

Palau National Day Special

Cooperation toward future security, prosperity

SURANGEL S. WHIPPS JR.
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF PALAU



Alii and konnichiwa (greetings) dear friends. Thank you for this opportunity to share with you our elation in celebrating the 28th year of independence of the Republic of Palau. We are

happy to share this momentous occasion with our friends in Japan.

This also marks another year of friendship with the people of Japan, with whom we share a long history and, indeed, in many cases, familial ties.

On behalf of the people of Palau, I express gratitude to the people, the government and the imperial family for our continued relationship in promoting peace and prosperity for our nations as well as our friends and allies in the Pacific region.

As the Republic of Palau celebrates another year of independence, we also look forward to 2024, which marks the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Palau and Japan.

In the last few weeks, I have had the honor of meeting with Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, with whom we spoke of our shared history and the many similarities between our nations. I also had the opportunity to meet with Prime Minister H.E. Fumio Kishida, and we reaffirmed our commitment to further develop our nations' friendship, which is based on the fundamental values and principles of freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

The people of Palau strongly believe that a free and open Indo-Pacific paves the way to a future of peace and prosperity—a legacy we all want to leave for our children and their children. Together with our mutual allies, we can ensure the region allows for the rights, freedoms and sovereignty of all countries, regardless of size or power. We can help build a region where we all are protected by international law, rules and norms. To that end, Kishida and I recommitted to opposing all forms of military, economic and political coercion and to countering harmful disinformation.

As we look to the future of our region, we also keep in mind the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the dangers of climate change and the need to build disaster resilience. We also must

consider the need for sustainable oceans based on the rule of law, a stronger foundation for robust and resilient economic development, and people-to-people exchanges for better human resource development to help promote these initiatives.

To help address these goals, I want to thank members of the Diet, specifically those in the Japan-Palau Parliamentary Friendship League, who met with our delegation, which included several heads of ministries and members of the Palau National Congress. Together, we discussed the importance of the friendship between Palau and Japan, which is critical to stability in the Pacific region. We also further

discussed our economic partnerships in the industries of fishing and tourism, and look forward to working to promote the economies of both nations. We sincerely appreciate the time of the Japan-Palau Parliamentary Friendship League and their advocacy for greater relations on all fronts between our nations, as well as the help they have extended to the Palauan people over the years.

Much like the Palau-Japan Friendship Bridge that connects the former capital of Koror to the larger island of Babeldaob, the friendship between our nations serves as a bridge to peace and prosperity.

These years of peace have allowed Palau to exercise its sovereignty, continu-

ing its relationship with Japan and other partners and friends who share similar convictions that it is better to come together in the spirit of cooperation and work together to build harmony and economic stability for today and for generations to come.

Finally, as Japan emerges from travel restrictions imposed by the pandemic, it is my fervent hope that Palau and Japan resume direct flights between our countries, and I further extend an open invitation to Japanese citizens to consider Palau as a destination for their next family vacation or business trip.

May God continue to bless the peoples of Palau and Japan.



Palau President Surangel S. Whippis Jr. poses with Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on Sept. 9 before issuing a joint statement later in the day. EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF PALAU

Deep connection based on warm historical bonds

PETER ADELBAI
PALAU AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN



Today marks the 28th anniversary of independence of the Republic of Palau. I express the respect and cordial greetings of the people of Palau to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor

Naruhito and Empress Masako, and best wishes for their continued health and happiness. To His Excellency Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, his Cabinet and the government and people of Japan, I express warm greetings and the best wishes of the Palauan people.

Palau and Japan are connected by long historical ties. Many Palauans are descendants of Japanese who lived in Palau during Japanese rule, and both countries are

physically connected by the underwater Kyushu-Palau Ridge.

The first recorded contact between Japanese and Palauans was in December 1820. However, it was 1914 when Palau, as part of Micronesia, came under Japanese administration until the end of World War II. Since then, Palau has maintained warm and friendly relations with Japan. In 1994 Palau became independent and established diplomatic relations with Japan.

As we celebrate, we pay tribute to those whose contributions were instrumental in building our nation. In this respect, I offer special recognition and gratitude to the government and people of Japan for the generous support and assistance to Palau over the years. Palau has received both national and prefectural government assistance that has contributed immensely to our development.

Earlier this year, Palau and the Mie Prefectural Government signed a memorandum of understanding to extend sister-

city relations between Palau and Mie. In August, Palau signed a memorandum on cooperation with the Okinawa Prefectural Government. And just last month, a grant assistance package for extending electrical power to the east of Babeldaob was signed between the Japan International Cooperation Agency and Palau. This will provide new power lines for integrating the existing power grid with the solar power system currently under implementation, thereby accelerating the achievement of President Surangel S. Whippis Jr.'s ambitious goal of getting Palau to make the transition to 100% renewable energy by 2032.

