

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE AMATA KABUA,
PRESIDENT OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS ON
THE INITIALING OF A COMPACT OF
FREE ASSOCIATION WITH THE
GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES

January 14, 1980

MR. AMBASSADOR:

FOR THE MARSHALLESE PEOPLE HEAVY RAINS MEAN THAT THE GODS ARE SHOWING THEIR SPECIAL INTEREST AND CONCERN. DURING THIS PAST WEEK IN KONA, WE HAVE BEEN ESPECIALLY HONORED AND BLESSED. NOW WITH THE STROKE OF OUR PENS THIS MORNING WE WILL FIX FINALLY AND DEFINITELY THE TERMS OF A UNIQUE POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES. TOGETHER AND WITH DIVINE GUIDANCE, WE HAVE FASHIONED A UNIQUE FORM OF FREE AND VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATION THAT RESPECTS AND REFLECTS THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE GOOD PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES AS WELL AS OF THE MARSHALLESE PEOPLE FOR A DIGNIFIED, JUST, AND CLOSE RELATIONSHIP.

OUR DREAM OF SELF-GOVERNMENT AND YOUR GOVERNMENT'S NEED TO ASSURE ITS LONG TERM DEFENSE INTERESTS ARE BOTH SERVED. OUR CAPACITY TO CONDUCT OUR FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN OUR OWN NAME AND RIGHT IS FULLY RECOGNIZED. SO, TOO, IS YOUR GOVERNMENT'S FULL DEFENSE AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR A FIXED TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS. LIKewise WE HAVE AGREED TO A REALISTIC APPROACH IN OUR DETERMINATION TO ACHIEVE ECONOMIC

SELF-SUFFICIENCY WITHIN THE FIFTEEN YEAR TERM OF GRANT AND FEDERAL PROGRAM ASSISTANCE YOUR GOVERNMENT HAS GENEROUSLY OFFERED. CONSULTATION IS THE KEYSTONE OF OUR NEW RELATIONSHIP AND THESE NEGOTIATIONS HAVE DEMONSTRATED THAT WITH GOODWILL, OPEN MINDS AND MUTUAL CONSIDERATION WE CAN AND WILL OVERCOME ANY PROBLEMS THAT MAY ARISE IN THE COURSE OF OUR FREE ASSOCIATION.

PETER, I WANT TO THANK YOU AND YOUR SPLENDID STAFF AS WELL AS THE ENTIRE UNITED STATES NEGOTIATING TEAM FOR YOUR DEDICATED EFFORTS WITHOUT WHICH THIS EXTRAORDINARY MOMENT OF HISTORY COULD NOT HAVE COME ABOUT. YOU ARE A CREDIT TO THE PRESIDENT AND NATION YOU SO ABLY SERVE. I ALSO WANT TO EXPRESS MY DEEP APPRECIATION THROUGH YOU TO PRESIDENT CARTER WHOM YOU REPRESENT PERSONNALLY. HIS LEADERSHIP AND YOURS HAVE BROUGHT US THROUGH MANY BLESSED STORMS.

NOW ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS AND THE MARSHALLESE PEOPLE, I AM HAPPY AND PROUD TO INITIAL THE COMPACT OF FREE ASSOCIATION.