
I was meant to be there...

A night at the Serena Hotel in Kigali

3 June 2017



A night at the Serena

The Serena is one of the most exclusive hotels in Rwanda, so when you receive an email asking you to attend an 'Australian' function, you frock up and you do all you can in your power to get there.

I was greeted at the door by a polite man who shook my hand and welcomed me to the evening. As we spoke it became apparent to me that he was in fact the Australian High Commissioner Mr John Feakes. Once this was established I mentioned to him that I wanted to have a conversation with him about my little girl and he said, "lets do it now". So I started to tell him the great long story and the obstacles that I had overcome as well as the frustrations that I still find myself sitting in today. Without any hesitation he asked, "Would it be helpful if I wrote a letter to Rwanda requesting them to write the document that you need?" Hello.....I actually wrote the Australian Embassy in January asking just that and was told it was not possible. I could not fault Mr Feakes enthusiasm and seemingly genuine passion for wanting to help me. He told me "It is my job to help Australians who are off shore and the largest part of my job has been processing adoptions and Visas!"

The other visitor from Australia was Mr Phillip Ruddock - another genuine guy who also seemingly knew what avenues I could pass through and who said to me, "If John can't sort this for you, you contact me and I will make sure it happen". Words I cling onto for hope, but the realist in me says to wait until I have what I need in my hand.

Both men seemed to be incredibly caring and wanted the best possible outcome for Flora and I. They, together, suggested that Rwanda was being unfair in their expectations as they have said Flora cannot have a Rwandan passport as her Rwandan Mother had died and her adopted mother was Australian, yet Rwanda was/is not willing to write the document for her to access the rights to an Australian passport or Visa.

This is now my greatest prayer request, that Mr John Feakes the Australian High Commissioner from Nairobi will in fact write a letter to whichever Rwandan authorities he decides is the best one after hearing my story that I will send him on Monday. And that the Rwandan authority will take action and respond positively to the request of the Australian High Commissioner.

The Rwandan / Australian Alumni

As the night continued at The Serena, I chatted to a range of people I had not met before in and around Kigali, from an American / Australian Geologist to a Rwandan Health Lawyer and an Australian Doctor. Then I spoke to a Rwandan lady who tells me she spent three months in Sydney and is now a member of the Australian Alumni.

As we talked I found out that she works at the Workforce Development Authority in Rwanda, which just happens to be the place where Fred and I are waiting to deliver our training curriculum. As I asked her in what department she works, she replied that she was the head of training the trainers and she approves curriculums to be trained! So after receiving a bunch of information and ideas from her, I also took her email home too.

This will also be a great prayer request as the days go on and we endeavour to have this document finalised and approved after presenting it to the Workforce Development Authority.

My Church Team

My home church team was here for the past two weeks and while I spend a quieter Saturday at home today I praise God for the busy-ness of the past two weeks and what a special treat it is to have visitors, especially in the form of Church family and friends. They achieved many things while they were here from giving medical health check ups to teaching sewing, leading a Pastors Conference and installing some LED lights into the school. It was a busy busy two weeks, as I type they are in transit in Doha and I am sure would value your prayers for their onward journey back to Sydney.

Thanks

As always thank you for praying for us - we truly value it. Our time is ticking before I am due to return to Australia and at this point I truly have no idea as to when it will be as it will all depend on Floras paperwork and documents, should it work that they would be available this year.