

United States and FSM governments complete negotiations of financial provisions of amended Compact with signing ceremony in Palikir

By *Bill Jaynes*
The Kaselehlie Press

May 23, 2023

Palikir, Pohnpei—In a ceremony this afternoon in the FSM President’s conference room, the United States and the FSM signed documents that are part of the again amended Compact of Free Association between the two countries. “The agreement itself has necessarily been amended, and has necessarily evolved because our region and the world has evolved as well,” said Chief Negotiator for the FSM Leo Falcam.



Indeed, for many years, United States representatives consistently, and insistently told the FSM that the financial provision of the Compact agreement would expire and would not be renewed at the end of 2023. Today’s signing gave a definitive sign that the world’s geopolitical situation has changed substantially enough to warrant a new 20-year extension of the financial provisions under the long-standing Compact of Free Association which allows for the United States to protect the FSM



[Click here for continuation](#)

PUC averts potential water tank catastrophe in Dolonier

By *Bill Jaynes*
The Kaselehlie Press

May 24, 2023

Pohnpei—PUC has averted a potential tragedy involving the Dolonier water tank. For approximately three weeks, PUC had been monitoring four leaks on the water tank. Within the last few days, two of those leaks got bigger which put the tank at high risk of complete and catastrophic collapse.

PUC mitigated the risk of tank failure by draining 406,250 gallons from the tank over 11 hours, leaving 281 gallons in the tank as of the morning of May 22 averting the possibility of disaster. Meanwhile they recruited a certified welder from

Adams Brothers Construction Company to repair the tank. The repairs were completed by the afternoon of May 23.

Water pressure for customers the tank served was low during the period of the repairs and PUC utilized the FSMTC cell phone network to let its customers know about the service interruption and its causes.

PUC’s representative BJ Obispo said that now that the repairs have been completed, they are refilling the water tank.

According to an email report to Governor Oliver and two Pohnpei senators, PUC CEO Nixon Anson wrote that Pohnpei’s 10th Legislature had supported the PUC concept plan to rehabilitate the central water system including the steel tanks. They passed a resolution to that effect with a funding source that

would require national government action which he said, never happened. However, he said that PUC would follow up on that proposal.



Eight Kosraen future soldiers take their Oath of Enlistment

US Embassy Kolonia

May 19, 2023

Pohnpei--U.S. Embassy Kolonia hosted eight Kosraean future soldiers today for their Oath of Enlistment ceremony. The Oath of Enlistment is a time-honored tradition required of all enlisted servicemembers. FSM Vice President Aren Palik and second lady Mrs. Adelita Abraham Palik are both from Kosrae, and were in attendance at today's ceremony as their niece took the oath of enlistment. Congrats to all!



Commanding Officer of the 30th Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) visits Governor Oliver

Pohnpei Enginkehlap News

May 16, 2023

Pohnpei--Governor Oliver received the Commanding Officer of the 30th Naval Construction Regiment, CAPT Dean Allen, USN for a courtesy call.



LT Adam Bossom, India Company Commander, Detail Pohnpei OIC, Liaison Officer, Federated States of Micronesia introduced CAPT Allen to Governor Oliver. LT Bossom also shared project updates with Governor Oliver including the completion of a school project in Pohnlangas, Madolenihmw next month. Upcoming exercises with the U.S. Armed Forces were also discussed including the upcoming Koa Moana exercise in the summer.

Governor Oliver thanked CAPT Allen, his Officers, and Sailors for their visit. He welcomed CAPT Allen to Pohnpei, who is here for the first time, commending the Seabees teams for all the important projects undertaken that have benefitted Pohnpei, and looked forward to the strong and enduring cooperation of the Seabees and U.S. Government.

CAPT Dean Allen was accompanied

by Command Master Chief Allen Johnson, USN, LT William Pelger, LT Adam Bossom, USN, Senior Chief Daniel Shaver, USN, Capt Theodore Donahue, USA, SSG Tarsis Harper, USA, PO1 John Eckert, USN and PO2 Kristen Olofson, USN.



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Bill Jaynes
Managing Editor

THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE KASELEHLIE PRESS WILL BE RELEASED ON:

June 07, 2023

Deadline for submission of articles or advertisements for this issue is the end of working hours on:

Monday, June 05, 2023

FSM Division of Anti-Human Trafficking holds Human Trafficking Shelter Management training

UNODC

April 27, 2023

Kolonia, Pohnpei – On April 27-29, 2023 a Human Trafficking workshop was conducted at the Island Palm conference room for the FSM Division of Anti-Human Trafficking Services (DAHTS) under the FSM Department of Justice. The workshop focused on strengthening Shelter Management in the FSM. There are four (4) Human Trafficking victim shelters already completed and located in the FSM states of Pohnpei, Chuuk, Yap and Kosrae. The International Organization of Migration (IOM) facilitated the workshop with issues relating to shelter staffing, investigation training, and how to assist victims at the shelters. The FSM DAHTS issued their Standard Operation Procedures (SOP) pursuant to the FSM Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Act of 2012. Human trafficking and migrant smuggling are global and widespread crimes that use men, women, and young girls for profit.

