

**Comments for the Pacific Leaders Talanoa
26 July 2018
Great Council of Chiefs Complex
Suva, Fiji**

On behalf of His Excellency Tommy E. Remengesau Jr, who is unable to attend this very important meeting, let me thank on his behalf, the Honorable Prime Minister Bainimara and the government and people of Fiji for hosting this very important meeting. Excellency's, ladies and gentlemen, Alii and Bula.

To frame Palau's story, I would like to recognize that July is Nelson Mandela month in South Africa, by remembering his statement that, "What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others..."

Palau's story begins by making sure we have energy diversity and security that affordable to all people.

Palau NDC

1. Palau aspires to be a leader in renewable energy. As part of our vision for building a Pristine Paradise, Palau has committed to increase its supply of renewable energy to 45% by 2025. This represents an extremely ambitious undertaking, but we are confident that, with the right partners, we can achieve our goal.
2. Earlier this year, (April 2018) Palau took a big step forward, passing legislation that modernizes our electricity sector laws to enable a rapid transition to renewable energy. The Energy Act opens up our electricity sector to growing shares of renewable energy; creates an independent energy regulator in the Palau Energy Administration, and strengthens the Palau Public Utilities Corporation. This legislation was possible because of the Palau National Energy Summit.
3. Independent renewable energy providers are now authorized to connect to our electricity grid, and the Palau Energy Administration has the tools to regulate our more modern and dynamic energy system. We are confident that this transition will make our energy sector cleaner, more reliable, and in the end, more affordable.
4. IRENA and the US Department of Energy, through its National Renewable Energy Laboratory have been key partners through this entire process and deserves our sincere gratitude. Palau is now looking to expand its partnerships with the private sector, particularly with regard to sustainable finance.

Palau National Energy Summit

1. In July 2017 we convened Palau's first National Energy Summit and Paris NDC Implementation Workshop. The Summit brought together all relevant Palauan stakeholders – government agencies, members of Palau's National Congress, civil society, state governments, the tourism sector and traditional leaders – to create a shared vision and ownership of Palau's clean energy transition. The Summit was broadcast live on Palauan television and radio so that all Palauans could participate and feel invested in this transformational change. It was also critical for aligning our vision with our broader sustainable development planning across the whole of government. As an outcome of the summit Palau was able to develop our Energy Action Plan.
2. Also, President Remengesau signed an Executive Order forming the Palau National Energy Committee, which he chairs, with the Palau Energy Administration as the secretariat of the committee. So as to coordinate the work of all relevant government agencies and accelerate the implementation of Palau's NDC.
3. We have found that building broad ownership of this national effort has helped to jumpstart progress.

Partnerships

1. There are challenges with any great transition in the way society works and the energy transition is no different. There have been enormous advances in renewable energy technology, but we need to see similar innovation in finance. Our islands still struggle to access affordable finance for large investments in infrastructure. Building our capacity to deploy and maintain these new energy systems will also be key to achieving SDG7.
2. Palau is grateful to have received initial technical support for our energy transformation from IRENA, New Zealand, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the US National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL). The Palau Roadmap was finalized with IRENA in March 2018 as a guide to meet Palau NDCs by 2025. New Zealand is providing a solar system for Kayangel State to have the potential to be 100% Renewable Energy and also provide an educational roof top solar system to our community college. JICA is supporting a study of the current electricity grid, the maintenance and repair of our current transmission grid for Babeldaob and Koror, the final report will be finalized in August 2018 and NREL has provided technical support on energy efficiency standards, reporting and feed in Tariff that will be complete by September 2018.
3. But we have a long way to go and, like many SIDS, need expanded partnership to effectively implement our NDCs. To achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement, the UN and partner countries must do more to support SIDS and all developing nations to accelerate the transition to a clean energy future.