



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS TO
THE UNITED NATIONS

New York

H.E. Mr. David Kabua

President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands

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check against delivery

Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, Excellencies,

YOKWE KOM! JOOJ EN JILOK IBBEN DRON IM OWARE JEMED ILAN BWE EN
LUTOK AN AINEMON IM TIRIAMO ION LALIN IM IOD KAJOJO.

LET US BOW OUR HEADS TOGETHER AND BESEECH GOD ALMIGHTY TO
LET HIS PEACE AND MERCY DESCEND ON US ALL AND ON OUR FRAGILE
HOME- THE PLANET.

I extend to you warmest “lakwe” greetings from the People of the Republic of the
Marshall Islands.

Mr. President,

I congratulate you upon your election to lead the the General Assembly.

I also offer sincere condolences for the devastating flood in Libya and earthquake
in Morocco.

Mr. President,

A strong and effective United Nations is needed now more than ever. Together,
we now face economic shock, growing global tension, and intensified climate
impacts.

Our United Nations was forged to help maintain peace, reduce threats and conflict,
and address the economic and social challenges facing humanity. It has also
served a useful purpose as a key platform for dialogue between nations, and we
acknowledge the strong efforts of the UN system in humanitarian relief and
assistance with development goals. Yet the world is at an hour when, more than
ever before, we are falling well short of what the world needs and deserves.

Mr. President,

The world is now vastly different from that of 78 years ago. The remarkable advances in all spheres of human life has been phenomenal and unrivaled. New advances have facilitated people-to-people connectivity and help to shrink our planet into a small, global village. Yet we are feeling an intense rise of the very global tension, if not the threat of wider conflict, which the founding members sought to avert.

Politics must never blind the need for accountability, not only in Russia's illegal and immoral invasion of Ukraine, but everywhere, without exception.

Mr. President,

Every nation in this room, my own included, has more to do to deliver on our human rights records.

Far greater understanding and directed assistance is needed to better address complex rights situations. Every nation gathered in this hall bears a vital responsibility to protect - not overstep - the voices of the most vulnerable.

As a candidate country for election to the UN Human Rights Council term 2025 to 2027, we are firmly committed to strong and credible action, and also to listen closely to all perspectives. And we are proud to call attention to the recent endorsement of our candidacy by the Foreign Ministers of the Pacific Islands Forum.

Mr. President,

The Pacific Small Island Developing States are truly "large ocean nations" before we are "small island developing states." Oceans are not a distant notion, they are our lifeblood, our economic future, our food security and our culture. And much of the rest of the world has used oceans as dumping grounds, or resource baskets from which to take at will, without consequence.

And now the tide is changing. Pacific island nations help to "set the mark" in global tuna markets and affect a transition to sustainability. Our partners are helping us step-up with resources, partnerships and real-time technology to better monitor and patrol our vast EEZs.

The UN has now adopted a new high seas conservation treaty addressing biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction. At a time when nations are increasingly challenged to work together on the basics, it is a testament to political will - and diplomatic skill - in which we have come together to cut across silos, and define specific actions and obligations to try to better ensure future generations see the same ocean benefits we know today.

It is our challenge to the world to bring this treaty into force and effect before the 2025 UN Oceans Conference. And today, you now have my signature on that treaty, to add to the growing chorus.

Mr. President,

The world's equilibrium has been upset by humanity's insatiable greed for the accumulation of materialistic wealth and possessions. Today, the Marshall Islands is encountering insurmountable challenges in coping with sea-level rise, erosion of shorelines, flooding caused by high tides, coral bleaching, intrusion of seawater into taro and crop lands and the rapid deterioration of the ocean ecological system. Moreover the warming of the ocean has affected coastal sustainable fishery and posed a direct negative impact on our way of life. In sum, our islands, our culture, our way of life, and our very existence as a people and nation is threatened.

We call for the establishment of an international financing facility to provide assistance and support to Small Islands Developing States and Low Lying Atoll Nations and territories devastated during and after natural disasters as well as offer elements of insulation from external shocks, be it energy, supply -chain disruptions, food security, global health pandemics, hyper-inflation and other challenges.

Mr. President,

Marshall Islands leaders have raised the alarm and called the world's attention to dangers posed by the Climate Change Monster since we became a member of this august body in 1991.

For over thirty years, Marshallese leaders, as is the case with leaders of low-lying island states have sounded the alarm in every international and regional forums.

For over thirty years, the world has been meeting and talking about the adverse affect of global warming and climate change. We hailed the historic conclusion of the Paris Agreement. However, eight years has gone by, and carbon emission levels remains high and the Planet is getting hotter with each passing day. As a matter of fact, the Secretary-General himself has affirmed that the "era of global warming has ended", "now we have entered the age of global boiling". May I again reiterate my humble call for the world to declare war on Climate Change?

Mr. President,

The future of the Marshall Islands and all low lying islands states hangs in the balance. The eyes of people, the world over are on us in this 78th session of the General Assembly. The Marshall Islands believes that the time for speeches and eloquence of talk is over. It is time for eloquence of actions. Let deeds, not words be our operating principle.