The workshop consists of staff from the DAHTS branch offices in the FSM with guest speakers from United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The UNODC introduced their new presence and their Transnational Organized Crime (TOC) project- which aims to strengthen the understanding of, and responses to TOC in the pacific., also to encourage and support member countries to take part in rule-based order in line with the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC) and its protocols. The FBI also take part in presenting the basic



investigation methods to human trafficking. The training was a success thanks to the organizers, the FSM DAHTS and IOM.

Australia in the spotlight: Maritime Security Adviser Lieutenant Commander Nigel Williams

LCDR Nigel Williams was posted to the Federated State of Micronesia (FSM) in January 2023 as the Australian Maritime Security Adviser. His role is to help strengthen the capacity of the FSM National Police's Maritime Surveillance Wing to conduct maritime and border security operations and support FSM's overall maritime security needs. This includes working on the Australian-gifted Guardian Class Patrol Boat, the FSS Tosiwo Nakayama, with a second arriving later this year.

LCDR Nigel Williams is a proud Australian naval officer with a career spanning 29 years. His experience includes working on Destroyers, Patrol Boats, and Landing Craft. He has served on HMAS Tobruk and HMAS Canberra. In August 2022, Lcdr Williams achieved a pivotal milestone in his career when he commissioned as a Maritime Combat Officer. Lcdr Williams' first appointment on commission was as a Surface Operations Officer of the Amphibious Task Group. His commitment to excellence was soon noticed, receiving a promotion to join the Sea Training



LCDR Nigel Williams with his wife Anita and daughter Lily.

Group as the Fleet Seamanship Officer, thus achieving yet another personal and professional career highlight.

Whether it is his dedication to his career, his family or adventuring, Lcdr Williams says his life is layered by professionalism, integrity, respect, and mateship.



LCDR Williams with CO FSS Tosiwo Nakayama Paulino Yangitesmal.

LCDR Williams says he is passionate about travel, adventure, diving, and family. He is also an accomplished bicycle rider and scuba diver and can often be found cycling Pohnpei or exploring the depths of

the local reefs. Married with two children, Lcdr Williams maintains a home base in Canberra while unaccompanied in the FSM.

...Compact

Continued from front page

militarily, if need be, as if the FSM was part of the United States itself.

“It is an agreement today that respects each nation’s sovereignty and recognizes how for the FSM has progressed in our ever-increasing ability to effectively administer and manage the economic and financial affairs of this nation,” Falcam said.

The ceremony was witnessed by the President of the Federated States of Micronesia Wesley W. Simina, Vice President of the Federated States of Micronesia Aren B. Palik, Speaker of the Congress of the Federated States of Micronesia Esmond B. Moses, Pohnpei State Governor Reed B. Oliver, Kosrae State Governor Tulensa Palik, and an audience of national and state officials from the FSM, representatives of the U.S. Embassy in the FSM, members of the media, and the public.

The documents signed this afternoon include agreements made on the entirety of Title II, certain provisions of Title IV, and Final Provisions of the Compact proper. The sides also signed an amended Fiscal Procedures Agreement and a Compact Trust Fund Agreement, as those were also scheduled to expire in 2023.

During last week’s similar ceremony in which the individual pages were initialed by the two countries’ chief negotiators, Leo Falcam and Ambassador Joseph Yun, Special Presidential Envoy for Compact Negotiations, then Presidential spokesperson said that the amounts agreed on at that time were not different than what former President David Panuelo announced in a press release on January 31, 2023. President Panuelo’s release said that the United States had agreed to provide \$2.8 billion in Sector Grants over the next 20 years. They had agreed to provide a \$500 million injection into the underperforming \$1 billion Compact Trust Fund with a projection for the fund to reach \$4 billion in 20 years. It also said that the agreement would no longer contain any verbiage regarding expiry of Financial Provision at the end of 20 years.

The Compact of Free Association between the United States and the FSM is not a new agreement. It is an agreement in perpetuity until such time as the agreement is terminated by either of the parties. Today’s signing ceremony was about the fiscal provisions of the agreement and



not a change in the other aspects of the Compact such as defense rights, security, immigration and others.

“We may all be rightly proud of this historic moment and the work that we have done to lay the foundation for a great future for our country and for our people,” said FSM President Wesley Simina in his opening remarks.

