REPUBLIC OF PALAU
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

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Executive Order No. 455

To restructure the 7th Our Ocean Conference (OOC) Steering Committee and ensure the continuity of work and planning for Palau to host the 7th OOC.

WHEREAS, the Republic of Palau will have the honor of hosting the 7th Our Ocean Conference (OOC) and expects an in-person gathering of over 80 nations, civil society and non-governmental organizations, youth, private sector, international personalities – all united in their commitment to finding solutions to protect and conserve the world's oceans and seas; and

WHEREAS, enhancing conservation and the sustainable use of ocean-based resources through international law will help mitigate some of the challenges facing our ocean; and

WHEREAS, the goal of the OOC is to build partnerships and to encourage result-oriented solutions through such partnerships to sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems; and

WHEREAS, the 2017 OOC, held in Malta by the European Union, produced some 437 tangible and measurable commitments from nation-states, major corporations, and international and non-governmental organizations, 7.2 billion (EUR) in financial pledges and 2.5 million square kilometers of additional Marine Protected Areas; and

WHEREAS, the 7th OOC is expected to be, by far, the largest and most high-profile international event ever to be held in the Republic of Palau, and hosting an event on this scale has the potential to impact the reputation of, and future opportunities for, the Republic of Palau and its citizens for many years to come; and

WHEREAS, Palau was scheduled to host the 7th OOC in 2020, but the COVID-19 global pandemic forced the conference's postponement to a later date; and

WHEREAS, Palau desires to strengthen its partnerships with its diplomatic partners and other like-minded organizations and donors, and the Minister of State shall play a vital role in diplomatic outreach and protocols for the 7th OOC; and

WHEREAS, the Executive Committee organized in 2018 contains several Ministries that are experts in their subject area, and each Ministry shall be responsible for leading discussions and working groups pertaining to their subject areas to ensure that the multi-faceted needs of this conference are met; and

WHEREAS, preparation for this event will require solutions to significant financial, logistical, administrative, and policy challenges and will require continuity from the planning efforts of the Remengesau Administration (10th Constitutional Government) to ensure success for the Republic;

NOW THEREFORE, pursuant to the authority vested in me by the Constitution and Laws of the Republic of Palau, Executive Order No. 411 is hereby repealed and, the 7th OOC Steering Committee shall be entrusted with the following structure, duties, and responsibilities in order to prepare the Republic of Palau to host the 7th OOC.

1. Organization of the Steering Committee: The Steering Committee shall be responsible for providing proper oversight for the planning, delivery, and production of all deliverables related to the 7th OOC. The membership of the Steering Committee shall be as follows:

1. The President, as Chairperson of the Steering Committee;
2. The Minister of State;
3. The Minister of Finance;
4. The Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, and the Environment;
5. The Minister of Health and Human Services;
6. The Minister of Justice;
7. The Minister of Public Infrastructure and Industries;
8. The Minister of Human Resources, Culture, Tourism, and Development;
9. The Minister of Education;
10. A representative of the Senate;
11. A representative of the House of Delegates;
12. The National Security Coordinator;
13. A representative of the Council of Chiefs;
14. A representative of the Governors' Association;
15. The Chief Executive Officer of the Palau International Coral Reef Center;
16. The Chief Executive Officer of the Palau National Communications Corporation or designee; and
17. A representative of the Palau Chamber of Commerce.

2. Authority and Cooperation of the Steering Committee: The Steering Committee may manage its own membership. The Steering Committee shall, by the official minutes of its first meeting, adopt an organizational structure that will guide its operation and establish terms of reference detailing each member's roles and responsibilities. Each Ministry represented in the Steering Committee shall designate at least one staff of the Ministry to report to the Secretariat and serve on working groups. The Steering Committee shall, by the official minutes of its meetings, create working groups dedicated to specific tasks in line with the responsibilities outlined in Section 6.

3. Term: The Steering Committee shall convene, at the call of the Chairperson, within 15 days of the signing of this order. The Steering Committee shall remain in effect and shall continue to meet upon the call of the Chairperson until the 7th OOC has taken place and thereafter to ensure that all outcome reports and other necessary post-conference deliverables have been completed and ready to be handed over to the host of the 8th OOC (Panama). The Steering Committee shall dissolve upon the reported completion of all responsibilities.

4. Meetings: Meetings shall be held regularly, upon the call of the Chairperson, and as appropriate by the Steering Committee. Records of meetings, activities, and operations of the Steering Committee shall be held at the Secretariat's office or another appropriate place as determined by the Chairperson of the Steering Committee.

5. Budget: The Ministry of Finance shall have full authority over all 7th OOC accounts established in the Palau National Treasury and shall have signing authority for all expenditure requests. The President may delegate the signing authority of expenditure requests as relevant and when appropriate. The Minister of

Finance shall be responsible for ensuring that funds in all 7th OOC accounts within the National Treasury are appropriately managed, that the procurement regulation and all applicable laws of the Republic that govern financial activities are upheld to the highest standard. The Minister of Finance shall submit monthly reports to the Steering Committee leading up to the conference date and thereafter when all the post-conference deliverables have been completed, and reports have been submitted to all donors.

6. Duties and Responsibilities: The Steering Committee shall be responsible for providing oversight on the multi-faceted preparatory needs of the 7th OOC that shall include but are not limited to the following:

1. Setting the policies, themes, and goals of the 7th OOC;
2. The development and preparation of all conference materials and registration platform;
3. Vendor, participant, and attendee recruitment;
4. Conference advertisement and outreach;
5. All administrative and logistical preparation, including but not limited to:
    a. Procuring, improving, or constructing conference space and related facilities;
    b. Arranging appropriate security for the conference, including any special security required by high-profile attendees;
    c. Approving the conference commitments, upon the recommendation of the Secretariat;
    d. Arranging hospitality, catering, communication, transportation, and related attendee services;
    e. Purchasing, renting, or otherwise securing necessary equipment; and
    f. Working with OOC international partners, donors, and related organizations.

7. Secretariat: The Secretariat shall reside within the Office of the President and shall be responsible for providing executive-level administrative support to the steering committee. The Secretariat shall also oversee the day-to-day activities of the working groups created by the Steering Committee. The secretariat shall be the repository for all records of the conference, including, but not limited to, the official minutes of Steering Committee meetings, expenditure records, bilateral exchanges with regards to the conference and any related commitments, and other related materials and contracts.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal, this 21st day of July 2021, in Ngerulmud, Republic of Palau.

Surangel S. Whipps, Jr.
President of the Republic of Palau