

**PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION NO. 13-102**

*Proclaiming December 3, 2013  
As the  
International Day of Persons with Disabilities*

**WHEREAS**, over 750 children and adults in Palauan communities have some form of physical, mental and other disabilities; and

**WHEREAS**, many persons with disabilities have struggled to achieve their full potential as self-sufficient and contributing members of their communities for the well-being of the Republic; and

**WHEREAS**, the various government agencies and non-government organizations provide programs to support and assist persons with disabilities while national laws of the Republic of Palau have been created to protect the rights of persons with disabilities and further strengthen and improve their inclusions in all aspects of our society; and

**WHEREAS**, many commitments have been made by the international development community, including the Republic of Palau, to include persons with disabilities in all aspects of development; and

**WHEREAS**, persons with disabilities face physical, social, economic, and attitudinal barriers that exclude them from participating fully and effectively as equal members of society; and

**WHEREAS**, the international disability movement achieved an extraordinary advance in 2006, with the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; and

**WHEREAS**, the Convention follows decades of work by the United Nations to change attitudes and approaches to disability that would ensure the full equality and participation of persons with disabilities in society; and

**WHEREAS**, the Convention is intended as a human rights instrument with an explicit development dimension and to realize equality and participation for persons with disabilities, persons with disabilities must be included in all development processes and, more importantly, in the new emerging post-2015 development framework; and

**WHEREAS**, the UN General Assembly in the recent years has repeatedly emphasized that the genuine achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other internationally agreed development goals, requires the inclusion and integration of the rights, well-being, and perspectives of persons with disabilities, in development efforts at the regional, national, and international levels; and

**WHEREAS**, the General Assembly convened the High Level Meeting on development and disability (HLMDD) at the level of Heads of State and Government, on September 23, 2013, under the theme: “The way forward: a disability inclusive development agenda towards 2015 and beyond”; and

**WHEREAS**, the High Level Meeting was held at a strategic time of UN history, taking place five years after the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities entered into force, two years after release of the World Report on Disability, and two years away from 2015 - the target date for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); and

**WHEREAS**, in 2013 the Republic signed the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its accompanying Protocol, thereby signifying its commitment to persons with disabilities; and

**WHEREAS**, the High Level Meeting on Disability Development Outcome that was adopted is an action-oriented document that provides policy guidance that helps to translate the international commitment for a disability-inclusive society into concrete actions and to strengthen global efforts to ensure accessibility for and inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society and development; and

**WHEREAS**, this year’s International Day of Persons with Disabilities provides an opportunity to further raise awareness of disability and accessibility as a cross cutting development issue and further the global efforts to promote accessibility, remove all types of barriers, and to realize the full and equal participation of persons with disabilities in society and shape the future of development for all; and

**WHEREAS**, the Convention calls upon States Parties, including Palau, to take appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to all aspects of society, on an equal basis with others, as well as to identify and eliminate obstacles and barriers to accessibility; and

**WHEREAS**, persons with disabilities shall live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life and development; and

**WHEREAS**, the UN sanctioned International Day of Persons with Disabilities - December 3, 2013 — must be utilized in order to further ensure the full and effective participation of Persons with Disabilities in all aspects of societal life and development; and

**NOW THEREFORE**, I, Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr., President of the Republic of Palau, do hereby proclaim December 3, 2013 as the “International Day of Persons with Disabilities” in the Republic. In doing so, I call on all the People of Palau to observe December 3<sup>rd</sup> with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities and to recognize fellow citizens with disabilities to be full and able members of our community and our society.

**SO PROCLAIMED** this December 3, 2013, in the Republic of Palau.

*For*           *signed by Vice President Antonio Bells*            
Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr.  
President  
Republic of Palau