75TH Session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) 
Bangkok, Thailand

COUNTRY STATEMENT – PALAU

Presented by: Mr. Secilil Eldebechel, PALAU- Chief of Staff

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, friends, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for allowing Palau to present our brief country statement.

First, I would like to extend our gratitude to the Royal Thai Government for graciously hosting our Commission for the past many years. I also want to thank the management and staff of the UNESCAP for the wonderful organization and arrangements making our travelling here to this great city of Bangkok a pleasant one.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the overarching mission of this great regional body of nations is to make our world a better place through economic and social cooperation and partnership among the member states. Each year we come together to discuss important issues affecting our respective states’ socioeconomic developments.

This year’s session, our theme focuses on “empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”. It could not be any
more relevant than this because this is the very fundamental principle that this institution should strive for. Our world will never be better if the people are not empowered to make progress in their lives. The survivability of the people will be at greater risk without income security, without food security, without cultural security, and without socioeconomic security. And, our communities will never prosper if such empowerment efforts are not inclusive of everyone and the opportunities are not equitably distributed. At least that is what our Pacific Partnership is all about. Alleviating those risks and ensuring sustainable livelihood of the people.

This is the reason why in our Agenda 2030 we have committed to sustainability. We are making sustainability a priority for all activities of this body. This means including sustainability in our day to day operations; this means ensuring sustainability in all aspects of organizing our agenda; this means engaging all stakeholders to also commit to sustainability.

Like many island nations, Palau shares similar challenges that are affecting progress in our region. Palau experiences the series of existential threat of climate change every day. That is making us rethink our development strategies and that gives all of us even more urgency and determination to make sustainability a priority in all our planning and activities.
That is why Palau is taking on the initiative to preserve a significant portion of our ocean area (80 percent to be exact) for the sustainable management of our marine resources.

Palau has commit to achieving 45 percent renewable energy target by 2025. This will allow us to maximize on the abundance of available clean energy sources to achieve sustainable economic growth as well as contributing to SDG no. 7, (affordable and clean energy).

Palau has launched a strategic campaign to encourage all our visitors to uphold the Palau Pledge to help protect and sustain our environment for the sake of Palau’s children, and the future generations across the world. The future of the planet belongs to them, and all of us have a responsibility to build a sustainable future for everyone, everywhere.

As a small economy, Palau is also faced with the number of development challenges including the lack of economies of scale due to being small and remote economy. The changing dynamics of our population is presenting a greater challenge for us to maintain productivity and economic growth.

That is why we are now looking into more innovative approach to overcome these challenges. Public private partnership (PPP) has become more relevant solution to sustain growth.
Use of digital technology to build on digital communities and knowledge-based platforms have transformed our way of life and this has become the thing of the century.

Friends, today, wherever we live in this world, whether a remote island with the vast ocean space, beaches and coral reefs, or a massive land mass with snow-capped mountains, deserts, rainforests and rivers, we are all linked together by the digital world. It has brought us even closer and even more efficient. We have no more excuses of not able to work together because of the distance between us.

In conclusion, I wish to say that Palau is committed to continue in our small ways to contribute to the purpose of this great institution. We will continue to support and strive to meet our goals to ensure sustainable development with no one left behind through empowerment of the people in an inclusive and equitable manner.

With continued spirit of cooperation and partnership, we will achieve a lot more of our common goals for the survival and prosperity of our people.

Thank you for keeping that spirit alive here in this beautiful Thailand.

Mesulang!