



For Immediate Release  
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Office of the President

On the morning of October 2, 2017, a serious boat accident involving a tour group from the People's Republic of China (PRC) took place in the Rock Islands of Palau. This tragedy resulted in one fatality and left twenty more PRC nationals injured. The Palauan boat driver also sustained injuries.

President Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr., and government leaders express their regrets for this incident and convey their deepest condolences to the victims and their families.

The government of Palau is actively cooperating with local communities, PRC mainland groups, charter parties, and other relevant organizations. Vice President Raynold Oilouch, Senate President Hokkons Baules, House Speaker Sabino Anastacio, Delegate Sebastian Marino, Delegate Marino Ngemaes, Finance Minister Elbuchel Sadang, Chief of Staff Secilil Eldebechel, Hospital Director Dr. Ngirachisau Mekoll, Director of the Bureau of Foreign Affairs Gustav Aitaro, Chairman of the Board of the Palau Visitors Authority (PVA) Mr. Ngirai Tmetuchl, and Director of the PVA Ms. Stephanie Nakamura and representatives of Blue Island International Tours, have met with the victims and have made communication with the PRC Embassy in Pohnpei, FSM, dealing with their safe and speedy repatriation. The injured continue to receive the best medical care and treatment at the Belau National Hospital and are in direct communication with authorities on the status of all arrangements being made for their safe and immediate return home.

Appropriate authorities have already begun an investigation into this tragic incident. The Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Health, and the Office of the Press Secretary will work together to ensure that police and hospital reports are made available upon completion and disseminated accordingly. The government wishes to thank the public and the media for their strong support and ask for their continued patience during the course of this investigation.

The government is actively ensuring the continued safety and security of its tourism industry, and is confident that this incident will not discourage future visitors from enjoying Palau's natural beauty. Palau will continue to encourage operators to follow the strict safety standards that are already in place, and will continue to review this incident to ensure any appropriate additional measures are taken.