**REPUBLIC OF PALAU**

**STATEMENT**

**Twenty-Seventh Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol**

Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 4-5 November 2015

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**OF THE REPUBLIC OF PALAU**

**Mister President, your Excellencies, distinguished Delegates, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is a great honor for the Republic of Palau to be present here in this historic Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on the occasion of its Twenty Seventh Meeting. On behalf of the Republic of Palau, we convey our sincere gratitude to the Government of United Arab Emirates for hosting the 27th Meeting of the Parties here in the exquisite city of Dubai.

I would like to thank the Ozone Secretariat for its excellent work over the years and for the excellent organization of this particular meeting.

Mr. President, Palau has been attending the Contact Group on Managing HFCs with keen interest over the past three days, listening to the robust discussion that, under the terms of the mandate of the contact group, are moving us toward negotiation of an amendment to phase down HFCs. Overall, Mister President, Palau sees an amendment to the Protocol to regulate HFCs as being in line with the recently adopted Sustainable Development Goals to ensure that our global environment is protected. Refrigeration and air conditioning is the cornerstone of sustainable development in many islands countries, including (eco) tourism sectors. The prominence of the HFC phase down issue in climate change and sustainable development discussions brought attention to the importance of refrigeration and our work here in this forum, which is an opportunity and a strategic goal that the Ozone Family should be very happy about. Palau applauds this 27th MOP, and the conclusion of the 36th Open-Ended Working Group last week, for the cooperation among parties to reach common grounds after many years to address this critical act to Amend the Montreal Protocol to include HFCs in order to protect our the global climate, our Earth and our people. Palau aligns itself with all distinguished parties to put a strong call to Amend the Montreal Protocol to include HFCs, this was our position at the Bali MOP and it is still our position now.

Like many A5, low-consuming parties, Palau will face challenges in planning and implementing the HFC phase down, but I emphasize that almost all of our challenges have straightforward solutions that can be addressed with additional financial and human resources and training. I’ll elaborate briefly on the key challenges Palau will face.

First, we will have the issue of safely installing, using and maintaining alternatives and transitional technology that are using flammable gasses.  None of the technicians in my country are trained to handle the transitional technology using flammable gasses.  Therefore, it is necessary for such trainings to be supported to Small Island States way ahead of time to prepare not just the technicians but the general public of the danger involved with the new technologies.

Second, it is critical to have new policies and safety standards in place before the producing countries agrees to start supplying such equipment to technology receiving countries such as Palau.

Third, Palau urges the MOP to ensure that feasibility of alternatives are sought, specifically for the fisheries industry. In the marine sector, the islands, including the Republic of Fiji and the Republic of the Maldives have emphasized the need for more climate-friendly alternatives. Addressing this challenge will require innovation and research in addition to financial support. We believe this should be done in parallel with negotiating an HFC phase down, since the phase down may help catalyze development of a range of low-GWP technologies and solutions.

The Independent State of Samoa has also raised the question of proper disposal of ODS, which Palau echoes, as we do not have the mechanisms for disposal of phased out ODSs that are seized at our ports at this time.

Lastly, it is critical for the key elements of the guidelines for the Executive Committee of the Multilateral Fund to be fair and precise to guarantee the effective implementation of the HFC phase down amendment.

Mister President, Palau is already dealing with adverse impacts of climate change that continues to threaten our region. For this reason, Palau fully supports adopting an amendment to the Protocol as soon as possible to phase down and prevent projected global warming from HFCs this century. However, phasing down HFCs will be an expensive endeavor, and the challenges faced by Small Island Developing States cannot not be managed without the necessary funding. Palau therefore urges that sufficient funding be accessible to Small Island States and that we receive special consideration in this regard, so we can continue to be the Champions in our effort to protecting the environment, including both the ozone layer and the global climate.

Thank you, Mister President for your attention.