said Minister Thomas.

"Minister Thomas said that the decommissioned MRPC is no longer a place of immigration detention and that the new accommodation facilities have been gazetted and declared as relocation centre for refugees and place of immigration detention effective as of 1 November. Refugees and non-refugees have also been directed to reside at the new relocation centres and place of immigration detention by way of gazette notice as well and the Chief Migration Officer has been appointed as the Administrator of the new facilities ".

"Immigration no longer has authority to keep any asylum seeker at the decommissioned MRPC and the place has reverted to the PNG Defence Force as a military base. Anyone remaining would be residing unlawfully and is subject to be evicted by the PNG Defence Force. Immigration and service providers no longer have any authority to restore any services and to operate at Lombrum naval base", said Minister Thomas.

"I would also like to acknowledge and thank the Police, PNG Defence Force, Provincial Health Authority and all other stakeholders for their support and cooperation over the past three weeks in monitoring the health situation at the

decommissioned MRPC and in supporting Immigration in moving the remaining residents out of Lombrum to the new facilities, said Minister Thomas”.

“The Police and immigration officers have encouraged the remaining residents to move for their own good to avoid an imminent health disaster if the residents remained for another day. Reports of excessive force and beating of refugees and non-refugees are false and propagated by individuals with ulterior motives to seek attention”, said Minister Thomas.

“I welcome the presence and expression of providing assistance to PNG from international organisations and non-governmental organisations on the ground in Manus and request that they work alongside relevant PNG government agencies and departments to provide any form of support and not directly engaging with refugees and non-refugees as that is the role of contracted service providers such as International Health Medical Services”, said Minister Thomas.

“I also encourage these international partners to verify accounts and include facts in their reporting and recognise the efforts of the PNG Government and its agencies in dealing with this very complex and challenging situation having constant regional and international media coverage which have been handled very well and professionally over the past three weeks”, said Minister Thomas.

“Minister Thomas thanked the Manus people for their resilience, understanding and hospitality of the refugees and non-refugees and their support to the government agencies in Manus”.

“I want to reassure the people of Manus that the government through my Ministry, PNG Immigration and the State Negotiation Team led by the Chief Secretary will discuss with Australian officials a timeframe to resettle refugees to third countries and return those that are non-refugees to their home countries so that this arrangement in Manus can come to a close, said Minister Thomas”.



Hon. Petrus Thomas, MP

Minister for Immigration and Border Security

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