

Presidential Proclamation No. 13-85

Declaring April 22-26, 2013 as Disability Awareness Week

“Keeping the Promise: Together for an inclusive and accessible society for all Persons with Disabilities”

WHEREAS, over 1,900 people in Palau are Persons with 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 Ministries and agencies of the government and non-government organizations provide programs to support and assist Persons with Disabilities while national laws by 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, evidence and experience shows that when Persons with Disabilities are empowered to participate and lead the process of development, the entire community benefits, as their involvement creates opportunities for everyone, with or without disability; and

WHEREAS, barriers are faced by Persons with Disabilities are, therefore, a detriment to society as a whole, and accessibility is necessary to achieve progress and development for all; and

WHEREAS, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) recognizes that the existence of barriers constitutes a central component of disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the CRPD describes disabilities as an evolving concept that “results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others”; and

WHEREAS, accessibility and inclusion of Persons with Disabilities are fundamental rights recognized by the CRPD and are not only objectives, but also prerequisites for the enjoyment of other rights; 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, governments, global leaders, policy-makers and other stakeholders acknowledge the need for disability-inclusive development and focus on promoting accessibility, they must be supported in their efforts and be reminded to keep their promises; and

WHEREAS, we have among us Persons with Disabilities that the Republic must recognize and call upon to take part in our development, for only in that process will they become full participants of our development goals; and

WHEREAS, the Disability Awareness Week would aid all people in Palau by raising consciousness of and sensitivity to the presence of Persons with Disabilities in Palau, and awareness of and sharing in the important work done by ministries, agencies and non-government organizations supporting such Persons with Disabilities; and

WHEREAS, Disability Awareness Week – 22-26 April 2013 – can be used for this purpose 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 designate April 22-26, 2013 as “Disability Awareness Week.” In doing so, I call on all the People of Palau to observe April 22-26 as Disability Awareness Week with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities and to recognize Persons with Disabilities to be full and able members of our community and our society.

SO PROCLAIMED this 17th day of April, 2013 in the Republic of Palau.

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