

Presidential Proclamation No. 13-103

To proclaim Sunday, December 15, 2013, as a national day of remembrance for Mr. “Nelson” Rolihlahla Mandela, the former President of South Africa and champion of human rights.

WHEREAS, Mr. “Nelson” Rolihlahla Mandela was born on July 18, 1918, in Mveso, Transkei, South Africa; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Nelson R. Mandela spent six years at University of the Witwatersrand, from 1943 - 1948 engaged in the study of law where he met students of all races and was exposed to liberal and Africanist thought, but due to the extreme racism and discrimination under which he lived and studied he ultimately left early without completing his LLB degree; and

WHEREAS, upon joining the African National Congress in 1944, Nelson Mandela would spend the rest of the majority of his life, until his release from prison on 1990, in fierce resistance against the ruling National Party’s apartheid policies implemented by the Afrikaner-dominated Herenigde Nasionale Party, which codified and expanded apartheid through new legislation; and

WHEREAS, after the banning of the ANC in 1960 as a political party, Nelson Mandela argued for the creation of a military wing within the ANC and, in June 1961, the ANC executive agreed that those members who wished to involve themselves in Mandela’s para-military style campaign would not be stopped from doing so by the ANC; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the para-military style campaign of resistance that Nelson Mandela led, he was arrested and incarcerated a number of times, eventually leading to his incarceration on Robben Island, a island just south of the coast of South Africa where he spent much of the next twenty-seven years incarcerated; and

WHEREAS, until his release in 1990, Nelson Mandela spent twenty-seven (27) years of his life in white-run prisons in which he continued to serve as a beacon of hope for the ANC led resistance as he spent most of his prison years in solitary confinement, subjected to hard labor, taunted by his white jailers, and denied most privileges; in response, Nelson Mandela worked to become friends with those jailers and consistently refused to compromise his political position – an end to apartheid – in order to obtain his freedom; and

WHEREAS, during his years in prison, Nelson Mandela’s reputation grew steadily as the most significant black leader in South Africa and became a potent symbol of resistance as the anti-apartheid movement gathered; and

WHEREAS, following years of international pressure condemning the practice of apartheid and the oppression of South Africa’s black population Nelson Mandela was released on February 11, 1990 at which time he shook hands with his long-time friend, the Prison Warden James Gregory, who remained a friend of Nelson Mandela until his death; and

WHEREAS, after his release, Nelson Mandela subsequently abandoned all of the para-military style tactics that the ANC had embraced for nearly thirty (30) years in exchange for embracing negotiations with the white President of South Africa, F.W. de Klerk; and

WHEREAS, in 1991, at the first national conference of the ANC held inside South Africa after the organization had been banned in 1960, Mandela was elected President of the ANC and from that position negotiated the end of apartheid with the white government that was then in power; and

WHEREAS, setting aside decades of violent upheaval, leaders Nelson Mandela and F.W. de Klerk were able to come together in order to prevent whites from fleeing the country, which would have resulted in the flight of capital, intellectual flight (the most highly educated individuals up to that time were white due to disparities in the education system), and the general collapse of the South African economy; and

WHEREAS, on the heels of his successful negotiations with F.W. de Klerk, Nelson Mandela was subsequently elected the first post-apartheid President of South Africa in 1994 in the first democratic election of South Africa in which all citizens of all races of South Africa were permitted to vote; and

WHEREAS, following his election to the Presidency, Nelson Mandela promptly named former white President F.W. de Klerk as his deputy and maintained many white Afrikaners in the government- the exact opposite of the “kick-them-out” revenge that many blacks supported - thereby contributing to continued transition to a multicultural democracy; and

WHEREAS, from 1994 to 1999 Nelson Mandela presided over the transition from apartheid minority rule to a multicultural democracy and worked hard to preserve the South African economy by maintaining and developing cordial relations with white Afrikaners, whose capital and education were critical to the South African economy; and

WHEREAS, Nelson Mandela received the 1993 Nobel Peace prize and later the US Presidential Medal of Honor for his efforts to ensure a peaceful transition to democracy in South Africa, particularly when South African could have easily slipped into despotic rule, economic chaos, or anarchy as other countries on the African continent have following the end of the colonial era; and

WHEREAS, in 1999 Nelson Mandela retired from politics and then became involved in international activism and philanthropy, devoting significant time to combating the AIDS epidemic that continues to ravage the African continent; and

WHEREAS, after a lifetime of fighting for freedom for his people, governing a deeply divided nation, and serving as an international champion for freedom for millions around the world, on December 5, 2013, Mr. Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was called to rest; and

WHEREAS, at his trial in 1964 that, at the time, led to a sentence of life imprisonment, Nelson Mandela made the following statement to his people:

“I have fought against white domination and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die...”; and

NOW THEREFORE, pursuant to the power vested in the President as set forth in the Constitution and applicable laws of the Republic, in recognition of his fight for freedom and status as beacon for freedom for millions around the world,

I HEREBY PROCLAIM that this Sunday December 15, 2013, the day of Nelson Mandela’s funeral, shall serve as a day of remembrance for Mr. Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela; and

I HEREBY PROCLAIM FURTHER that the people of the Republic shall observe one (1) minute of silence at 9:00 am on Sunday morning of December 15, 2013, so that all the people of the Republic may remember Mr. Mandela and the freedom that he stood for and fought for; and

I HEREBY PROCLAIM FURTHER that all flags in the Republic be lowered to half mast for three (3) days beginning on Friday, December 13, 2013, through Sunday, December 15, 2013, the day of Mr. Mandela’s funeral.

May the people of Palau embrace the democratic ideals espoused by Mr. Mandela and may we all cherish the ideal of a democratic and free society.

SO PROCLAIMED, this December 10, 2013:

/s/

Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr.
President
Republic of Palau