

# Palau independence day

## Truly appreciating Japan, a fine and active partner



Tommy E. Remengesau Jr.  
PRESIDENT, REPUBLIC OF PALAU

On behalf of the government and the people of Palau, let me extend my heartfelt greetings today to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko and our hopes for their continued good health and happiness.

I also extend our greetings to H.E. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, his Cabinet, and the government and people of Japan. As always, we wish you all ongoing good health and prosperity.

My friends, today marks the 19th year of independence for the Republic of Palau. On this day back in 1994, Palau entered into the Compact of Free Association with the United States and through treaty action gained its political independence. Today, as we celebrate this 19th anniversary of our independence, I would like to recognize Japan for its very generous support to Palau over the years. The relationship of Palau and Japan is a long one, having grown and prospered for over 70 years. It is our hope that this relationship as friends and partners will continue to expand for decades to come.

Over the years, Japan has provided Palau with extensive development assistance for a broad variety of projects, for which our people shall forever be grateful. Infrastructure assistance has included the emergency construction of the Japan-Palau Friendship Bridge after its collapse in 1996, construction and repair of roads, provision of power generation, as well as buildings, docks and many other projects. Japan has also provided technical assistance in a broad variety of areas. Much of this assistance has been orchestrated through decisions and agreements developed at the biannual Japan-Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting (PALM). This meeting of Japan and regional states and partners has been very helpful in identifying development needs in the region and in articulating

appropriate mechanisms to deliver generous Japanese technical assistance and infrastructure financing.

In addition, many Palauans have been trained in Japan through numerous exchange programs sponsored by various government and non-government organizations. This has resulted in the strengthening of domestic skills and knowledge of our Palauan citizens and the development of our nation. Many of these Palauans trained in Japan now serve in our countries in a variety of fields, including education, tourism, health, marine surveillance, disaster management and many other areas. We hope to continue to expand these opportunities and partnerships in the future.

Palau International Coral Reef Center constructed by Japan under a Common Agenda with the United States and in a tripartite relationship with Palau, continues to grow into a primary regional and international center for marine and coral reef research and protection. Palau has a very pristine marine environment, and the center is our biggest tool in developing the science and politics to protect our marine environment. Japan has been a fine and active partner in developing this treasured asset.

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) also provides a strong base for the provision of technical assistance, as well as humanitarian assistance. We have gained many friends who have come to Palau through JICA and these friendships are long-lasting. We are sure that we will bond with many new JICA friends over the years to come.

We have also received financial and technical assistance from many Japanese non-governmental organizations (NGOs), most notably the Sasakawa Foundation. The foundation has assisted in developing the surveillance capacity of our Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and has also assisted with Palau's inter-island transportation capacity. We anticipate that this and similar relationships will also continue to grow and prosper.

Palau's pristine environment has been enjoyed over the years by many Japanese tourists. Today, Palau is looking to not only expand its tourism base, but also to move more toward high-level tourism. In this effort, Palau is seeking the support of Japan and its people to invest in hotels and in other related tourism infrastructure and to continue to travel to Palau and enjoy these new and improved opportunities.

Palau is also working with Japanese officials to organize



Natural wonder: Palau's UNESCO World Heritage site Rock Islands Southern Lagoon encompasses 100,200 hectares, including 445 islands of volcanic origin. EMBASSY OF PALAU

the removal of the bones of Japanese soldiers back to Japan. In this effort, many caves that were closed after World War II have been reopened. Palau has undertaken this effort because we share the belief that the spirits of the dead will be more at peace, as will their families. Palau will be hosting the 70th anniversary commemoration of the end of the Battle of Peleliu next year. We invite our Japanese friends to join us in this event.

Palau would request that Japan continue to work toward regional peace and harmony and we support Japan's efforts to become a member of an expanded United Nations Security Council. In these ever more complicated times with security and peace in the balance, Japan has shown itself to be a stabilizing force in the Asian Pacific region. We therefore support Japan's active work to foster regional harmony.

Palau would like to congratulate Japan for winning its bid to host the 2020 Olympics. Palau is

### Support, friendship have been a cornerstone of our warm relationship with the people of Japan

Francis Mariur Matsutaro  
AMBASSADOR OF PALAU



As we mark the 19th anniversary of national independence for the Republic of Palau, today, Oct. 1, I would like to extend to the people and the government of Japan our sincere appreciation

and profound gratitude for standing by our side during these 19 years of our journey as a sovereign nation.

On behalf of H.E. Tommy E. Remengesau Jr., president of the Republic of Palau, the government and the people of Palau, I am honored to offer our deepest respect to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko with our warmest greetings and wishes for their best of health, peace and lasting happiness.

I wish to convey our cordial greetings to His Excellency Shinzo Abe, his Cabinet, and the government and people of Japan and to extend our appreciation and gratitude for the assistance and support Japan has so generously provided to Palau over the years.

I wish to express as well our warm greetings to the many friends of Palau throughout Japan, the individuals, corporations and nonprofit

organizations, whose support and friendship over the years have been a cornerstone of our warm relationship with the people of Japan.

Today is a special day for the Republic of Palau as a young nation. I take the opportunity on this important day to greet our friends and the people of Japan to join in the celebratory spirit of this date. It is our sincere hope that our friendship will continue to strengthen and grow ever more.

in the same time zone as Japan and hopes that more Palauans will become involved in Olympic sports and that this will improve Palau's performance and participation in the 2020 Olympics. Palau would also hope to host visitors to the Olympics immediately before and after the actual events.

My friends, Palau is greatly appreciative of its friendship with the Japanese people and with the Japanese government. Relationships such as these are

rare and require ongoing efforts to maintain and expand. Let me assure you that it is my intention, in support of the will of the people of Palau, to continue to develop and improve our two countries' opportunities for exchange and communication. I can assure you that Palau truly appreciates the relationship and wishes to express its gratitude to the people and government of Japan.

Let me end by offering my thanks to the out-going Resident

Ambassador Yoshiyuki Sadaoka for all of his hard work in strengthening our two countries' relationship. Let me also welcome our new Resident Ambassador Kazuhiro Tajiri and wish him success. Let me further extend my appreciation to all of our Japanese tourists, who are the ultimate ambassadors of good will from Japan and who make us truly appreciate Japanese culture. May our special bond of friendship continue to prosper.

## Helping our friend Palau fight climate change

Nobuteru Ishihara  
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-PALAU  
PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE

I heartily congratulate the Republic of Palau on its 19th Independence Day anniversary.

It was a great honor for us that President Remengesau visited Japan in February as his first formal visit as the president of Palau. This indicated that the Republic of Palau and Japan have been and continue to be neighbors with the Pacific Ocean between us, which have shared a profound historical relationship.

On his visit, I was fortunate enough to have an opportunity to meet the president as the minister of environment. I clearly remember the seriousness he showed in explaining that Palauans are facing the risk of climate change such as sea-level rise, intensified typhoons or coastal erosion.

Furthermore, I was deeply impressed by the fact that people of Palau, under the leadership by the president, are taking positive actions to tackle climate change by shifting to renewable energies at home, in the face of the vulnerabilities against climate change at present.

Japan, on the other hand, has accumulated experiences and advanced technologies in the area of renewable energies as well as energy savings. As the minister to lead climate change policies, I was further convinced and determined that we should support Palau and our partners of

island countries, who have been positively taking actions, by taking advantage of our experience and knowledge in promoting renewable energies and energy savings.

To move my idea forward, we organized an International Conference on Climate Change and Coral Reef Conservation in Okinawa last June, where Elbuechel Sadang, Palau's finance minister, kindly participated and joined the plenary panel session.

At the conference, I announced the Comprehensive Environmental Support for Island Countries, a program providing comprehensive support for adaptation to climate change, climate change mitigation measures as well as coral reef conservation and waste management.

I am planning to convene the

conference next year, too, and am willing to bring the idea into actions on the ground with close cooperation with the Republic of Palau.

At the meeting with the president in February, he expressed his expectation for leadership from Japan in tackling climate change as well as for the advanced environment technologies that Japan owns.

In response to his expectation, I, as the minister of environment, continue to make my best efforts to lead the climate change policies.

The collaboration with the Republic of Palau, our partner country of many years and a country taking proactive actions in the area of climate change, has been and continues to be of critical importance.

If I remember correctly, it has been 10 years since I last visited Palau.

I am now very much looking forward to visiting the Republic of Palau as the minister of environment as well as the chair of Japan-Palau Parliamentary Friendship League to see, hear and feel the present Palau, which I hope would lead to the further development of our deep friendship, between Japan and Palau, and, in particular, environmental cooperation between us.

In commemoration of the 19th anniversary of the independence of the Republic of Palau, I would like to conclude my message of congratulations by expressing my sincere wish that our friendship between Palau and Japan will continue to prosper.

### Congratulations to the People of the Republic of Palau on the 19th Anniversary of Their Independence



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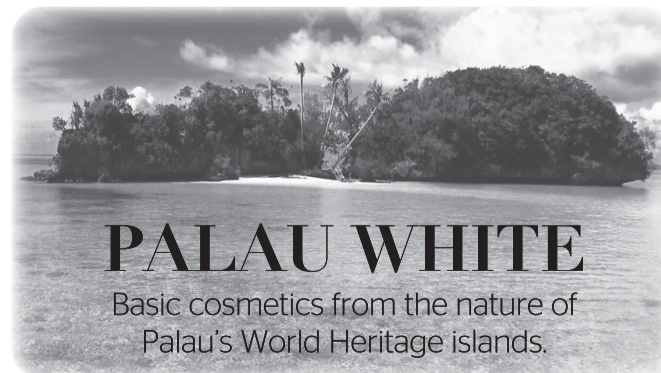
We sincerely appreciate your good relationship over the last 120 years and hope for the same in the future.



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