



President

REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

PROCLAMATION

DECLARING A STATE OF EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, the prevailing weather conditions have caused extremely low precipitation and the recent El Nino-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) rivals the severity of the last two strongest El Nino events on record triggering a highly extended period of dry season until July latest and RMI is now in a severe drought condition; and

WHEREAS, the forecast for rainfall across the RMI is below 50% average in the first quarter of 2016 and the lack of precipitation will result in a decrease of water supply, farming and crops will be damaged, habitats for terrestrial and marine plants and animals will be stressed, health problems will most likely increase due to bacteria in water and food, lack of food and dehydration; and

WHEREAS, 13 atolls have formally requested assistance from the National Government starting 14 January 2016 to address the water shortage challenges associated with the drought; and

WHEREAS, deployment of national rapid assessment teams and drought situation reports to 18 atolls started from 14 January 2016 have clearly showed that the level of distress experienced by the people in the communities throughout the RMI is further exacerbated by the fact that: (a) limited rain since September/October 2015 in most areas, (b) household water catchments, and other water storage facilities in the affected atolls and islands, have since run out of water, (b) available water sources will run out in between 1 – 3 weeks (with exception of a few locations with functioning RO units), (c) drought effects are beginning to be seen on agriculture but are not yet at a critical stage, and (d) some health problems related to the drought are being seen but no abnormalities; and

WHEREAS, to date, a total of ten (10) RO machines have been deployed to affected communities in Aur, Mili, Likiep, Ujae, Lae, and Arno and additional RO units will need to be further distributed to other islands including other means of water provision to the population of the Majuro,

WHEREAS, the Government continues to monitor the severe drought situation and is taking the necessary measures to address the challenges faced by the people in the affected communities and in particular, to safeguard the health, property and general well-being of the people in these communities; and



NOW THEREFORE, mindful of the failure to take immediate and meaningful steps to address the adverse impacts of the severe drought could place the lives of people in the affected communities in imminent danger, the Cabinet, based on the recommendations of the National Disaster Committee, and acting pursuant to section 1102 of the *Emergencies Act 1979* (7 MIRC 11), and at its meeting on 2 February 2016, authorized the issuance of this Proclamation;

ACCORDINGLY, I, Hilda C. Heine, by the powers vested in the Office of the President, and on behalf of the Cabinet, hereby declare a **STATE OF EMERGENCY** to exist in the Republic of the Marshall Islands;

BY THIS PROCLAMATION, Cabinet has invoked its emergency powers under the *Emergency Act 1979*, and as such, I have heretofore, and on behalf of the Cabinet, signed and caused the issuance of the **ORDERS** necessary, to protect and safeguard the lives and property in the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

THIS PROCLAMATION and all emergency **ORDERS** issued hereunder, shall remain in effect, until the expiry of 31 days from the date hereof, or unless extended by Cabinet.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. That all Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies are hereby directed to work in unison, and to plan and coordinate their efforts through the National Disaster Committee to ensure timely execution of the relief efforts to effectively mitigate the hardship and suffering upon the affected communities;

That the Emergency Operating Center (EOC) is hereby activated at Chief Secretary's Office.

In addition to paragraph (1) and (2) in particular:

A. The Ministry of Finance:

- (1) The Ministry of Finance is the Lead in the Logistics Cluster.
- (2) That the Ministry of Finance shall exempt any custom duties on any donating water, food, equipment and other contributing general items from abroad to assist the Government and affected atolls and islands.



B. The Ministry of Education:

- (1) That the Ministry of Education shall maintain active communication, monitoring and provide the necessary supports toward the schools in affected atolls and communities.

C. The Ministry of Internal Affairs:

- (1) That the Ministry of Internal Affairs shall liaise closely with the affected local governments for their engagements and vital supports in the implementation of any plan of execution in delivering water and other essentials to the affected communities.

D. The Ministry of Transportation & Communication:

- (1) That the Ministry of Transportation & Communication shall coordinate closely with the **Airline of the Marshall Islands, Marshall Islands Shipping Corporation** plus other public and private sea-vessels registered in the Marshall Islands to prioritize their availability toward assisting the efforts of mitigating the negative impacts of the drought.

E. The Ministry of Health:

- (1) The Ministry of Health is the Lead in the Health Cluster.
- (2) That the Ministry of Health shall maintain active communication, monitoring and provide the necessary supports toward health dispensaries in affected atolls and communities.

F. The Ministry of Resources and Development:

- (1) The Ministry of Resources and Development is the Lead in the Food and Agriculture Cluster.
- (2) That the Ministry of Resources and Development shall maintain active monitoring of the food crops in all affected communities and prepare for deployment of seedlings when necessary.



G. Majuro Water Sewer Company

- (1) Majuro Water Sewer Company is the Lead in the Water Hygiene and Sanitation (WASH) cluster.
- (2) MWSC shall lead the activities in coordinating the distribution of potable drinking water to the community of Majuro in tandem with the Majuro Atoll Local Government and the distribution and maintenance of the RO units distributed throughout the RMI

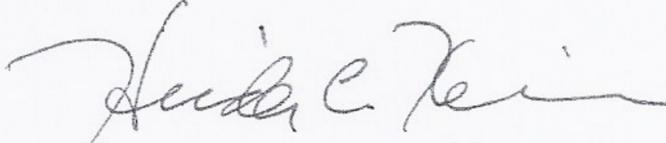
H. The Office of the Chief Secretary:

- (1) That the Office of the Chief Secretary, with the National Disaster Committee, shall provide timely updates and sound recommendations, specifically matters of policy and financial resources consideration, to the Cabinet for further determination and direction.

I FURTHER DIRECT that as soon as hereafter possible, this Proclamation be filed in the Office of the Chief Secretary and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and that widespread publicity and notice be given for this Proclamation.

Given under my hand this 3rd day of February, 2016.


EARLIE C. BING
ACTING CLERK OF THE CABINET


HILDA C. HEINE
PRESIDENT