



## CABINET MEETING

Office of the President

Tommy E. Remengesau Jr. Building | 11:30 am – 1:30 pm  
Wednesday, April 26, 2017

### In Attendance:

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|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. President Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr. | 12. Dr. Yimnang Golbuu, PICRC CEO                      |
| 2. Vice President Raynold B. Oilouch  | 13. COS Secilil Eldebechel                             |
| 3. Minister Billy Kuartei             | 14. DCOS Rebluud Kesolei                               |
| 4. Minister Emais Roberts             | 15. Press Secretary Olkeriil Kazuo                     |
| 5. Minister Sinton Soalablai          | 16. Anthony Papian, Special Asst. on Communications    |
| 6. Minister Charles Obichang          | 17. Kaleb Udui, Jr., Senior Economic Advisor           |
| 7. Minister UmiihSengebau             | 18. EQPB Acting Exec. Director Mike Blesam             |
| 8. Minister Elbuchel Sadang           | 19. NDBP President Claire Harvey                       |
| 9. Minister Baklai Temengil-Chilton   | 20. Jeff Ngirarsaol, NDBP Agri/Aquaculture Loan Broker |
| 10. Postmaster Timothy Sinsak         | 21. Anthony Rudimch, PPUC Water Project Manager        |
| 11. Director Brian Melairei           | 22. Isebong Rengulbai, PPUC PIO                        |
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| 23. Asap Bukurrou, PICRC Aquarium Supervisor   |
| 24. Mingrang Kloulechad, Admin. Director       |
| 25. Ilebrang Olkeriil, Development Coordinator |
| 26. Marine Gouezo, Researcher                  |

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Prepared by Rolynda Jonathan, Office of the President

AGENDA	DISCUSSION	ACTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS
<b>PICRC Overview and Progress Report</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PICRC CEO Dr. Golbuu reiterates and expresses appreciation to the President, the Vice President and all Cabinet members of their continuous partnership and support of PICRC.</li> <li>• PICRC continues to operate long-term coral reef monitoring programs. Since 2001, PICRC established 23 permanent monitoring sites in 3 reef habitats: inner reef, outer reef and patch reef. PICRC look into four ecological indicators when assessing and monitoring these sites: benthic cover (coral, macroalgae, etc.), fish abundance and size, juvenile corals density and macro-invertebrates abundance.</li> <li>• Coral Reef Conditions               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coral reefs were deemed in healthy conditions from 1991-1992 with 70% live coral cover on barrier reefs and patch reefs. No quantitative data then.</li> <li>- 50% of corals surveyed were severely impacted in the 1998 el-nino bleaching event. 25% of coral cover was completely bleached. There was no quantitative survey before and after the bleaching. And there is no data to determine how much corals were killed by bleaching. Coral cover in the east outer reef were in good condition until Typhoons Bopha and Haiyan. Coral cover in the west outer reef are in good recovery and in stable condition since 2009. Coral cover in inner reef were less affected. Despite these natural phenomenon, coral habitats have bounced back and recovered proving resilient coral</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Press Conference</b></p> <p>a) <i>The President requests Dr. Yimnang Golbuu to report of information shared to the public at the next press conference in coordination with Minister Sengebau and Press Secretary Kazuo</i></p>



