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Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review*

Marshall Islands

Addendum

Views on conclusions and/or recommendations, voluntary commitments and replies presented by the State under review

* The present document was not edited before being sent to the United Nations translation services.



I. Ratification (75.1, 75.2, 75.3, 75.4, 75.5, 75.6, 75.7, 75.8, 75.9, 75.10, 75.11, 75.12, 75.13, 75.14, 75.15, 75.16, 75.17, 75.18, 75.19, 75.20, 75.21, 75.22, 75.23, 75.24, 75.25, 75.26, 75.27, 75.28, 75.29, 75.30, 75.31, 75.32, 75.33, 75.34, 75.35, 75.36)

1. RMI supports the recommendations to ratifying the Core Human Rights Instruments and to analyze and develop strategies for the accession/ratification of the “Core Human Rights” Instruments, as endorsed by RMI Cabinet in May 2015. In addition, we reiterate that our challenge to accede these important treaties and protocols are due to limited resources to ensure proper implementation.

II. National human rights institution (75.43, 75.44, 75.45, 75.46, 75.47, 75.48, 75.49, 75.50, 75.51)

2. RMI note the importance of establishing a national human rights institution; however, at this time we are not considering such establishment. The RMI has continued to work on strengthening existing mechanism within government, including the Gender and Development Office and the Child Rights Office within Ministry of Internal Affairs.

III. Legislative review and policy measures (75.37, 75.38, 75.39, 75.89, 75.90, 75.91, 75.92)

3. RMI supports the recommendations to further review our laws to be in conformity with the international human right standards and RMI’s Constitution. Many of these rights are already addressed through existing thru RMI legislation. However some gaps may exit and would be naturally addressed over an extended period of time as part of a normal and gradual implementation process. Furthermore, many such rights are already addressed within RMI’s Constitution and Bill of Rights, RMI need not be in full “pre-compliance” prior to ratification (e.g. legislative and policy gaps are to be expected and maybe addressed gradually overtime)

IV. Promotion of human rights (75.61, 75.62, 75.63, 75.64, 75.65, 75.66, 75.84, 75.106)

4. RMI supports the recommendations to strengthen the promotion of human rights activities. The RMI has undertaken efforts to adhere to the principals of main human rights treaties. This includes holding capacity building workshops and consultations through the support from International and bilateral organization. In addition, two major studies were undertaken over the last four and half years. In March of 2013, the *Ajiri in Ibumini*: Child Protection Baseline Report (CPBR) was launched. The *Debij Aeneman ilo Moko*: Family Health and Safety Study (FHSS) was conducted and will be launched later this year.

V. Women’s rights and domestic violence (75.41, 75.54, 75.55, 75.56, 75.67, 75.69, 75.70, 75.71, 75.72, 75.73, 75.74, 75.75, 75.76, 75.77, 75.78, 75.79, 75.80, 75.82, 75.83, 75.88)

5. RMI supports the recommendations to addressing women’s rights and domestic violence and to deal with other issues affecting women. Progressive efforts have been made to raise awareness on domestic violence, and legislative step has been undertaken to prevent and protect women and children from domestic violence.

6. The rights of women are progressively realized in the country. We are making a decent progress in advancing female education, employment, and other economic characteristics. The Cabinet recently adopted a number of important gender-inclusive national policies including the Gender Equality Policy, the aforementioned NSP, National Climate Change Policy Framework, and National Energy Policy, among others. They all incorporate goals and outcomes to progress gender equality and advancement of women, and call for the development of gender sensitive strategies for climate change responses and advancement of woman in decision-making and economic empowerment.

