Taoiseach Micheál Martin, TD,

Department of the Taoiseach

Government Buildings

Upper Merrion Street

Dublin 2

*Via email*

A Thaoisigh,

I am writing to you regarding the government commitment to end direct provision in the Programme for Government. I was pleased to learn that you and your office are chairing the White Paper which will be released in the coming weeks detailing your plans to end direct provision and reform the refugee determination process.

I fully support the recommendations that are contained in the Day Report to end institutionalised living and provide people in our protection process with accommodation in the community. I believe that work should begin immediately to effect this transition. Integration should begin as soon as possible after a person’s arrival in the State and residents in direct provision have repeatedly said how difficult it is for them or for their children to be part of their communities while they are living in segregated accommodation.

The recommendations of the Day Report would go a long way to achieving the objective of a reception and protection system which respects the human rights and dignity of the people who come here to seek international protection. I would like to see your support, and that of the government for the Day Report and, in particular, the recommendations to:

* End institutionalised and congregated living and provide own door accommodation in the community
* Implement the recommendation to clear the backlog and reform the international protection application process
* Provide access to bank accounts, driving licences and enhance access to employment and education
* Introduce a vulnerability assessment that meets our obligations under the recast Reception Conditions Directive.

I believe that it is really important the government show leadership on this issue. It was disappointing to read media reports from the Department of Housing which appeared to pit the needs of international protection applicants against vulnerable people in Ireland – particularly those who are inadequately housed or who are homeless. Direct provision came about in a housing crisis motivated by similar fears. In the 20 years of direct provision’s existence, we have seen the human cost of that decision.

I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely,