

RELEASE IN FULL



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Hon. Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State of the United States
Washington, DC

Dear Secretary Clinton:

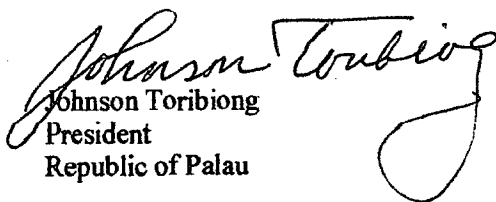
During the course of the Fifteenth Anniversary joint Review of the Compact of Free Association between the United States and Palau, I had to convey disappointment at times with positions taken by some Department of State personnel. I am writing today, however, to compliment the letter that Acting Assistant Secretary Rodriguez sent Chairman Bingaman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources April 5th regarding the Senate bill to implement the Agreement produced by the Review and also to compliment the efforts that Deputy Assistant Secretary Reed has made regarding the Agreement.

The letter and efforts have displayed deep understanding of the relationship between our freely associated states and the mutual benefits flowing from this special association as well as what is needed to approve the Agreement and continue the association.

Let me also take this opportunity to express great appreciation for the instrumental actions that you and members of your staff took to resolve Review issues, for work done by then Deputy Secretary Lew, and for the involvement of Assistant Secretary Campbell. This attention was absolutely critical to obtaining agreement. I took very seriously the advice given through Jeff Farrow last summer that the Review should be concluded so that an agreement could be approved last year and am grateful for the opportunity that we then had to finally negotiate the issues as well as for Secretary Reed being the negotiator.

Although the Agreement ultimately was sent to the U.S. Congress this year, I am confident that continued perceptive efforts, such as those by Secretaries Reed and Rodriguez, will result in a continuation of the free association between our nations.

Sincerely yours,


Johnson Toribiong
President
Republic of Palau