

FSM Information Services

Press Release

FSM Celebrates 75th United Nations Day by Advocating for Greater Multilateralism

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—On October 26th, 2020, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) formally celebrated the 75th United Nations Day, an annual and legal FSM national holiday held every 24th of October. After a mini parade across Kolonia Town in Pohnpei State, remarks were given by the Honorable Bethwel Henry, Speaker of the 1st FSM Congress, the Honorable Kandhi A. Elieisar, Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs, and the Honorable Cromwell Bacareza, Chief of the FSM's United Nations Children's Program (UNICEF).

Speaker Henry's welcoming remarks detailed the Nation's appreciation both for its own unity as the FSM, comprised of the States of Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae, and for the Nation's evolution from a colony and proto-colony under four separate countries' jurisdictions into a sovereign country recognized throughout the World for its commitments to the global community and solidarity through membership in the United Nations. The Speaker noted his appreciation that Pohnpei State itself is a united entity, whose diversity of ethnic and linguistic groups stand together as one, and that Pohnpeians stand with Yapese, Chuukese, and Kosraeans as Micronesians. "We thank all of you for joining us in this celebration," Speaker Henry said, emphasizing that the FSM stands with the United Nations in Shaping Our Future Together.

Secretary Elieisar's UN address described the FSM's benefits and commitments achieved through the principles of solidarity, inclusivity, and multilateralism, noting that His Excellency David W. Panuelo said in September that "it is crucial, in both times of peace as well as times of calamity, that the international community stand together, and that an infringement on the rights of one is the same as an infringement on the rights of us all. Whether we choose to call it multilateralism, inclusivity, or simple human decency, we are all much more alike than we are different. All human life matters, and our Nation calls upon the global community to embrace solidarity with one another. Empathy is not weakness; empathy is courage, and empathy is strength."

The Secretary noted with appreciation that in the 34 years of the Nation's independence, the FSM became a member of the United Nations in 1991, has established five Embassies and three Consulates General, and formed diplomatic relations with 86 countries. "This was made possible through international recognition of our independent status, achieved principally by our membership in the United Nations," Secretary Elieisar said.

The Secretary described the relationship between how seemingly abstract, large-scale problems have at their heart concrete, personal-level solutions. Speaking on Climate Change, the Secretary said “The FSM rightfully maintains that Climate Change is an existential threat to the Pacific Region, which we can see in our own Paradise in Our Backyard in how Climate Change is presently affecting remote island atolls such as Kapingamarangi, Woleai, and the Mortlocks. At the level of the United Nations, the FSM voices its concerns to the World, calling for action on the Paris Agreement and the Kyoto Protocol. At the level of bilateral relations with the United States, Japan, the People’s Republic of China, and Australia, the FSM calls upon its friends and allies to view Climate Change as a threat to food security, quality of life, and environmental health, and to take proactive measures towards using renewable energy. At the National level, the FSM recognizes its reliance on the importation of fossil fuels, and is working to expand FSM Petroleum Corporation/Vital’s mandate to include an emphasis on renewable energy. At the State level, the State of Chuuk in partnership with Vital and SoftBank is constructing the Integrated Coconut Processing Facility which will create jobs and exportable products whilst providing clean energy to the island of Tonoas. At the community level, remote islands such as Pakin and Mwoakilloa are reliant on solar panels. At the familial level, many of us are working to install solar panels and solar lights at our homes. On the individual level, each one of us is increasingly rejecting one-time-use plastic bottles for drinking water.”

“The beauty of the United Nations, and the beauty of genuine respect and cooperation with one another, is that this same formula of making an abstract, large-scale problem into a concrete, personal-level solution applies to virtually any challenge we can imagine. It is synthesized in the notion that words allow us to express how we feel and come to a consensus on what is true, to be followed by commitment—and that commitment itself is an action, not a word, demonstrated by what we do at the individual, familial, community, State, National, and Global level,” the Secretary continued.

Secretary Elieisar celebrated the accomplishments of the United Nations, to include the global community’s success through the World Health Organization to eradicate Smallpox in 1980. The Secretary described that multilateralism was key to tackling a large-scale, abstract problem by turning commitments into demonstrable actions with concrete results. It was noted that such commitments could also see the World develop, and disseminate, a COVID-19 vaccine, and responses for other public health crises.

The Secretary’s address then segued into recognition and appreciation on behalf of the FSM and the North Pacific at large for the implementation of the forthcoming United Nations Multi-Country Office. “It has taken over 15 years for us to achieve this result. With challenges of a global scale affecting island nations like ours in the Pacific, a UN presence on the ground will be extremely helpful. This important decision reflects the UN’s commitment to address the concerns of even the most vulnerable and smallest of its members. Micronesia is proud to become the host for this office,

and extends its gratitude to both the United Nations at large as well as its brothers and sisters in the North Pacific for their support.”

“As President Panuelo said at his 75th United Nations Address,” Secretary Elieisar concluded, “a better world is not something we ask for: a better world is something we build. We define a better world through consensus, with a foundation of empathy and love for other human beings. We construct a better world by acknowledging that we are who we choose to be, and then choosing to take responsibility for both ourselves and our communities. For the small nations of the world, the United Nations today is more important than ever before.”



Pictured Above: T.H. Kandhi A. Elieisar speaks on the FSM’s commitments to the principles of solidarity, inclusivity, and multilateralism



Pictured Above: Chief Bacareza presents his remarks



Pictured Above: The UN Day mini parade in Kolonia Town



Pictured Above: The UN Joint Presence Office and partners pose for a photo



Pictured Above: Secretary Elieisar joins the heads of UNICEF, WHO, and IOM in the FSM to unveil the United Nations sign in front of the UN Joint Presence Office