



16 April 2018

Dear Minister,

I welcomed the opportunity to speak with you today alongside Lord Ahmad, and I look forward to working with you going forward. As discussed, I wanted to write to you setting out the commitments that the Government announced today to support the 'Windrush' generation.

This is a unique cohort of people who are entitled to reside here lawfully and access public services. The Government recognises and celebrates their contribution to this country and I very much regret any anxiety that uncertainty over their status may have caused. We believe that the vast majority of such individuals will already have documentation that proves their right to be here. For those who do not already have a document we wish to work with them to enable them to obtain one which attests to their status. That is why, earlier today, the Home Secretary made a number of important announcements in that regard, as we wish to improve the service to this group of people.

To begin with, we will create a new team dedicated to helping these people evidence their right to be in this country and access services. They will work across government to help these applicants prove they have been living or working in the UK and provide a picture of their lives here. Our starting point will be to do as much work as possible for the individuals and make every effort to ensure that they do not need to use lawyers. Instead, our team will help and guide them through the processes whilst doing much of the evidence gathering for them. Once the evidence has been collected showing they are entitled to live in the UK the Home Office will aim to resolve cases within two weeks.

Clearly we need individuals to come forward and engage with us in this process. As a result we have set up a webpage [www.gov.uk/government/publications/undocumented-commonwealth-citizens-resident-in-the-uk] for people with concerns and will establish a dedicated contact point for individuals. We are also setting up a hotline for Members of Parliament to ensure that we can act fairly, efficiently and effectively for the Windrush generation, which is so valued in this country. Furthermore, we have been engaging with charities, community groups and would greatly appreciate any assistance to use you and your network to assist with identifying and encouraging relevant individuals to come forward and obtain the necessary documentation.

We also recognise that some individuals may be worried about costs or their immigration status and what the consequences of coming forward will be for them and their relatives. I wish to reassure you, and them, on both these points. First, it is our intention that no individual should be left out of pocket as they go through this process and, given the uniqueness of the situation this group find themselves in, they will not pay for this documentation. Secondly, we would also like to reassure you that there will be no removals or detention as part of any assistance to help these citizens get their proper documentation in place.

We welcome your input and feedback. Tomorrow your Prime Minister will have the opportunity to meet with our Prime Minister to hear if there is any more that can be done to help allay people's concerns and the Home Secretary will also be meeting with High Commissioners later this week to discuss this crucial issue.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Caroline Nokes". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Rt Hon Caroline Nokes MP
Minister of State for Immigration