

PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION NO. 03-40

Declaring May 31st as "World No Tobacco Day"

WHEREAS, the health of all people is a true measure of a nation's vitality; and the health of all Palauans is inseparably linked with the health of people throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, all the nations of the world, acting through the World Health Organization (WHO), which Palau fully supports, are pledged to the goal of health for all; and

WHEREAS, May 31st of each year has been established by the WHO as "World No Tobacco Day", an occasion to educate, to encourage increased community involvement, and to focus on the unity of our health concerns; and

WHEREAS, the theme for World No Tobacco Day 2003 is "Tobacco Free Sports"; and

WHEREAS, sports are a celebration of life inspiring healthy living, healthy competition, and healthy fun; and

WHEREAS, tobacco products, on the other hand, do not celebrate life, but rather cause disease and death; and

WHEREAS, at a minimum, tobacco use weakens athletic performance; and

WHEREAS, tobacco use will become the world's leading cause of death and disability by 2020, killing more than 10 million people each year, thus causing more deaths worldwide than HIV, tuberculosis, maternal mortality, car crashes, suicide, and homicide combined; and

WHEREAS, data on Palau's youth indicate that 58% of elementary school students and 71 % of high school students are current users of a tobacco product with some starting as young as 5 years old; and

WHEREAS, involvement in sports has been found to reduce the likelihood that young individuals will use tobacco and other drugs; and

WHEREAS, World No Tobacco Day stresses the importance of community participation in promoting healthy lifestyles in an effort to reduce tobacco-related diseases and deaths, and the social costs of tobacco use; and

WHEREAS, the creation of an environment that will prevent initiation of tobacco use by children, promote quitting among the adults and youth and encourage successful permanent abstinence from tobacco use will benefit each and every one of us in the Republic and the generations to come,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr., President of the Republic of Palau, do hereby declare May 31, 2003 as “World No Tobacco Day”, emphasizing “Tobacco Free Sports”, and urge all citizens, especially athletes, to observe and take part in activities designed to advance the prevention of tobacco-related diseases and the use of this deadly drug, especially by our children, and encourage sports events and facilities and all other recreation activities throughout Palau to be tobacco free in an effort to attain “Health for All”.

SO PROCLAIMED this 28th day of May 2003, at Koror State, Republic of Palau.

/s/

Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr.
President of the Republic of Palau