



Republic of Palau
Office of the President

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President

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EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 389

To Declare a State of Emergency Due to Extreme Drought

WHEREAS, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency (NOAA) weather report dated March 21, 2016 indicates that drought conditions have worsened across the Republic of Palau, with Koror now in a state of Extreme Drought (Drought Level 3 of 4); and

WHEREAS, the NOAA weather report further indicates that cumulative rainfall for Koror over the past four months was the lowest recorded since 1951, with rainfall likely to continue to be below normal for the next two months; and

WHEREAS, according to the NOAA weather report, drought conditions exist and will continue to worsen for all islands and atolls of Palau, with below average rainfall projected for the next two to three months; and

WHEREAS, Palau Public Utilities Corporation (PPUC) reports that, of the two water sources for the Koror-Airai Water System, one, the Ngerimel Dam, has run out of water and been shut down; and

WHEREAS, PPUC reports that the only remaining source of freshwater, the Ngerikiil River, is at a critically low level and is producing only 19% of its normal production; and

WHEREAS, the declining water levels caused by this drought seriously threaten the availability and quality of potable water; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the continuing decline in water levels since January 2016, on March 12, 2016, PPUC placed Koror and Airai on an Emergency Water-Rationing Schedule, permitting five hours of water access each morning and evening; and

WHEREAS, on March 19, 2016, the water-rationing schedule was reduced to four hours in the morning and evening, with a further reduction to three hours each morning and evening effective March 22, 2016; and



WHEREAS, PPUC reports that Ollei, Ngarchelong, Ngaraard, Ngatpang, Mongami, Peleliu and Anguar are also currently on water-rationing schedules due to dangerously low water levels; and

WHEREAS, the Ministry of Health (MOH) reports that the health impacts associated with the current drought could include outbreaks of disease and food and water borne illnesses; and

WHEREAS, MOH facilities, including the Belau National Hospital, are reliant on the public water system to operate; and

WHEREAS, the Ministry of Education reports that it is dependent on the public water system and is concerned about the effects of water rationing on student health and hygiene; and

WHEREAS, the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) reports that it depends on the public water system to fill its firetrucks and that, with increased dry conditions due to drought, it is concerned that more fires may be likely to occur and the firetrucks may not be able to successfully control them; and

WHEREAS, the NOAA weather report likewise indicates that grass fires, especially on Babeldaob, will increase as the drought worsens; and

WHEREAS, MOJ reports that the Division of Corrections, which houses an average of 90-100 inmates, is dependent on the public water system and will not be able to support the prison population if water conditions worsen; and

WHEREAS, the water shortage further jeopardizes Palau's electricity supply, as the electrical power plant depends on the public water system for its cooling mechanism; and

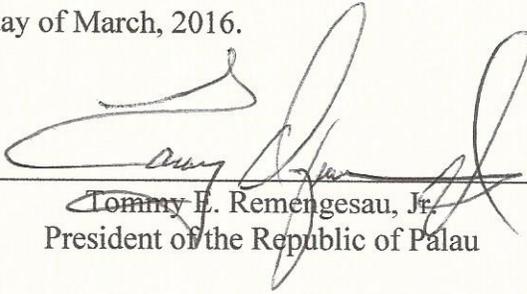
WHEREAS, the extreme drought and its adverse effects threaten the lives or property of a significant number of people in Palau;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr., President of the Republic of Palau, hereby declare a State of Emergency due to extreme drought in the Republic of Palau, in accordance with Article VIII, Section 14 of the Constitution and other applicable provisions of law; and



PROVIDED FURTHER, in accordance with Article VIII, Section 14 of the Constitution, the Senate and House of Delegates of the 9th Olbiil Era Kelulau are hereby convened for a special meeting at a time and date to be determined, in order to confirm or disapprove of the foregoing Declaration of a State of Emergency.

SO ORDERED this 22nd day of March, 2016.



Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr.
President of the Republic of Palau