VI. Children’s rights (75.40, 75.42, 75.68, 75.81, 75.85, 75.86, 75.87)

7. RMI supports the recommendations to implementing children’s rights and improve the situation of children in the country. The Child Rights Office is the government focal point for matters involving child welfare. In 2014, Nitijela approved The Child Protection Policy. This report allows the government the opportunity to reflect on achievements, progress and challenges in bringing about the full realization of the rights of all children in RMI. RMI celebrates the progress it has made since the submission of its initial report but also acknowledges continuing challenges – unemployment, high teen pregnancy rate, quality education for children as well as urban migration, have all affected the further realization of children’s rights.

VII. Disability (75.59, 75.93, 75.104, 75.105)

8. RMI supports the recommendations to continue to take steps to addressing other needs of disable persons. For instance, in September 2014 the Nitijela approved the RMI National Policy on Disability Inclusive Development. This Policy is to provide the purpose of the comprehensive framework and improving the quality of life of person with disabilities and to increase their meaningful participation in society. This policy was developed in line with the Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the pacific regional Strategy on Disability (PRSD) and the Incheon Strategy.

VIII. Socio-economic strategies and plans (75.52, 75.53, 75.57, 75.60)

9. RMI supports the recommendations and are committed to develop socio-economic strategies and plans. In 2013, the National Strategic Plan (NSP) was developed. It is designed as a framework to coordinate the articulated medium term development goals and objectives of the RMI government at the national level. It covers a three year increment period, starting 2015-2017 and will continually updated in order to meet longer term

objectives, especially in regards towards the scheduled completion of *The Compact of Free Association, as Amended* funding in 2023.

10. The NSP was developed in line with both *The Constitution* and Vision 2018, which provides the RMI with a long range view of national context and perspective that inform relevant national priorities.

IX. Climate change (75.58, 75.107, 75.108, 75.109)

11. RMI supports the recommendations to addressing climate change and to strengthen impacts relating to human rights issue. This compels us to implement measures to build resilience, reduce disaster risk, support renewable energy and energy efficiency, and other adaptation measures. Within the context of extreme vulnerability to climate change impacts, the RMI has developed a National Climate Change Policy Framework as a national blueprint to address national threats to climate changes in partnership with our regional and global partners. Presently, our Government is taking a holistic approach to address climate change issues in the following nine priority areas:

- (a) Food and Water Security;
- (b) Energy Security and Conservation;
- (c) Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management;
- (d) Human Resources Development, Education and Awareness;
- (e) Health;
- (f) Urban Planning and Infrastructure Development;
- (g) Disaster Risk Management;
- (h) Land and Coastal Management, including Land Tenure;
- (i) Transport and Communication.

X. Health and education (75.94, 75.95, 75.96, 75.97, 75.98, 75.99, 75.100, 75. 101, 75.102, 75.103)

12. RMI supports the recommendations and the need to strengthen progress in education and health were made as well. In terms of education, the Marshall Islands Education Act of 2013 makes education compulsory for all children ages 5–18 and Marshall Island’s progress on MDG 3 is on-track to achieved gender parity in education. With regards to health, we were able to strengthen prenatal and postnatal programs, and increase our emphasis on preventative care to ensure that women can continue to have safe pregnancies and births.

XI. Nuclear waste (75.110, 75.111)

13. RMI supports the recommendations and recognized the Special Rapporteur’s report on the implications for human rights of environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous wastes visited the RMI March 27–30 2012 and U.S. April 24–27 2012 “to assess the impact of human rights of the Nuclear Testing Program conducted in the RMI by the U.S. from 1946 to 1958”. He presented his report to the Human Rights Council during its 21st Session in September 2012. One of the issues identified in the report was the limited access to information relating to the Program.

14. Many of the historical documents provided to the RMI were incomplete and in “Deleted Version Only” form and labeled as Extracted, Redacted or Sanitized with information of unknown nature and volume removed. Following the Special Rapporteur’s report, the RMI has been trying to gain access to this information as recently as 27 April of this year but to no avail. The repeated failure or refusal of the U.S. to provide full access to these records can only be taken as a blatant indignity toward and lack of respect for the Marshallese people and represents an ongoing violation of basic human rights.