Last month, Whippis visited Japan for a series of high-level meetings.

In his meeting with Kishida, Whippis exchanged views with the prime minister on a wide range of issues of mutual interest. Both leaders committed to enhance the robust relationship between the two governments.

The president and first lady Valerie R. Whippis also met with the emperor and empress, after which the first lady called on Japan's first lady Yuko Kishida.

Whippis and his delegation also met with the chairman of the Japan-Palau Parliamentary Friendship League, the Honorable Hakubun Shimomura, and members of the group to present his economic recovery agenda.

On Sept. 27, Whippis and former President Tommy E. Remengesau Jr. attended the state funeral of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

As the new ambassador of Palau to Japan, I am looking forward to working with all levels of government, civil societies, nonprofit organizations and people in Japan to strengthen this enduring friendship. I welcome and encourage anyone, and any group or organization interested in having a friendly relationship with Palau, to contact the Palau Embassy at 03-5797-7480.



Whippis and first lady Valerie Whippis meet Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako on Sept. 9. EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF PALAU

Congratulations to the People of the Republic of Palau on the Anniversary of Their Independence

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Naoyuki Iwata

Goodwill Ambassador of the Republic of Palau to Japan President, Nihon Kensetsu Kougyo Co., Ltd.



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Iwata Ladies Clinic
Dr. Michie Iwata

Goodwill Ambassador of the Republic of Palau to Japan

Assistance ongoing in many spheres

GUSTAV AITARO
MINISTER OF STATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF PALAU



On this occasion, as Palauans celebrate the 28th anniversary of independence, I would like to convey my warmest greetings and best wishes to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako. May I also say that we are grateful to the government and people of Japan for the diverse assistance you have provided to Palau over the years of our close relationship. Your support has made it possible for Palau to undertake our remarkable journey of development and progress since independence in 1994.

We are connected by our shared history, values and our belief in fundamental democratic principles. Japan's influence is evident in Palau, as many of our people are of Japanese descent, and Palau once served

as the headquarters of the South Seas Agency under Japanese administration. We are also geologically linked by the undersea Kyushu-Palau Ridge.

We greatly appreciate Japan's leadership in our shared geographic region, especially in the areas of maritime security, territorial integrity, rule of law, climate change and sustainable development, among others. We also support Japan's vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific.

One much-appreciated and timely form of assistance is development aid for Palau's agriculture and fishing industries. President Surangel S. Whippis Jr.'s vision for economic development prioritizes these areas, and our Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Environment, newly created under his leadership, aims to strengthen such endeavors.

Last month, Japan and Palau signed a \$20 million grant with the Japan International Cooperation Agency to extend Palau's power grid capabilities. We also signed a memorandum of cooperation to improve infrastructure, promote tourism, strengthen transportation connections,

nurture human resources and engage in cultural exchanges.

At the prefectural government level, Palau and Mie Prefecture signed a memorandum of understanding in March to extend our sister-city relations established in 1996. On Aug. 26, Palau and Okinawa signed an MOU to further enhance our friendship and cooperation in areas, such as agriculture, fisheries, education, infrastructure development, tourism and health.

The late former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was one of the greatest friends to Palau and he was loved by our people. I would like to offer my deepest condolences to the Abe family and the people of Japan. We are deeply honored that our president and former president were able to attend the state funeral and pay respects to such a great statesman on behalf of Palau and our people.

Again, my heartfelt gratitude to the government and people of Japan for standing by us over the past 28 years. May our cooperation continue to flourish and be mutually beneficial.

Congratulations to the People of the Republic of Palau on the Anniversary of Their Independence



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Palau National Day Special

Backing efforts to sustain our oceans

YOHEI SASAKAWA
CHAIRMAN OF THE NIPPON FOUNDATION, HONORARY CITIZEN OF THE REPUBLIC OF PALAU



On the occasion of the Republic of Palau's independence anniversary, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to H.E. President Surangel S. Whippis Jr. and the people of Palau. I would also like to offer congratulations on the success of the seventh Our Ocean Conference hosted by Palau in April this year.

I am convinced that this conference has enhanced the international presence of island nations, including Palau, and has further accelerated the global movement toward the sustainable use of the oceans. The year 2022 is indeed a major milestone for the survival and prosperity of the human race for the next 1,000 years. It is no exaggeration to say that Palau is playing a central role. I hope that Palau will continue to play a leading role in ensuring a healthy ocean for the future.