Our own islands security is at stake - not only by the tension between superpowers but by rising seas and changing oceans. The world has spent a full generation falling short in our common goals to avoid dangerous climate change.

And we are past the hour of waiting for a real step-up in ambition. This year must be different. At COP 28, the global stocktake must mark the turning point point at which we all recognize that we are collectively failing to deliver on the Paris Agreement, and we must all respond by agreeing upon a clear roadmap to correct our course. This ambition roadmap must include the phase-out of fossil fuels. The world can't afford to further ignore the issue at the heart of the crisis.

Though we must use every tool at our disposal, we cannot place our hope in dreams of unproven, untested solutions, or use “abatement technology” to greenlight the continued expansion of fossil fuels.

For the most vulnerable nations, adequate, predictable and accessible finance is crucial, particularly for adapting to prepare for the present and future onslaught of the impacts of climate change, and addressing the loss and damage that is already being experienced. We need donors to deliver on their existing commitments, and to come together to address the climate finance crisis in a way which is led by the science and the needs of vulnerable states.

These challenges might be inconvenient for large economies - but I can assure the climate impacts already at our door, and those yet to come, are decidedly more inconvenient for low-lying atoll states like mine, and for other island nations around the world.

Mr. President,

The United States has not fulfilled its obligations to the people of the Marshall Islands resulting from the nuclear testing program. On November 25, 1947, U.S. President Harry S Truman in response to concerns about the people of Enewetak who were being removed and relocated so that the U.S. could conduct its nuclear weapons test stated: “*The Enewetakese will be accorded all rights which are the normal constitutional rights of the citizens under the Constitution, but will be dealt with as wards of the United States for whom this country has special responsibilities,*” Other atolls were also affected and these obligations likewise remain unfulfilled.

The Marshall Islands has continued its negotiations with the United States on extending our relationship free association. We have come a long way in this endeavor; have satisfactorily addressed most issues; and remain cautiously optimistic that our agreements will be finalized soon. However, there remain difficult issues that the Marshallese people have insisted need to be resolved. As a functioning democracy, we cannot ignore the wishes of our people, and as the world’s foremost and pre-eminent democracy, the United States needs to understand this reality. The Marshall Islands desires to continue its free association with the United States, but the United States must realize that the Marshallese people require that the nuclear issues be addressed.

Mr. President,

The Marshall Islands strongly welcomes the rise of the Partners in the Blue Pacific, and the support of friends and allies who are committed to working with us on island-driven solutions. Our early steps together are positive, even as more structure is needed to listen closely to our deepest needs. Let’s all go beyond the headline announcements, and into our local communities, and move into more focused dialogue *with* the Pacific, and not just *about* the Pacific.

Mr. President,

The Republic of the Marshall Islands affirms the recent statement by the Pacific Islands Forum Foreign Ministers, which, regarding the release of treated water from the Fukushima power plant. With other Forum members we remain vigilant

and concerned, as committed to regular and ongoing discussion with Japan as well as an annual dialogue with the IAEA.

Mr. President,

Distinguished heads of states and government, I appeal to you all, let us work together to strengthen the foundation of international peace and security.

Let us then, jointly call for the UN Secretary-General's Summit of the Future, next year, to include diverse perspectives and voices, and to forge a "watershed moment" for peace and security. We have before us all a valuable opportunity to strengthen the pillars of accountability and UN system reform. Together, we can all help ensure the UN is truly "fit for purpose" and better aligned with contemporary challenges. The 4th UN SIDS meeting in Antigua & Barbuda next year likewise is a spotlight moment for island-driven solutions and strategies.

Mr. President,

There remains a visible crack in the UN. Our United Nations will never be whole and complete without the meaningful participation of the 23 million people of Taiwan in the specialized agencies of the UN system, as well as in meetings and mechanisms which support the SDGs.

Difficult indeed it would be for our UN family to build further trust and prosperity between us while also closing the doors of our organization to Taiwanese journalists and public visitors.

For too long, the UN bureaucracy has stuck to a wrongful misinterpretation of Resolution 2758, and has used politically-influenced conclusions to exclude any clear engagement with the people of Taiwan and their vibrant democracy. We must have the courage to recognize the reality of the present situation, and relegate this outdated dogma to the vaults of history.

Today, the UN can no longer "look the other way" and ignore the need to actively facilitate peace, stability and security across the Taiwan strait and within the region. We commend the Secretary-General's commitment for the UN to do its utmost to ease tensions in the Strait and prevent escalations by involving all stakeholders - and by logic and common sense - we believe this must include Taiwan.

Mr. President,

Is it possible for us to wage peace instead of war? Is it too much to ask that the United Nations declare war on Climate Change and Global Boiling, Poverty, Racism, Injustices, un-equitable distribution of wealth, the wide-gulf between the haves and have nots, exploitation of the Planet's finite resources?

We must help hasten the peace foretold by ISAIAH when they "shall beat their swords into plough shares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more".

Thank you and kummol tata.