UNFCCC COP31 World Leaders Climate Action Summit | Antalya, Türkiye

Statement by H.E. Surangel Whipps, Jr., President of the Republic of Palau

Thursday 11 November, Plenary Anadolu

(*Delivery time: 3 minutes*)

Mr. President, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

Alii from Palau. We thank Türkiye for its hospitality and joint leadership with Australia, and we thank Australia for hosting the Pre-COP in our Pacific home.

COP31 must turn the tide. In Palau, we say: the land is our mother, and the ocean is our father. They care for us, and we must care for them.

Yet, the 1.5°C goal is slipping away. In Glasgow, I said: *"You might as well bomb us."* That might have been easier than watching climate change tear our homes apart, piece by piece. We are at war with a crisis we did not create—a war no peace treaty can end; only urgent action can.

So First: we must Put science where it belongs. Action without science is a ship without a rudder. We call for the next IPCC report by 2027 or early 2028 at the latest.

Second: we must Limit any 1.5°C overshoot. For the Pacific, this is not an abstract target; it is an existential threat to our food, economies, and sovereignty. States must honor their international obligations, noting the ICJ clear finding that breaching climate obligations is an internationally wrongful act carrying state responsibility.

Third: we must Deliver the renewables revolution. We agreed at COP28 to transition away from fossil fuels. The Pacific is ready to become the world's first 100% renewables-powered region. At the 55th Pacific Islands Forum in Palau, we launched our investment prospectus. Join us.

Fourth: we must Fund resilience through the Pacific Resilience Facility. Arriving in Antalya, we crossed $200 million mark in our goal to reach 500 million. Of that $100 million is our own Pacific money. We should not have to pay for our own survival, but we act without hesitation. We call on all countries, philanthropic partners, and multilateral funds to deliver the 300m remaining before the next COP.

Fifth we thank Türkiye and Australia for keeping our ocean—the world's second lung—central to COP31. A healthy ocean is a healthy planet we must scale up investment, in its protection and sustainable use.

Finally as an ocean country we know that everyone in the canoe must paddle together. Taiwan is a strong and important partner—leading in disaster resilience, energy transition, and food security. The world needs Taiwan's participation at COP. We share this planet. We are strongest when we are all paddling together.

Let COP31 turn hope into decisive action.

Mesulang. And I thank you.