As for relations between Palau and Japan, I am pleased that Whippis was able to visit Japan and have an audience with Their Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, further deepening the friendship between our countries. I would

like to further express my sincere gratitude to the president and other dignitaries for attending the state funeral of the former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and expressing their condolences.

The Nippon Foundation, in its capacity as a private-sector organization, will continue its efforts to promote stability, prosperity and peace in the region between our nations, which share fundamental values, particularly democracy. It is our strong desire to further promote friendly relations between the people of Palau and Japan.

Once again, I would like to pay tribute to the 28 years of Palau's independence and sincerely wish for Palau's continued prosperity.



The Rock Islands Southern Lagoon is registered as a mixed UNESCO World Heritage Site. The limestone islands between Koror and Peleliu are among Palau's world-famous diving spots.

DAVID KIRKLAND



Palau and the United States co-host the seventh Our Ocean Conference in April.

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT, REPUBLIC OF PALAU

Further development of friendly ties on the horizon

HAKUBUN SHIMOMURA
CHAIR OF THE JAPAN-PALAU PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE, MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF JAPAN



On behalf of the Japan-Palau Parliamentary Friendship League, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the government and people of the Republic of Palau on their 28th anniversary of independence.

I was appointed to the chair of the friendship league in June. During President Surangel S. Whippis Jr.'s visit to Japan

last month, the friendship league was privileged to host a welcome meeting for the president and the distinguished Palauan delegation, including ministers and parliamentary members. At the meeting, we exchanged frank views on a wide range of issues, including tourism, the marine environment and fisheries. I am honored to have had this valuable opportunity soon after being appointed as chair.

I am very pleased to see that significant results were achieved during their stay in Tokyo. The president and the first lady were received in audience by Their Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako. At a summit meeting with Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, the first-ever leaders' joint statement by Japan and Palau was issued. Furthermore, documents for the Project for the Development

of Power Transmission Network, as well as those for cooperation in the transportation and tourism sectors, were signed.

All members of the friendship league have a *tokubetsu* (special) feeling for Palau and would like to contribute to the further development of friendly relations between our countries. The year 2024 will mark the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Palau, and the members of the friendship league will continue to cooperate to further deepen the ties between our countries. We are also looking forward to visiting Palau in the near future.

In closing, I would like to express my best wishes for the continued good health of the Palauan people and the further development of the Republic of Palau.

Mesulang. Arigato gozaimashita.

Working for a free, open Indo-Pacific

ATSUSHI SUNAMI
PRESIDENT, SASAKAWA PEACE FOUNDATION



I would like to express my gratitude to the people of Palau and commemorate the 28th anniversary of Palau's independence. Our foundation partnered with the government

of Palau in convening the seventh Our Ocean Conference in Palau in April, when I was welcomed with the Palauans' warm hospitality and pristine nature. The conference was a great success under the leadership of President Surangel S. Whippis Jr., in mobilizing support and forging a partnership for achieving a sustainable ocean and blue economies. We presented key perspectives and facilitated dialogues at the conference and sponsored 15 youth participants, including seven from Japan.

Last month, Whippis made his first visit to Japan since becoming president in January last year. During the visit, he emphasized his policy measures, such as the Blue Prosperity Plan, and promoted the partnership between Palau and Japan toward achieving a sustainable ocean and blue economies to address a wide range of issues, including sustainable fisheries, aquaculture, blue carbon, tourism, maritime security, research, and human resource development. Whippis also reaffirmed the partnership to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific.

The Ocean Policy Research Institute of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation, with the support of the Nippon Foundation, runs projects to strengthen Palau's maritime surveillance capability and promote ecotourism. The institute carries out research on achieving a sustainable blue economy in Palau. It also supports the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, in which Palau and Japan are taking the lead in promoting sustainable blue economies. Our joint initiatives are exemplified by, for

instance, the Pacific Islands Blue Economy Roundtable Meeting we co-hosted in Palau this April, and a side event at the second U.N. Ocean Conference in Lisbon in June to address sustainable blue economies for Pacific island countries. This September, the institute supported six students on the Statsraad Lehmkuhl of Norway, a tall ship that sailed from Palau to Yokohama last month to promote human resources and leadership development.

Palau and Japan, connected by the Pacific Ocean and Kyushu-Palau Ridge, share historical and cultural ties and advance democracy, social inclusion and sustainability. Whippis expressed his fervent hope for the prompt return of Japanese tourists to Palau, as well as the resumption of direct flight services between the countries. Our foundation strives to reinforce the partnership between Palau and Japan to safeguard Palau's pristine environment, improve people's livelihoods, and achieve a safe, just, secure, sustainable and prosperous Pacific and world.

