



**REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

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13 July, 2001

Mr. Geoffrey J. Judge  
Deputy Assistant Secretary for  
Planning and Administration  
Office of Environment, Safety  
and Health  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, DC. 20585

Dear Deputy Assistant Secretary Judge:

I am writing to you to express my sincere appreciation for your participation in the annual meeting between the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI). Your honest and straightforward approach to dealing with the sensitive subject matters discussed during our meeting was greatly appreciated by the RMI delegation, particularly myself.

I look forward to co-chairing with you the working group to formulate strategic plans for the medical and environmental programs, and to address the issues identified in the joint communiqué. From the RMI side, I recommend that the senators, mayors and legal counsels for the 4 Atolls join the national government, including the RMI Embassy in Washington, D.C., at our working group meetings. Due to the technical needs involved in restructuring the medical and environmental programs, I also think we will need medical and scientific experts on-hand, such as Neal Palafox, Terry Hamilton, and Han Behling. Finally, I also feel strongly that Mr. Joseph McDermott from the U.S. Department of Interior (DOI) should serve as the moderator for our meetings. The issues we will discuss are difficult and it will help to have a third-party moderator, particularly from DOI since it has authority to ensure that the terms of the Compact are fully implemented.

Given the number of Marshallese who must participate in the working group, it would be helpful if we could find a venue for our meeting as close to the Marshall Islands as possible. Please let me know your thoughts about our first meeting of the working group as soon as possible so I can give the RMI delegation adequate time to make preparations.

I also hope to work with you to address several issues outside the immediate scope of DOE's environmental and medical programs. For example, I would like to continue to keep you posted on developments relating to the RMI's Changed Circumstances Petition. The Administration has a constructive role to play in reviewing the petition and helping

Congress understand the limitations of the 177 Agreement. It is in both DOE and the RMI's best interest to attend to the full range of radiological issues in the RMI, not just the limited scope under the 177 Agreement. In this regard, I welcome any suggestions you may have on how populations, such as the people of Ailuk Atoll (as well as other radiologically contaminated atolls outside of the 4 Atolls) and the Marshall workers who helped clean up the test sites on Bikini and Enewetak, could receive services they vitally need.

I feel confident and positive about the mechanism we have put in place to address issues of common concern. Thank you for your commitment to working with the RMI on areas of vital interest to our bilateral relationship.

Best Regards,



Gerald M. Zackios  
Minister of Foreign Affairs.