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Note No. 014/14

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Singapore to the United Nations Office and other International Organisations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and has the honour to refer to the letter from the OHCHR dated 12 December 2013 conveying the Joint Allegation Letter referenced AL Health (2002-7) G/SO 214 (106-10) SGP 2/2013 of 12 December 2013 from the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health Mr Anand Grover, and the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants Mr Francois Crepeau to the Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations, Ms Tan Yee Woan.

The Permanent Mission has the further honour to seek the assistance of the Office in transmitting the enclosed reply from Singapore to Mr Grover and Mr Crepeau.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Singapore to the United Nations Office and other International Organisations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.

GENEVA

4 February 2014

Special Procedures Branch
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights





PERMANENT MISSION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

4 February 2014

Mr Anand Grover
Special Rapporteur of the Right of Everyone to the enjoyment
of the highest Attainable Standard of Physical and Mental Health

Mr François Crépeau
Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants

Dear Mr Grover and Mr Crépeau,

Communication from Special Procedures
Joint Allegation Letter AL Health (2002-7) G/SO 214 (106-10) SGP 2/2013

I refer to your letter of 12th December 2013 in relation to the case of Mr
[REDACTED]

Singapore's Immigration Regulations

Singapore welcomes all foreigners to visit Singapore, be it for work, visit, play or study. However, they must come through the legal channels, with proper papers and travel documents. Foreigners wishing to enter Singapore would need to obtain a Visit Pass, which regulates the stay of foreigners in Singapore.

A visitor's entry into Singapore is not automatic and each case is considered on its own merits. The grant of a Visit Pass is determined by the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) officers at our checkpoints, who may inquire about the traveller's purpose of visit as part of normal immigration clearance procedure.

A foreigner may be refused entry if the purpose of visit is found to be suspicious or unsubstantiated. Foreigners deemed ineligible for entry upon

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arrival will be returned to their last port of embarkation in accordance with international practice. The relevant airline or its ground handling agents would be issued a notice by ICA requiring them to make the necessary arrangements. In the meantime, all foreigners who are refused entry into Singapore would be accommodated at the Inadmissible Passenger (IP) room operated by the Singapore Airport Terminal Services. Any reports of abuse will be investigated and prosecuted, where appropriate.

Singapore's Immigration Act also lists HIV-positive persons as prohibited immigrants. Being an open city state which is highly densely populated, with a large population of long-term immigration pass holders, Singapore takes the threat of the spread of serious infectious diseases by immigrants seriously. Singapore's HIV epidemic is classified as low-level and the possible adverse effect that imported cases will have on the existing low rate of transmission is a public health concern. However, there are current administrative arrangements in place to allow short stay entries for certain groups of people e.g. those seeking medical care in Singapore.

The case of Mr [REDACTED]

In the case of Mr [REDACTED] we note that his physician in Singapore had successfully applied for short term entry for Mr [REDACTED]'s medical care. However, each entry would be contingent upon continuing need, supported by Mr [REDACTED] furnishing documentation of on-going medical treatment in Singapore, including appointment dates, upon request by the checkpoint officer. There was some miscommunication between Mr [REDACTED] and the treating facility with regards to his appointment date, which was communicated to him through text message in September 2013 (his chosen mode of communication for appointments). Mr [REDACTED] can continue to enter Singapore for medical treatment and is advised to confirm his appointment dates prior to travel.

Inaccurate Claims by Mr [REDACTED]

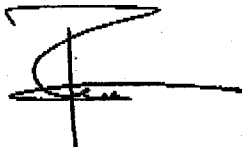
Mr [REDACTED] claimed that his passport was impounded by the immigration authorities for two hours until the next available flight, and that he only received his passport when he arrived back in Jakarta, Indonesia. Mr [REDACTED]'s passport was held by ICA for safekeeping until his departing flight, and his passport was subsequently handed over to the airline representative. This procedure is in accordance with paragraph 5.21 of Annex 9 (Facilitation) to the Convention on International Civil Aviation.

Mr [REDACTED] also claimed that when he was waiting for the next available flight, his phone was taken from him and he was unable to make any calls. It is standard procedure that all personal effects of persons awaiting their departure flights in the holding room are kept in a locker for security reasons. This does not preclude anyone from making a request to make phone calls while in the holding room; all such requests would be considered on a case-by-case basis. However, Mr [REDACTED] made no such requests when he was in the IP room waiting for his flight.

Mr [REDACTED] further alleged that he was required to pay S\$61.00 towards a "security fee", the details of which was not disclosed to him. This expense was administered by the airlines and not by the Singapore immigration authorities. As such, the Singaporean authorities cannot comment on this allegation. Mr [REDACTED] may wish to seek clarification from the relevant airline instead.

We would like to assure you that Singapore is committed to respect fundamental freedoms including the rights and freedoms of persons living with HIV/AIDS and in accordance with the principles of the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Yours sincerely



STEVEN PANG CHEE WEE
Chargé d'affaires a. i.