



**Republic of the Marshall Islands
STATEMENT by Tanya Terry
51st Session Human Rights Council
28 September 2022
Geneva**

Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

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Thank you, Mister President,

The Marshall Islands would like to thank the Special Rapporteur for his comprehensive report.

We welcome the report's highlighting that Indigenous peoples should not be made to pay the costs of inaction on consumption and emissions by non-indigenous societies. We, therefore, ask for heightened awareness of the impact of Climate Change and Nuclear legacy on indigenous peoples in a small island developing state.

To quote Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, a poet and Climate Change envoy from home, “It’s always been a dark future, but now that dark future is becoming more clear”. Some of our people cannot return home to their atolls which remain contaminated due to Nuclear Testing. Additionally, as a result of Climate Change, at just 3 meters above sea level, we are surrounded by the ocean; with rapidly rising sea level, we have nowhere to go. Thus, caused by the Nuclear legacy and Climate Change, we face an already uncertain future exacerbated by cultural disconnection from our heritage and roots.

We believe that there can be no shortcuts to sustainable and effective conservation; in the name of conservation, it will ultimately benefit the planet and its people as a whole. The Marshall Islands will sustain an urgent appeal regarding Nuclear legacy and Climate Change in order to protect the right of our indigenous people to a safe, healthy and sustainable environment.

Kommol tata and I thank you.