

Palau UNFCCC COP17 National Statement

Delivered by Mr. Sebastian Marino, Head of Delegation

Date: December 8, 2011

1. Alii! And thank you Madame President. I bring warm greetings from His Excellency, President Johnson Toribiong and the people of the Republic of Palau.
2. Palau would like to express deep gratitude to H. E. President Zuma, the government of South Africa, and the people of South Africa and Durban for their hospitality and warm welcome.
3. Madame President, please accept our congratulations on your Presidency and the management of our work here at this COP. We are grateful for your leadership thus far and especially as we work to finalize our tasks in the remaining hours of this meeting. Under your guidance and leadership, we remain hopeful for a successful outcome here in Durban.
4. Palau would like to associate its remarks with the statements by Grenada on behalf of AOSIS and the statements by Nauru, on behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States.
5. As a Pacific island nation, Palau is already facing the impacts of climate change. For example, saltwater inundation has disrupted our traditional agricultural practices and posed increasingly devastating threats to our nation's food security. As a result of these climate change impacts, Palau has taken measures to increase resilience and reduce vulnerability.
6. Though Palau's contribution to global emissions are minimal compared to many countries, we have expanded efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. With the support of donor countries, and many thanks to those countries that have supported us in this endeavor, we are proud to announce that, by 2020, 20% of Palau's energy will be generated by renewable sources.
7. We hope that with the increasing availability of Fast-start Finance and direct access to funding once capitalization of Green Climate Fund occurs, we will be able to further bolster our efforts and take all necessary steps to meet our immediate needs and the needs of future generations.
8. We are committed to doing everything and anything we can, to do our part, to combat climate change, and we hope that our efforts show just that to others---especially those with greater capacity and the ability to make a larger impact on reducing global greenhouse gas emissions.
9. Madame President, we are reminded that it is not only our common responsibility to address the causes of climate change, but also the common consequences of climate change that brings us together here in Durban. In that vein, Madam President, it is important to recall that customary international law demands that states ensure that activities within their jurisdiction and control, respect the environment of other States. Nations must respect fellow nations – most fundamentally, this means respecting the continued existence of nations. In this case, the most fragile among us.
10. Yet, current pledges place us on a pathway of increasing temperature by 3 to 5 degrees, and the window of opportunity to correct our path and achieve the below 2 degree goal agreed upon in Cancun is closing rapidly, let alone 1.5 degrees.
11. Madame President, as you've said, time is not on our side. We must act now to increase our global mitigation ambition to achieve our agreed temperature goals.

12. It is with this sense of urgency that Palau seeks an outcome here in Durban that achieves the following:
 - Agreement on a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol
 - A parallel mandate for a Protocol on the LCA track
 - And an increase of mitigation ambition from all Parties.
13. We must also act with urgency to ensure the Green Climate Fund is operational and capitalized in time to provide for the needs of the most vulnerable countries and to mobilize mitigation action in developing countries.
14. As one of the final speakers during this high-level segment, Madam President, I would like to reiterate the sentiment expressed by the Prime Minister of Samoa, that Parties must act collectively to fulfill the moral imperative to ensure the continued survival of every nation.
15. Finally, Madame President, as the Convention recognizes the global nature of climate change and the need for “the widest possible cooperation,” Palau supports the participation of the Republic of China (Taiwan) as an observer to the UNFCCC. Taiwan is independently taking steps to reduce its own greenhouse gas emissions and deserves to be part of the global effort to fight climate change.
16. We look forward to working with you in these final hours to ensure that Durban succeeds in delivering the path for a two-track, legally binding outcome.
17. Thank you, Madame President and thank you distinguished delegates.