**Palau Universal Periodic Review**

**General Session**

**Closing Remarks**

**By**

**Minister J. Baklai Temengil**

The President of the Human Rights Council, Members of our Troika, Excellencies, Distinguished Representatives, Ladies and gentlemen

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Palau, I would like to thank you all again for the opportunity to share our human rights story. We continue to learn from best practices and strive to shape and develop the policies of our country while also trying to stay abreast with international standards. At times it seems our head is just above water and we are treading in place, however the key word there is that we are above water and continue to make every effort for the people of our island nation.

It is no surprise that a small country with limited resources faces challenges in ensuring that human rights are afforded to every single person, however as you have just heard, we are also making some mighty strides and are proud to have shared an open and honest report with the international community.

With the financial and technical support from our international partners, we will also continue to analyze our laws with legislative compliance reviews and make further amendments to legislations in order to ensure human rights are afforded to every person in the country.

Our Government will continue to educate the public in human rights, raising awareness to the community so that our ‘rights bearers’ understand their rights and responsibilities.

In closing, I would like to congratulate the OHCHR for their efforts in overseeing this process. The UPR process is a catalyst for us to look within, assess our situation and open our eyes to the gaps in our system when ensuring the rights of people in Palau. The Government of Palau would also like to thank the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat for their guidance and support through this process.

I would like to particularly thank the Government of Israel and the Government of Sweden for their gracious donation in supporting our delegation to attend this session. We also want to take this opportunity to show our appreciation to the Kingdom of the Netherlands for providing funding support to the Secretariat of the Pacific Community in order to provide the necessary support to all Pacific countries including the training support in Palau last year, the mock session in preparation for this Review and the presence of our colleague from SPC who is here today.

To physically get to the other side of the world from the Pacific presents financial difficulties as you can imagine and their support has come a long way. Aside from attending important meetings such as this, Palau welcomes and looks for any assistance and support available from development partners and donors in pursuing our human rights endeavors in not only fulfilling our international human rights obligations but also aligning ourselves to these principles.

I must also thank the Mission of the Government of Fiji here in Geneva for their assistance in helping us prepare for this session and opening their office to us. And finally, thank you for your patience and guidance in chairing our meeting today and to all member States present, thank you for all your input and recommendations that will indeed assist us in all of our work in the human rights conventions and its treaties. Lastly, the OHCHR working group and staff, especially the OHCHR Pacific and Asia section for providing support, assistance and guidance to prepare us for our 2nd UPR, indeed Thank you very much.

Thank you again Mr. President, kom kmal mesulang!