

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Media Release

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### **From Stateless to Climate Citizen: Nauru Offers a Passport and a Future**

For more than three decades, Siimo Kaasik lived in countries without ever fully belonging to one. Born in the former Soviet Union and later residing in the United States under an order of supervision as a stateless person, he built a life around a peculiar administrative condition: endless documentation paired with the absence of a country willing to claim him outright.

That changed when he was approved under Nauru's Economic and Climate Resilience Citizenship Program, an initiative designed to attract investors seeking secure second citizenship while helping fund climate resilience projects across the Pacific nation.

"At some point you realise you have collected more immigration numbers than birthday cards," Siimo said. "After enough years spent explaining yourself across counters, interviews, and fluorescent waiting rooms, you stop chasing grand ideas. You just want one country willing to say, yes, we know who you are."

For Siimo, the decision carried equal parts conscience and survival instinct.

"I spent years describing what it means to come from a country that vanished," he said. "With Nauru, I am supporting a country trying very hard to make certain it does not. My contribution does not disappear into some ministry drawer beside stale coffee and forgotten paperwork. It becomes infrastructure, energy projects, water security, things people can actually see."

His story reflects something larger about the program itself. Beyond investment migration, it offers something modern bureaucracy rarely delivers gracefully: recognition. In cases involving stateless applicants, citizenship becomes more than a travel document. It becomes formal acknowledgment that a person exists somewhere in the world not as a temporary exception, but as a citizen under law.

The program allows successful applicants to retain their original nationality where permitted and

extends eligibility to qualifying family members without any residency requirement.

Edward Clark, CEO of the Nauru Program Office, says Siimo's experience reflects the broader purpose behind the initiative.

"This program is about more than mobility," Mr Clark said. "We are welcoming people who understand where the world is heading and who want their investment tied to visible outcomes in a climate vulnerable nation. Every contribution supports projects that strengthen resilience and economic stability. When a stateless applicant becomes a citizen, something larger is corrected."

All applicants undergo extensive due diligence checks and personal interviews to preserve the integrity of the program and the calibre of those accepted into it.

For someone who spent years navigating legal limbo, the scrutiny itself carried an unexpected comfort.

"I know what it feels like when governments are uncertain what to do with you," Siimo said. "Nauru never gave me that impression. They knew what they were building and they knew exactly why I belonged in it."

Now, with citizenship secured, he is planning journeys once confined to consulate waiting rooms, visa forms, and travel books.

"I am looking forward to walking through border control with one passport in my hand instead of a folder thick enough to qualify as hand luggage," he said. "More than anything, I am looking forward to introducing myself without a footnote attached to the sentence."