NITIJELA OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS
47TH CONSTITUTIONAL REGULAR SESSION, 2026

Republic of the Marshall Islands
Jepilpilin Ke Ejukaan

RESOLUTION 60

A RESOLUTION to approve the RMI Ambassador to the United States of America H.E. Charles Paul to convey and formally present the position of the Republic of the Marshall Islands before the Congressional Hearing on January 13-14, 2026 in Washington D.C., concerning the Unilateral Reclassification by United States Customs and Border Protection of Tuna Harvested in the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

WHEREAS, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the United States share a longstanding partnership in the Pacific region, grounded in common history, mutual security interests, and formal agreements dating to the Second World War and the decades that followed; and

WHEREAS, that partnership is reflected in enduring cooperation under the Compact of Free Association and in the presence of critical United States defense assets in the Republic of the Marshall Islands, including the Ronald Reagan Ballistic Missile Defense Test Site, which serves vital national and regional security objectives; and

WHEREAS, citizens of the Republic of the Marshall Islands have served, and continue to serve, honorably in the Armed Forces of the United States, standing shoulder to shoulder with Americans in defense of shared security and democratic values; and

WHEREAS, actions taken without consultation that materially harm the economic foundation of the Republic of the Marshall Islands are inconsistent with the spirit of

mutual respect and cooperation that has long characterized relations between the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the United States;

WHEREAS, for more than thirty years, tuna harvested within the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of the Marshall Islands under licenses and charter arrangements issued and regulated by the Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands has been treated as Marshall Islands–origin product for entry into the United States; and

WHEREAS, on or about October 28, 2025, United States Customs and Border Protection abruptly reversed this settled practice by directing that fresh headed-and-gutted tuna harvested in the Marshall Islands Exclusive Economic Zone be declared as originating in the People's Republic of China solely on the basis of vessel flag, without prior consultation or notice; and

WHEREAS, the tuna fishery constitutes a cornerstone of the Marshall Islands economy, contributing more than thirteen percent (13%) of the national budget and supporting employment, food security, and economic stability throughout the nation; and

WHEREAS, the reclassification has effectively closed the United States market to fresh Marshallese tuna by imposing tariffs that render such exports commercially unviable, causing immediate and severe economic harm; and

WHEREAS, established principles of United States law and international fisheries governance recognize that the origin of wild-caught fish is determined by the place of harvest and the exercise of jurisdiction by the coastal state, including through licensed and chartered operations within its Exclusive Economic Zone; and

WHEREAS, the unilateral reclassification undermines these principles, disrupts settled international fisheries practice, and conflicts with the expectations of consultation and cooperation embodied in the Compact of Free Association;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the People of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, through their *Nitijela* at its 47th Constitutional Regular Session to authorize the RMI's Ambassador to Washington D.C., H.E. Charles Paul to *lodge a formal complaint (démarche) directly with the U.S. State Department, urging intervention with the United States' Customes and Border Protection (CBP) under the Department of Homeland Security to:*

1. Formally objects to the reclassification by United States Customs and Border Protection of tuna harvested in the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of the Marshall Islands as originating in the People's Republic of China based solely on vessel flag;
2. Affirms that tuna harvested within the Marshall Islands Exclusive Economic Zone pursuant to licenses and charter arrangements issued and regulated by the Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands constitutes product of the Republic of the Marshall Islands for purposes of trade and customs treatment;
3. Calls upon the Government of the United States to immediately reverse the October 2025 reclassification and restore the long-standing treatment of Marshallese tuna as Marshall Islands–origin product;
4. Urges the release or refund of any tariffs, duties, or penalties imposed as a result of the reclassification; and
5. Requests prompt consultations between the Governments of the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the United States, consistent with the Compact of Free Association, to resolve this matter expeditiously and in good faith without compromising national security.

CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify:

1. That Nitijela Resolution No: **60** was passed by the Nitijela of the Republic of the Marshall Islands on the **12th** day of **January** 2026; and

2. That I am satisfied that Nitijela Resolution No: **60** was passed in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Rules of Procedures of the Nitijela.

I hereby place my signature before the Clerk this **12th** day of **January** 2026.

Hon. Brenson S. Wase
Speaker
Nitijela of the Marshall Islands

Attest:

Morean S. Watak
Clerk
Nitijela of the Marshall Islands