



Check Against Delivery

**High-level Plenary Meeting to Commemorate and Promote
the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons**

**Remarks by President Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr.
2 October 2020**

Mr. President, Excellencies,

As we mark the 75th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, one of the signature achievements of multilateralism has been our progress towards making the world safe from the indiscriminate violence and horrors of nuclear weapons.

Just three years ago, we adopted the Nuclear Ban Treaty. A sign of what is possible when we are committed to dialogue, solidarity and peaceful cooperation. This work of fostering new norms for peace and security is one of the strengths of the United Nations. That nuclear possession is as immoral as nuclear use.

Palau was one of the first countries to ratify this treaty, and our Constitution enshrines a commitment against the possession of nuclear weapons. We welcome recent ratifications, especially those from our Pacific family, Niue and Fiji, which are bringing us closer towards its entry into force. This is encouraging progress. We urge all other member states to join us.

Last month, of course also marked the 75th anniversary of atomic bombs being dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As the number of survivors diminishes with each passing year, we can honor their witness to nuclear devastation through concrete progress towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

We need a renewed commitment to action to fulfil the promise of the structures and norms for nuclear disarmament that the United Nations has developed over the past 75 years. To bring into force the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty. To engage in serious dialogue at next year's Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, especially by the NPT nuclear states.

In the Pacific, the testing of nuclear weapons has been a scourge on our region that continues to afflict present generations. The promised remediation of the lingering after effects has been inadequate and incomplete.

Over the past two weeks, we have heard the need for greater ambition for the Decade of Action for the 2030 Agenda as our shared vision for progress. The acquisition and maintenance of nuclear arsenals diverts resources that could otherwise be used for human development. We handicap our efforts to achieve sustainable development by the possession of nuclear arms. And they do not make our world a safer place.

In this 75th anniversary year, we recall the opening words of the UN Charter: “We the peoples of the United Nations, are determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. To reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, and the dignity and worth of the human person.” The total elimination of nuclear weapons is how we can live up to this call.

Thank you, and Kom Kmal Mesulang.