	<p>communities. Coral cover in patch reefs were extremely impacted by the bleaching. Seems to still be recovering but slowly. Coral community re-assembled fast with low density.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fisheries Monitoring and Research Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PICRC continues to conduct surveys of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) inside and outside of MPAs, including seagrass beds. Through these surveys, it was found that biomass of top predators such as temekai is 5x larger in MPAs.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Data and Information Sharing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PICRC continues to assist local, regional and international organizations and countries in this respect.</li> <li>- PICRC recently assisted MNRET with the coral reef component of the 2017 State of the Environment Report. PICRC is also in the process of developing a detailed report of Palau’s reef and fish habitats.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>Ministry Briefings</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ministry of Justice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>MOU for Northern Reefs:</b> The Vice President, Minister Sengebau and the states of Kayangel and Ngarchelong signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on April 21 establishing stronger presence, coordination and collaboration with national law enforcement authorities particularly Marine Law and Fish &amp; Wildlife. The MOU will also develop surveillance and enforcement program aimed at reducing illegal activities within the national and state jurisdictions in the north. Additionally, through the MOU, MNRET will provide necessary funds and human resources as well as provide assistance in improving management and enforcement efforts of PAN sites in collaboration with conservation officers and state rangers.</li> <li>- <b>Euatel Handover:</b> The Vice President on behalf of the President attended the April 25 handover ceremony of Euatel, the new patrol boat handed over by Nippon Foundation. A reception dinner was held on the same evening.</li> <li>- <b>Jail Shakedown:</b> At 9:00 am on April 26 for approximately 3 hours, the Narcotics Enforcement Agency (NEA), Customs and Border Patrol, and CID officers conducted a shakedown at the Division of Corrections. As of the time of the Cabinet Meeting, officers reported seizing cellphones and marijuana from inmates.</li> <li>- <b>2<sup>nd</sup> NEC Meeting:</b> The meeting was held on April 20 with updates from Maria Ngemaes, Meteorologist-in-Charge at the National Weather Service on the El Niñoprediction. Ms. Ngemaes reported 50-65% of El Niño occurrence. The Vice President emphasized the same percentage was made last year. NEC agreed to develop plans and announcement of El Niño watch to the public between now and NEC meeting scheduled in May. Director Andrew Tabelual of MOE requested to permission from NEC to inform teachers and educators prior to the NEC meeting. Permission was granted. Mr. Wyman? Has been appointed NEMO Coordinator he previously served in an acting capacity.</li> <li>- <b>Meeting with Former Senate Legal Counsel:</b> The Vice President is scheduled to meet with former legal counsel of the Senate today for a position at the Office of the Attorney General. Vice President Oilouch discussed with the Senate President and he has no issues with her</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ACTIONS &amp; RECOMMENDATIONS</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i><b>Jellyfish Lake</b></i></p> <p>b) <i>The President instructs Vice President Oilouch to meet with RubekulOreor, Koror State Governor and Legislature for a united front in addressing the Jellyfish Lake.</i></p>



possibly moving to the AG's office.

- **Jellyfish Bul:** Rubekul Oreor requested for a meeting with the Vice President on the bul initially meant to take effect on May 1. Meeting has not been confirmed. On April 24, KSG filed civil case in court against the Rubekul Oreor. TRO was issued on April 25 ceasing implementation of the bul. Hearing is scheduled for May 1. The President reiterates the national government's position on the matter remains. The President further reiterates the responsibility of the national government to look out for the interests of the Republic. The present condition of the Jellyfish Lake impacts the Republic's integrity and overall customer satisfaction. The President emphasizes importance of addressing the matter with a united front and urges for dialogue in regards. The Vice President requests for clear direction moving forward.

- **Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs**

- **Trip to Japan:** Minister Temengil-Chilton, Senator Frank Kyota and PNOC President, and Governor Shmull recently visited Japan and met with officials from Zao Town, Miyagi Prefecture and Hirachiomiya City of Ibaraki Prefecture. Both prefectures and their respective cities expressed interests to host Team Palau during the 2020 Summer Olympic Games. During the visit, an MOU was signed between the parties for pre-game training camps at the Sendai University. The delegation also had the opportunity to meet with approximately 10-15 80-90 year old Japanese from Zao Town who were born in Palau. PNOC to work training camp schedules. MCCA working on press release and public announcement.
- **Cultural Heritage Meeting:** The Pacific Regional Meeting on Intangible Cultural Heritage is being held this week. About 25 participants are here for the meeting. MCCA working with UNESCO on heritage site launched by a Google institution. MCCA has launched some content from Palau's programs.
- **National Disability Forum:** Minister Temengil-Chilton thanks all who participated. Outcome document detailing recommendations is under development. Once complete the document will presented to the President.
- **Sports Banquet:** The Sports Award Banquet scheduled on April 27 at Ngarachamayong Center. Ministers are encouraged to procure their tickets and attend
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- **Senior Citizen's Day:** MCCA continues to prepare for the Senior Citizen's holiday on May 5<sup>th</sup>. Program is being developed for the day. MCCA working on preparing for the Senior Citizen's Family Fishing Derby in collaboration with Press Secretary Kazuo and Exec. Director Sakuma of PNMS. Invitations have been sent to Governors.
- **Revival of Natural Wells:** Through federal program from the Parks Services, MCCA is working on improving natural wells in Palau. The program was first launched in Kayangel. \$5,000 was extended to the state for clean-up and improvement of natural wells.
- **Belau Games:** MCCA continues to prepare for the Summer Belau Games from June 24 to July 2.



- **Ministry of Natural Resources, Industries and Commerce**
  - **Jellyfish Lake:** Minister Sengebaur reports of Koror Delegate’s involvement in a form of a mediator between KSG traditional and elected leaders. Minister Sengebau reiterates the national government’s clear position on the matter and requests for continued dialogue until other steps must be explored. The President requests for Minister Sengebau’s memorandum proposal to discourage visitation to Jellyfish Lake addressed to tour operators and the public as part of dialogue between KSG.
  - **China Marine Research Permit:** Minister Sengebau has discussed the request with Dr. Golbuu. Dr. Golbuu indicates some information from the research is useful for Palau. Part of research includes tagging yellow fin and meluis to determine migration within Palau’s EZZ. Application has been forwarded to the vessel. Application to be signed following receipt.
  