An excellent time to experience Palau's beauty

NORIHICO TSUKUI
HONORARY CONSUL-GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF PALAU IN MISHIMA



Congratulations on the 28th anniversary of the independence of the Republic of Palau. Ten months have passed since the young Surangel S. Whippis Jr., aged 54, was sworn in as the

new president. The new president is tackling a number of challenges and promoting various policies with his new government. As honorary

consul-general, I am doing my best to help resolve these issues.

One of them is the establishment of direct flights between Japan and Palau. As Kobe Airport will be internationalized in 2025, we are working to have the first international flight from Kobe Airport go to Palau. Together with the ambassador, I am asking the Kobe City Council, the mayor of Kobe, the governor of Hyogo Prefecture and members of the Palau Parliamentary Assembly for their assistance.

Currently, Palau allows only Okinawan fishing boats to fish for tuna. However, that tuna is labeled as coming from Okinawa because it is landed in Okinawa. In the future, I would like to help land some of these tuna in Palau so it can be

labeled as Palauan, and that Palauan tuna be branded. We also ask for cooperation from major fishing companies, wholesale companies and sushi restaurants.

The Republic of Palau now allows those who have received two or more COVID-19 vaccinations to enter the country without a PCR test. Now is an excellent chance to visit this pristine paradise while the islands are not crowded.

In addition, as the honorary consul-general of the Republic of Palau, I have opened an Honorary Consulate General in Mishima, Shizuoka Prefecture, and am mainly engaged in goodwill and public relations activities in the Chubu region. We look forward to your visit. Thank you very much.

Port call and yacht races reinforce maritime bonds

KOHTA FUJIKI
HONORARY CONSUL-GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF PALAU IN YOKOHAMA



Congratulations to the Republic of Palau on this, the 28th anniversary of its Independence Day. I would like to take this opportunity to convey my warmest congratulations to the 10th president of Palau, His Excellency Surangel S. Whippis Jr. I also welcome the new ambassador to Japan, His Excellency Peter Adelbai.

Events symbolic of our maritime ties bring me great joy. I was present on Sept. 12 when the Norwegian square-rigger

Statsraad Lehmkuhl arrived at Yokohama port after completing the Palau-Japan leg of its One Ocean Expedition. Five students from Palau were part of the crew of this U.N. Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development project, which aims to create interest and share knowledge on the vital role of the ocean in global sustainable development.

Our countries held the 2019-2020 Japan-Palau Goodwill Yacht Race from Yokohama to Palau, celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Republic of Palau's independence and the establishment of formal diplomatic relations with Japan. Building on it, a second Goodwill Yacht Race will be held in March 2024, from Yokohama to Palau, and then further on to Okinawa, inaugurating the 2024 "Marine Week" events in Palau. All participating yachts will be equipped with a water sample collector to study micro-

plastics drifting in the ocean, with research conducted by the Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology.

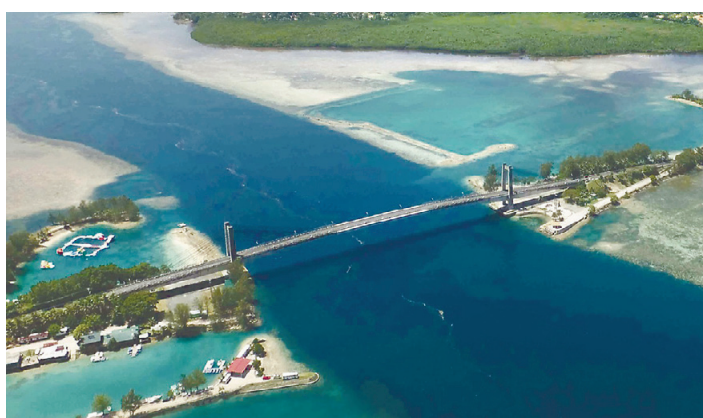
I have observed and experienced the deepening bilateral relations between Palau and Japan year by year. As the honorary consul-general of Palau in Yokohama and president of Fujiki Transportation & Stevedoring Co., I look forward to actively providing my knowledge and experience in port operations, transportation, logistics, tourism and hospitality to contribute to Palau's further development.

May cooperation between us continue to grow. May we further nurture our *tokubetsu* (special) relationship. Thank you.

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.



Kishida and Whippis inspect the honor guard during the president's visit to Japan in September. EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF PALAU



The Japan-Palau Friendship Bridge acts as the main artery of the country. The bridge connects Palau's two major islands: Koror and Babeldaob. EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF PALAU



Minister of State Gustav Aitaro and Japanese Ambassador Akira Katsura pose on Sept. 8 after exchanging notes on grant aid for developing Palau's power transmission network. EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF PALAU

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