

# Presidential Proclamation No. 09-12

*Recognizing November 25, 2009*

*As*

*WHITE RIBBON DAY/*

*A stance to end violence against women and girls*

**WHEREAS**, the White Ribbon Campaign is the first male-led campaign to end violence against women and girls in the world. We encourage men and boys to take a stand and say that violence, in any form, is never acceptable;

**WHEREAS**, the White Ribbon Campaign recognize that most men do not commit acts of violence against women and girls. Yet by staying silent about this issue, we are allowing it to continue. The White Ribbon Campaign asks men to speak out against violence against women and girls. Wearing a white ribbon is a personal/ public pledge that wearer does not condone, excuse or remain silent about violence against women and girls; and

**WHEREAS**, the violence against women has commonly been considered a ‘women’s issue’, and whereas a critical issue that should be brought out and to the forefronts of issue in the communities. The White Ribbon Campaign believes that violence against women and girls will only end when men and women work together; and

**WHEREAS**, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) is now widely recognized as a risk to human security and a potential de-stabilizing factor for communities and societies alike. It remains pervasive across the Pacific, and as it is still considered a sensitive issue in most Pacific cultures, its prevalence often goes underreported. There is an urgent need to acknowledge the prevalence of SGBV in the Pacific at all levels of the community, whether occurring in the domestic context or during conflict and post-conflict situations.

**AND WHEREAS** the Ministry of Justice and the Bureau of Public Safety would like to seek and to raise awareness about this important issue and engage the community in the prevention of violence; and to urges women and girls to begin to break the silence on this issue, and to further encourage each to seek and urges increase as well as promote improved public policies and improve services for support for those in need of them promoting awareness, the reduction and the persistent stigma and discrimination that too often serve as barriers for people seeking services and supports available to them availability of appropriate and equitable services;

**THEREFORE, I, Johnson Toribiong, President of the Republic of Palau DO HEREBY PROCLAIM 25 November 2009 AS WHITE RIBBON DAY** in Palau and urge all governmental and non-governmental women organizations and agencies to work in concert with elected and appointed public officials to increase public awareness about, and to abhor/ oppose violence against women and girls in any form, to speak up and to break the silence that violence against women and girls is not condoned or nor accepted in our communities; **I FURTHER URGE ALL CITIZENS TO** join and support the local, state, and national nongovernmental organizations that are working to promote awareness and speaking of and to breaking the silence against violence against women and girls a predominant issue in our communities across Palau.

Together, we will all make a difference, cutting back and stopping the prevailing acts of violence against women and girls in our communities!

SO PROCLAIMED this 25<sup>th</sup> day of November 2009, at Ngerulmud, Melekeok State, Republic of Palau.

/s/

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Johnson Toribiong  
President  
Republic of Palau