- **Ministry of Public Infrastructure, Industries and Commerce**
  - **Sojitz:** Minister Obichang, COS Eldebechel and Legal Counsel to the President Alex Weber have met with Sojitz for final negotiations. One issue remains and additional discuss is scheduled for April 26 to iron out matter of rights for selling shares to require Palau’s approval.
  - **Utility Vessel Request:** Request has been made for use of Civil Action Team’s utility vessel aimed for buoy improvement project. Pending document from Guam in regards prior to handover. Head officials based in Palau has approved of request. Main concern expressed on maintenance of vessel.
  - **Meeting with Micronesian Shipping Commission (MSC):** New route for mail from west coast through direct flight to Fiji using the Marshall Islands as a transit point to east and west coast. This route will allow for transport of perishable items. No impact to Palau, however major impact presented for the Marshalls. Palau and the FSM to support RMI should this come into fruition.
  - **Standards of Ports:** Palau meets the minimum standards for Coast Guard. Marshall Islands is now up to standard, but the FSM is not. Major challenges facing the FSM is on security, safety and condition of their ports. Seeking regional input and direction on this issue.
  - **Water Pipe Project for Aimeliik and Airai:** This project required both states to contribute matching funds. Aimeliik’s contribution has been made. Airai not yet. Main issue facing project is the turnover of assets to PPUC following completion. Minister Obichang and Director Melairei request for CIP, which is currently administering project to provide only technical assistance. Minister Obichang and Director Melairei requests for PPUC and both states to take over administration of project.
  - **Family Recycling Challenge:** Program to come to close on April 28. Results will be finalized on May 1. Awarding tentatively scheduled for May 5<sup>th</sup> to coincide with Senior Citizen’s Day Programs.
  - **“One-Stop Shop” Building:** Director Melairei reports request for data for space needs is out of control. Meeting with agencies is scheduled for April 26 at ARFF in regards.
  - **Landfill Survey:** Landfill survey team from Japan arrived on April 23. Director Melairei and parties signed Minutes of Discussion on April 26 officially launching project. Final report is anticipated to be submitted by February 2018 in time for PALM8.

***Aimeliik-Airai Water Pipe Project***

- c) *The President instructs Minister Obichang and Director Melairei to meet and discuss their recommendation for PPUC and both states to administer project. Get back to the President ASAP*



- **Ministry of State**
  - **UN Mission to Palau:** United Nations Mission team arrived on April 25. Team comprises of seven officials representing UN agencies. Minister Kuardei and COS Eldebechel met with the team on April 26 prior to the Cabinet Meeting. Full schedule is set for duration of their visit. The team is schedule to meet agency and government officials at the Capitol. .
  - **Nippon Foundation Request:** The Nippon and Sasakawa Peace Foundation have requested through Minister Kuardei for the President to visit Japan in September to see patrol vessel.
  - **ROC Fleet Visit:** Committee preparing for program for goodwill visit by the ROC Friendship Fleet on May 7. Minister Kuardei to follow up on minor arrangements and finalize all ahead of arrival.
  - **Academy Candidates:** Palau’s candidates have been accepted. Brent Naito was accepted to both Westpoint and U.S. Naval Academy. Will be up to him to decide. Rongel Marcil was accepted to U.S. Naval Academy.
  
- **Ministry of Finance**
  - Quarterly report has been completed and transmitted to the President based on RPPL 10-1 (FY 2017 Annual Budget). Estimation of tourism revenue reduced by 10% and expenditures was reduced by 6%. According to Financial report, overall revenue is at 47%. As it stands, major funding from fishing rights and direct assistance have yet to be received. Major revenue is as follows:
    - ~ GRT: 52%
    - ~ Wages and Salaries: 49%
    - ~ Departure Tax: 50%
    - ~ General import: 49%
    - ~ Minister Sadang reports all projections to be met. Expense is down by 41%
  - **Meeting with ADB on BSCC status:** Project to complete connection by November as scheduled. Total obligation recorded at \$20 million. BSCC requested for remaining \$5 million balance for additional operation. Minister Sadang communicated request to ADB. ADB requested for following actions to be implemented prior to November:
    - ~ ICT Policy. Policy to include regulation on fishing and vessel movement in area of cable.
    - ~ Agency for regulating pricing.
  - **PIDB Meeting:** Investment at \$12 million. Total loan out to Palau \$1.2 million. Palau contributed \$1 million. Marshall Islands contributed \$3 million. Minister Sadang to work with OEK to extend housing loan program to Palauans in CNMI and Guam as well as locally. President disagrees for extension outside of Palau.
  - **PPEF Update:** Minister Sadang working on negotiation engagement letter with IATA and to begin process to move forward.
  - **MAP:** Minister Sadang to instruct person-in-charge to redo incomplete components of MAP before finalizing and binding.
  
