



## Trusteehip Council

Distr.  
LIMITED

T/COM.10/L.312  
19 November 1982

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMUNICATION FROM SENATOR JOSHUA KOSHIBA, CHAIRMAN,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, FIRST OLBIIL ERA  
KELULAU (PALAU NATIONAL CONGRESS) CONCERNING THE  
TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

(Circulated in accordance with rule 24 of the rules of  
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The Senate  
FIRST OLBIIL ERA KELULAU  
Republic of Palau  
Koror, Palau  
96940

28 September 1982

The Honourable Fred M. Zeder II  
The President's Personal Representative  
for Micronesian Status Negotiations  
Suite 3356, 18th and C Streets, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Ambassador Zeder:

Our Committee on Foreign Affairs is charged with the task of reviewing the recently signed compact of free association and making appropriate recommendations to the Senate for its approval. Before we can make any recommendation to the Senate, there are several issues that must first be resolved.

First, we feel that the proposed November plebiscite on the compact gives us too short a time to conduct a meaningful political education throughout the islands of Palau. We have been told that the compact of free association must be presented to the United States Congress by January 1983 in order not to get laid aside in the

wake of elections and other political affairs of the United States. This is a poor justification for trying to rush this most important document through the Palauan electorate, and we are left with a suspicious feeling that something is being withheld from us. What is behind all this sudden rush after negotiations have been on-going for 13 years? Are we not in the same boat as the Marshallese? And why is 11 weeks too short a time for the Marshalls' plebiscite, in the eyes of the United States Government, but adequate for the people of Palau? We strongly believe that 11 weeks' time does not give us sufficient time for educating the people well enough to vote intelligently on the compact of free association.

Second, we understand that a sum of \$US 250,000 has been made available to the President of the Republic of Palau for use in the political education programme for the compact. Under our national Constitution, all revenues coming into Palau, regardless of the source, must be deposited in our national treasury for disbursement by law. This process with which the United States Government has granted this money to Palau for political education bypasses this constitutional requirement and is unacceptable to us. We see it as an effort of your Government to bribe our people into accepting the compact.

Next, under our Constitution, the compact of free association must first be reviewed and approved by our National Congress before it is cleared for approval in a nation-wide plebiscite. It has become apparent that efforts are underway to bypass this constitutional requirement. Our constitutional Government has been patterned after the only form of government that we are most familiar with - that of the United States Government through popular representation. Therefore, we consider such action to seriously undermine the fundamental principles of democracy upon which our governments are founded.

Mr. Ambassador, a political education programme is underway in the Republic of Palau, but efforts have been confounded with so many unanswered questions surrounding the compact itself. For instance, the amount of money that Palau will receive under free association with the United States is uncertain to the people while the political educators have difficulty answering this question. There are still too many issues and factors to be resolved before the compact is presented to a referendum. Several subsidiary agreements and annexes to the compact are still forthcoming, the Olbiil Era Kelulau must first consider the terms and conditions therein, and translation must also take place before the compact is ready for presentation to the people.

Our immediate concern is to ensure that the citizens of Palau have an adequate opportunity to study and discuss the compact of free association as this treaty

will have significant impact on their lives. Unless these issues are resolved, our committee would not be in a position to recommend approval of the compact to the Senate.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Joshua KOSHIBA  
Chairman

cc: President Paul Poudade, United Nations Trusteeship Council  
Ambassador R. S. Ovinnikov, First Deputy Permanent Representative of the Union  
of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations, representative  
to the United Nations Trusteeship Council  
President Haruo I. Remeliik, Republic of Palau  
High Commissioner Janet McCoy, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands  
Secretary of the Interior James Watt, United States

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