Remarks of His Excellency Tommy E. Remengesau, jr
President of the Republic of Palau
Opening plenary intervention, CMA1
Tuesday, November 15, 2016

[All Protocol Observed]

His Majesty Mohammed VI [, King of Morocco],
Excellencies,
Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you, Mr. President,

My delegation and I are grateful for the warm hospitality that we have received from the people of this vibrant city of Marrakech.

It is an honor to address you on this historic occasion on behalf of the Palauan people.

Less than a year ago 196 countries came together in common cause to fight the greatest challenge of our generation. Under the Paris Agreement, we all pledged to pursue efforts to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 °C and cut net emissions to zero in the second half of the century.

The year since has seen the entry into force of the Paris Agreement faster than anyone imagined - unprecedented for an international accord of this scope and importance - as well as advances on aviation emissions and a milestone agreement on HFCs.

Yet the world is still on track for 3 or more degrees of warming. Current commitments are simply not enough to avoid climate catastrophe. 2016 is on track to be the warmest year on record, sadly supplanting last year's record.

In Palau, as in many Pacific island nations, the last year brought [record-breaking] drought, violent storms and rising seas that are threatening to reverse our hard won development gains and displace our coastal communities.

Yet 2016 also saw an extraordinary surge in renewable energy which now competes with dirty fossil energy without subsidies in many markets around the world.

A low carbon economy is on the horizon, but we must act much more ambitiously and quickly to reach it before locking in levels of warming that will doom our children to inherit a world which, in the words of United States President Obama, is beyond their ability to repair.

We must move forward with urgency and purpose. ***All*** nations must work together to deliver on the promise of Paris Agreement. ***All*** nations must urgently scale-up pre-2020 climate action. And ***all*** nations must come to the Facilitative Dialogue in 2018 ready to put more ambition on the table.

In Palau, as in island nations around the world, we are acting now - we have no time to waste to transition to clean renewable energy and a low-carbon economy. We have adopted a new Electricity Act and are working hard to achieve the renewable energy targets in our NDC as quickly as possible.

Excellencies,

The unprecedented commitment shown by countries to bring the Paris Agreement into force early demonstrates your leadership and the global political will to tackle climate change. We must now turn this extraordinary momentum into the Marrakech Momentum toward the rapid, effective and ambitious implementation of the Agreement.

The future of my home, vulnerable communities around the world, and all our children, rests on our actions.

We came together in Paris, and again here in Marrakech, for the benefit of all humanity, inspired by the global movement to protect our common future.

That global movement, and *our collective resolve,* must continue to grow in strength as we move forward together. This resolve must drive our nations toward the low-carbon, climate-resilient future all our people need.

Thank you.