



For Immediate Release
Serial No. PR-17-39
October 31, 2017
Office of the Vice President

Republic of Palau strengthens its Bilateral Relationship with the United States in the 2017 Joint Committee Meeting

Vice President and Minister of Justice Raynold B. Oilouch successfully led the Republic of Palau's official delegation to the 2017 Joint Committee Meeting with the Government of the United States of America held in Honolulu, Hawaii on October 26-27, 2017.

Accompanied by Minister Faustina Rehuher-Marugg, Minister Emais Roberts, Minister Sinton Soalablai, Assistant Compact Chief Negotiator Dwight Alexander and Palau National Marine Sanctuary Executive Director Keobel Sakuma, Vice President Oilouch and the delegation participated in an open discussion and briefing on a number of important bilateral issues, including the Compact Review Agreement, which has been pending US congressional approval since 2010. The Palau delegation was very pleased to hear the US delegation's confident assurances that "this is the year" in which the agreement will finally receive full congressional ratification.

Other important bilateral issues raised at this meeting included improved service access for Palauan veterans, a review of Tripler Army Medical Center services provided to Palauan citizens, and the possibility of stockpiling medical supplies for the Pacific region in light of recent regional conflicts regarding the North Korean regime.

The two delegations discussed possibilities to increase Palau's security by addressing transnational crimes like human and drug trafficking, and talked over various proposals to improve information sharing on foreign vessels in Palauan waters.

Other topics of interest to Palau included increasing access to military surplus equipment for state governments and an improvement to the visa/immigration clearance system for Palauan citizens with criminal offense records.

Finally, this Joint Committee Meeting served as an important opportunity to iron out the technical details of the pending bilateral Air and Maritime Domain Awareness project, which has taken shape over the past several months. Palau ADA/MDA technical team members worked through several outstanding issues, and Vice President Oilouch is happy to report that the agreement is almost finalized.