



**Statement of His Excellency Tommy Esang Remengesau, Jr.
President, Republic of Palau**

High Level Segment

30 November 2015

[Check Against Delivery]

[Check against delivery]

Mr. President,
Colleagues,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Republic of Palau extends its deepest condolences to the people of France. Our hearts and prayers go out to Paris.

We are gathered here in the "City of Light" to show the world we are a global family in solidarity with the French people, and united in our commitment to peace and dignity for all.

Mr. President,

It is an honor to address all of you this afternoon at the end of an extraordinary year for sustainable development and the environment. Likewise, COP21 must be a turning point in the fight against climate change.

We applaud the effort of 183 nations coming forward to join this global effort. The Republic of Palau joins you and has submitted an ambitious INDC which will put us on track to be a renewable energy leader in the Pacific. Although our emissions are tiny, we are doing our part. Working with our partners we expect to reduce emissions by half as against Business As Usual in 2025.

We would like to thank the government of the United States for the technical support provided for the preparation of our INDC. We would also like to recognize the Republic of China/Taiwan for submitting an INDC in the spirit of global cooperation.

However, we know that, collectively, the efforts brought forth thus far are not enough to avoid a dangerous level of warming, which would be catastrophic for vulnerable countries and communities. For that reason, we need the Paris agreement to include a strong long-term goal, a regular review process that drives greater ambition over time, robust transparency rules for

both action and support, and a permanent loss and damage mechanism to help respond to the unavoidable impacts of climate change.

We must also urgently scale-up pre-2020 climate action. Palau would like to recognize the leadership of Peru and France through the Lima-Paris Action Agenda which is mobilizing a broad range of stakeholders – beyond national governments – to announce bold climate actions right now.

The Alliance of Small Island States continues to emphasize the need for more ambitious pre-2020 action to give the world the best chance to avoid dangerous warming, and has made a number of critical proposals under Workstream 2 to elevate this work, including the appointment of high-level champions.

Some of the most damaging impacts of climate change for the Pacific will be to the marine environment, which is why Palau is working hard to protect our Ocean. Palau recently established the landmark Palau National Marine Sanctuary – a large-scale marine protected area that will encompass our entire exclusive economic zone. The sanctuary includes a no-take zone of over 500,000 square kilometers –80% of our EEZ, an area the size of France – while maintaining the remaining 20% for domestic fishing to ensure the food security of Palauans now and in the future.

Large marine protected areas are critical to allow marine biodiversity to recover and fish stocks to rebound, which has great spillover benefits for the region and the world, helping the oceans to maintain their critical function as an effective carbon sink.

Mr. President,

We have come together in Paris for the benefit of all humanity. We are witnessing a global movement to protect our common future –by nations, business, civil society and citizens around the world– like we have never seen before. I would like to thank leadership of the French presidency, and say that Palau stands with you to deliver an historic Paris agreement – one that will be ambitious, durable and binding and will put the world on the path to the low-carbon, climate-resilient future we need.