



FFA

Strengthening national capacity and regional solidarity for sustainable tuna fisheries

Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries

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FFA MEDIA RELEASE

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FFA mourns passing of former Director Talobak Victorio Uherbelau

FFA HQ, Honiara, SOLOMON ISLANDS-- The Forum Fisheries Agency mourns the sad passing of its former FFA Director, Talobak Victorio Uherbelau on Sunday, August 27, 2017. He was 78.

At the forefront of Palau's emergence into nationhood, Uherbelau, who held the chiefly title Talobak, served as his country's first Attorney General and went on to become the first of his country to lead a regional agency. The post title was changed to Director-General in 2005.

"Vic Uherbelau was a standout strategist and a determined and principled negotiator in Palau and the former Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands who brought his skills and his strong commitment to 'Pacific nationalism' to his two terms as Director of the FFA from November 1994 to November 2000," says FFA Director General James Movick.

A self-described "Palauan nationalist", Talobak Victorio had an impressive career of service to his nation spanning more than five decades and featuring many roles where his work ethic, gifted prose and law degree would help shape Palau's journey onto the regional and global stage.

"Talobak Victorio's life journey reflects the determination of a generation of young Pacific Islanders from Micronesia to take control of their own national destiny even in the days before elected leadership. The late Tony DeBrum on Marshall Islands was another. Talobak Victorio was literally at the centre of it all when the nationhood of Palau was being determined and established. He worked tirelessly to ensure a destiny and a voice for his people at the UN table, and he brought those same traits to his regional leadership of the FFA," says DG James Movick.

"We mourn the loss of another Pacific leader and statesman, and remember him well as a tough and seasoned negotiator, leading Palau through its Compact negotiations as well as playing a large role in the US Fisheries Treaty throughout its life and up to the most recent negotiation."

“The secretariat staff of the FFA and our Pacific fisheries family across the across the region join me in extending condolences to Talobak Victorio’s family, colleagues, and community at this time of bereavement. His contribution to Palau and Pacific development, and to Oceanic Fisheries at the regional and global tables, is immeasurable and we thank them for letting him give so much of his time and his commitment to regional fisheries.”

Talobak Victorio is survived by his wife Rachel Ngiruos-Uherbelau; daughters, Elsie, Angela, Rebecca and Vaidil, sons Numa and Gaafar; and many grand and great grandchildren –**ENDS**

Photo: Former FFA Director Talobak Victorio Uherbelau left, with former FFA Deputy Director Ian Cartwright. (Photo: FFALibrary)

ABOUT FFA:

The Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) strengthens national capacity and regional solidarity so its 17 members can manage, control and develop their tuna fisheries now and in the future. Based in Honiara, Solomon Islands, FFA’s 17 Pacific Island members are Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Since 1979, FFA has facilitated regional cooperation so that all Pacific countries benefit from the sustainable use of tuna – a multi-billion dollar resource important for many people’s livelihoods in the Pacific.

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