- **Ministry of Health**
  - Gastroenteritis cases decreasing, however threat remains and the public is encourage to take precaution. Dengue like fever is still above threshold. Public is encouraged to clean-up households. Public Health continues to report to the public.

**ROC Friendship Fleet Visit**

- d) *The President instructs Minister Kuardei to release program schedule and other details to the public.*

**100 days Reports**

- e) *The President instructs Minister Sadang to revise 100 days report and to remove 100 days plans incorporated within the report. Report should highlight what ministries have done within the first 100 days since inauguration 2017.*





	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>UN Drought Assistance:</b> Minister Roberts met with UN officials who accepted MOH’s request for water containers and water purifiers in preparation for possible drought. UN recommends for MOH to increase quantity.</li> <li>- <b>DEH and CDU Building:</b> Minister Roberts to follow up with Director Melairei on status of these new office space building projects. DEH funding for building to lapse in July.</li> <li>• <b>Ministry of Education</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MOE to announce possible drought to principals during monthly meetings. Efforts ongoing to assess water pumps and tanks of schools in order to prepare for possible drought ahead of next school year.</li> <li>- Senate sought comments from MOE for SB 10-45, which seeks to establish scholarship for students from outlying states only. MOE supplied comments expressed issue of equity and difficultness to implement such program. Program is proposed for PNSB to administer.</li> <li>- <b>Pacific Education Conference:</b> MOE expecting over 1,000 participants including Palau educators. Opening ceremony is proposed for the evening of July 17 at the Capitol grounds. MOE preparing letter of request to the President, OEK and Judiciary. MOE request for the possibility and availability of the President to give his special remarks at the opening.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>Progress Update from PPUC on Water &amp; Sewer Improvement Projects</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects ongoing. Representative reports a suspected bomb has been found at the entrance of Ngesaol. The ERW and UXO Safety Team and the Norwegian People’s Aid were dispatched.</li> <li>• The President requests for PPUC’s participation in NEC, and to begin preparation for possible drought. PPUC representative reports PPUC recently met to discuss strengthening monitoring efforts for dam and wells.</li> <li>• Concerns expressed of Ngerkeseaol Water Tank overflow made. PPUC representative reports manual switch is required to prevent overflowing. The President requests for PPUC to address matter.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Progress Update from NDBP on the Agri/Aquaculture Mega Loan Program</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NDBP organized outreach program in Ngarchelong and Ngaraard. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In Ngarchelong, 9 people attended. 1 applicant and another is expected.</li> <li>- In Ngaraard, 21 participated. Jeff Ngirarsaol, Agri/Aquaculture Broker is working with potential clients.</li> <li>- Bureau of Marine Resources and Bureau of Agriculture delivered great presentations.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Pending Loans and Other Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NDBP approved one \$15,000 loan for crops in Airai. Two applications are under review for approximately \$20,000. Another potential loan of \$100,000 for farming is pending.</li> <li>- NDBP is working with the Bureau of Marine Resources for an aquaculture workshop with a professor from Taiwan.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>Miscellaneous</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>President’s Official Trip to Texas</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One of the biggest message received from the trip is to “listen to what science is telling us”. The President reiterated that there is no politics or political parties in science. Discussions made focused on attention to science, facts derived from science and for people to address those challenges.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Update from the Postmaster</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Investigation into mail theft ongoing. Palau Post continues to receive complaints. Two additional</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	



	<p>persons have been apprehended in connection to this mail theft scheme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Palau Post is operating in good standing.</li></ul>
<b>Reminders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All Ministers are reminded to note the following upcoming events:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- May 5: Senior Citizen's Day Celebration and Family Fishing Derby</li><li>- May 7-9: Goodwill visit from the ROC Fleet of Friendship</li><li>- May 14: Launch of Police Week</li></ul></li><li>• The President is scheduled to travel to Guam to attend the 22<sup>nd</sup> Micronesia Islands Forum. In his absence, Vice President Oilouch may call for a Cabinet Meeting. In the meantime, no Cabinet Meeting is scheduled. The Office of the President will inform all Ministers accordingly of the next Cabinet Meeting.</li></ul>

**\*Meeting minutes are subjected to change, and approval**