



MEDIA RELEASE

26 August 2025

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DO NOT SUSPEND THE CONSTITUTION, HILDA!

In a hastily drafted media release, Unlisted Thoughts strongly urges the President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Her Excellency Hilda Heine, to not suspend the Constitution of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (**the Constitution**), not take drastic actions to restore public security, and not rule by decree as a defensive measure against communist acts of violence endangering the state.

Unlisted Thoughts was saddened to learn that on the morning of 26 August 2025, the Nitijela Parliament Building was ablaze. Unlisted Thoughts expresses to the Marshallese our condolence and our gratitude that no-one was killed in the inferno.

However, when legislative buildings burn down, most heads of state and even more heads of government become tempted to suspend articles of their constitution, restrict civil liberties, halt freedom of the press, and imprison people for life. Unlisted Thoughts recognises the allure of this, especially when in response to alleged communist agitators.

President Heine must be strong and resist this urge.

As we all know, Section 18 of Article II of the Constitution states:

18 Invoking Bill of Rights Provisions

- (1) No right secured by the Bill of Rights may be denied or abridged, whether directly through the imposition of force or penalty, or indirectly through the withholding of privilege or benefit.



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- (2) Any provision of the Bill of Rights may be invoked either as a defense to a civil or criminal proceeding or as a basis for legal or equitable relief against any actual or threatened violation.

If the President of the Marshall Islands fails to respect the Marshallese right to be free from quartering soldiers in times of peace, free from conscription, and be free from being punished by death, then the President is unconstitutional and must resign. And if they do resign, they cannot take it back because in paragraph (5) of Section 3 of Article V of the Constitution:

Where the President has tendered or is deemed to have tendered his resignation from office, that tender may not be withdrawn.

Unlisted Thoughts also notes that there is no provision for the President to suspend any part of the Constitution.

A weak President of the Marshall Island would react to the Nitijela Parliament Building burning down by taking away the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and belief.

A strong President will do the right thing.

Unlisted Thoughts strongly urges President Heine to not suspend the Constitution using powers, actual or imaginary, in her constitutional toolbox.

Historian specialising in fires at legislative buildings Lucy Bell Quayle said:

“When your parliament burns down, you can either suspend freedom of the press or sit down and plan out how your next one will look.”

Former Speaker of the House of Commons the Right Honourable John Bercow said:

“Order!”

Former NSW Rural Fire Service salaried staff member Peabody Toole said:

“When the Houses of Parliament in Cape Town burned in 2022, it took everything in His Excellency Cyril Ramaphosa’s body to not suspend the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and assume dictatorial control.

“I wish I could be that strong.”

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