



**THEME: PADDLING TOGETHER FOR A STRONGER MICRONESIA**

***Palikir Communiqué***

1. His Excellency David W. Panuelo, President of the Federated States of Micronesia, welcomed His Excellency Taneti Maamau of the Republic of Kiribati, His Excellency David Kabua of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, His Excellency Surangel S. Whipps, Jr. of the Republic of Palau, and His Excellency Russ Joseph Kun of the Republic of Nauru to the 21<sup>st</sup> Micronesia Presidents' Summit (MPS) on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2023 in Palikir, Pohnpei. The theme of the 21<sup>st</sup> MPS is, "Paddling Together for a Stronger Micronesia."
2. As host and Chair of the 21<sup>st</sup> MPS, His Excellency President David W. Panuelo expressed his utmost gratitude and appreciation to the Presidents and acknowledged their efforts in joining the 21<sup>st</sup> MPS despite obstacles and challenges associated with air travels to Pohnpei due to limited flight schedule. He also acknowledged the Honorable Kitlang Kabua, Foreign Minister of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, for joining in-person on behalf of His Excellency David Kabua.
3. President David W. Panuelo expressed his personal gratitude to President Russ Joseph Kun as outgoing Chair, and acknowledging the key role of Nauru as Chair of the 20<sup>th</sup> MPS.
4. Presidents welcomed the decision by Kiribati to return to the Pacific Islands Forum, and acknowledged with appreciation Kiribati's reaffirmation that their brotherhood and sisterhood with the MPS was never fractured.
5. Presidents acknowledged with appreciation Fiji's Prime Minister, Sitiveni Ligamamada Rabuka, for accepting invitation to address the 21<sup>st</sup> MPS.

**Briefing by the Joint Region Marianas**

6. Presidents conveyed their appreciation to Rear Admiral Benjamin Nicholson for his in-depth briefing on security matters impacting the Pacific, including Climate Change, Illegal, Unregulated, and Unreported (IUU) fishing activities, and search and rescue.



## 21<sup>st</sup> Micronesian Presidents' Summit

### Update on the UN Multi-Country Office (MCO)

7. Presidents welcomed major updates from the Resident Coordinator for the UN MCO based in Pohnpei. As reported, the MCO will hire regional staff on the understanding that majority of the number of staff will be from the Micronesian sub-region.
8. A private company was successfully engaged for the building design and to come up with a cost estimate for the project. The One UN Micronesia House is making meaningful progress on its operationalization, with 19 international agencies that will be eventually based on Pohnpei and over 100 staff joining the said international offices in the future. Presidents expressed satisfaction on the progress achieved and look forward to securing sufficient funding for the construction of the One UN Micronesia House.
9. A view was expressed regarding the establishment of more regional offices serving country members, especially for the Micronesian region.

### Initiatives by Saudi Arabia

10. Presidents acknowledged Saudi Arabia's interest in hosting the World Expo 2030 and thanked the delegation of Saudi Arabia for making a presentation at the MPS. Majority of the MPS members (Kiribati, Palau, Nauru and FSM) have expressed support for Saudi Arabia.
11. Presidents solicited Saudi Arabia's financial support for the establishment of the UN One Micronesia Office in Pohnpei. Saudi Arabia delegation took on board this request, and conveyed that it had already transmitted this request to Saudi Government.

### Illegal Invasion of Ukraine

12. Presidents condemned the illegal, brutal, and unjustified invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, which is nearly approaching its one year anniversary. Presidents agreed that the rule of law, the international rules-based order, and respect for sovereignty and human rights must prevail. Presidents called upon the international community to help towards reinstating peace and stability in that region.

### Planned visit by President Joseph R. Biden Jr. to the Pacific Region

13. Presidents welcomed President Biden's planned visit for Leaders' Summit in the Pacific Region and expressed their full support and cooperation to ensure the success of this visit.

## 21<sup>st</sup> Micronesian Presidents' Summit

### Suva Agreement

14. Presidents reaffirmed the importance of a timely execution of the reform package under the Suva Agreement and the corresponding commitments expressed at the 51<sup>st</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Leaders meeting in Fiji. The Presidents acknowledged, with appreciation, the important role played by the Republic of Fiji, in particular former Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama, in institutionalizing the reform package and to the current chair of the Forum, the Honorable Sitiveni Ligamamada Rabuka, for making his first trip to Kiribati and for making regional unity a top priority of his chairmanship.
15. Presidents discussed briefly the terms of the Suva Agreement and unanimously expressed their satisfaction of the critical reforms in the agreement.
16. Presidents decided after consultation to endorse the candidacy of Nauru to be the next Secretary-General of the Pacific Islands Forum beginning in 2024.
17. In the spirit of solidarity, Presidents endorsed the location of the Pacific Islands Forum sub-region office for the North Pacific in the Republic of Kiribati.
18. Presidents endorsed the location of the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner in Palau.
19. Presidents expressed support for the candidacy of the Republic of the Marshall Islands for the post of Pacific Ocean Commissioner.

### MPS Secretariat

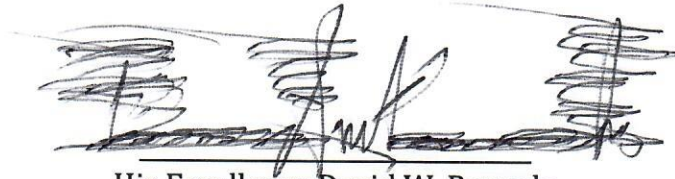
20. Presidents agreed to have FSM be the host of the permanent MPS Secretariat, and this Secretariat shall be accorded an elevated status. It shall be headed at a level of a Secretary General, inclusive of relevant membership fees. A working committee is mandated to draft the institutional documents that Presidents can endorse and officialize for final approval.

### Hosting of 22<sup>nd</sup> MPS

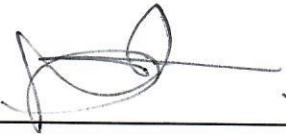
21. Presidents welcomed Kiribati's offer to host the 22<sup>nd</sup> Micronesian Presidents' Summit.



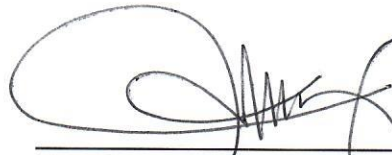
## 21<sup>st</sup> Micronesian Presidents' Summit



His Excellency David W. Panuelo  
President  
Federated States of Micronesia



His Excellency Taneti Maamau  
President  
Republic of Kiribati



The Honorable Kitlang Kabua  
Special Envoy  
Republic of the Marshall Islands



His Excellency Surangel S. Whipps, Jr.  
President  
Republic of Palau



His Excellency Russ Joseph Kun  
President  
Republic of Nauru