All of the speakers were quick to point out that though the hard work of coming to mutually agreeable and beneficial terms has been completed, today’s signing was not the end. Both countries will need to pass the agreement on to their respective legislatures before the agreements will be completed.

“To date there has been overwhelming bipartisan support in the U.S. Congress for continuation and strengthening of the Compact relationship, which is very encouraging,” a spokesperson for the FSM Joint Compact Review and Planning Committee (JCRP) said. “However, you rightly point to larger partisan issues in the U.S. that could affect the Compact approval. The negotiators have discussed a steps that might be taken should Congress not be able to pass the new amendments before the end of the fiscal year, but hopefully these won’t come into play.”

At the time of last week’s initialing ceremony, the plan was still for U.S. President Joe Biden to travel to a summit in Papua New Guinea with Pacific Island leaders. On the margins of that summit, the Compact was to be signed and witnessed by the Presidents of both the United States and the FSM. However, neither of the countries’ Presidents was able to attend that summit. President Biden cancelled his intended participation in order to stay home and work on the current debt ceiling issue that is still being hashed out in the U.S. Congress.

Additionally, though the FSM has received assurances that all of the federal programs

will continue, including Pell Grants, IDEA, judicial training programs, and others, as separate components, the parties are still working on those specific agreements. President Simina said that he hopes to have those for his signature in the near future.

U.S. Charge de’ Affaires Alissa Bibb signed the documents on behalf of the United States. “As Secretary Blinken mentioned in his remarks yesterday in Papua New Guinea, our relationship is significantly more than just the Compact,” she said. “We have a lot of shared values. We share respect for democracy, freedom, human rights, rule of law, the rules based international order, and of course, we have a shared desire for peace and stability here in the Pacific region.

“...My hope is that when we look back in 20 years, both from our side and from the FSM leadership’s side, that we will be able to point to tangible results to ways that this Compact assistance—these programs—made a difference in the lives of citizens of Kosrae, Pohnpei, Chuuk, and Yap.”

“This is indeed a very historic day,” said Chief Negotiator Leo Falcam. “It’s a day that symbolizes, with substance, the desires, intent and willingness to renew our agreement and to continue and deepen our enduring historical special relationship with the United States of America, a relationship that we all know, started well before ‘Compact one’.

“...It represents our enduring FSM’ desire to continued economic growth and development and our mutual and bilateral desire for a stable, secure, and rules based prosperous Pacific.”

Falcam congratulated the efforts of the whole JCRP team and its advisers, particularly what he called the “seasoned leadership” of JCRP Chairperson Asterio Takesy. He closed his speech by also pointing out the hard work, effort, and sometimes intervention of former FSM President David Panuelo.



FSM Congress Speaker Esmond Moses closed the event with a toast to the relationship of the two nations.

Australian representatives pay courtesy call to FSM President



Australia in Micronesia

May 22, 2023

Pohnpei—Ambassador Cowley, accompanied by Australian Maritime Security Advise LCDR Nigel Williams, had the honour today of meeting the new FSM President, H.E. Wesley W. Simina, and the Vice President, the Hon. Aren B. Palik.

Australia looks forward to a continuation of our warm, trusted and productive partnership on shared bilateral and regional priorities with the FSM under the Simina-Palik administration.

Photo credits: [Office of the President, Federated States of Micronesia](#)

Clean Cities, Blue Ocean workshop begins in Kolonia town, Governor Oliver attends opening



Pohnpei Enginkehlap News

May 19, 2023

Pohnpei--Cliff Rainbow Hotel, Pohnpei: May 9, 2023 – Governor Oliver attended the opening of the USAID clean cities, blue ocean pilot project workshop. A courtesy call made on Governor Oliver, May 8, 2023, by Mr. Roger Gardner and Mr.

Renee Acosta from USAID informed and invited Governor Oliver to the workshop, in collaboration with the Pohnpei State Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Kolonia Town Government.

Mr. Francisco Celestine, EPA Executive Officer delivered welcoming remarks U.S. Embassy Kolonia

Governor Oliver receives USAID Clean Cities, Blue Ocean program Facilitators



Pohnpei Enginkehlap News

May 16, 2023

Pohnpei--Governor Oliver met with USAID Country Manager, Roger Gardner, and USAID project Officer Mr. Herman Semes, Jr., who introduced Renee Acosta and Jasmin Tutor from the USAID Clean Cities, Blue Ocean program.

Mr. Acosta and Ms. Tutor are based in the Philippines and are here to facilitate a workshop to pilot the USAID Clean Cities, Blue Ocean project with Kolonia Town Government. The project aims to reduce plastic pollution in the oceans, directly at its source. The project develops capacities to improve solid waste management and helps build behavior change.

Governor Oliver welcomed Mr. Gardner, Mr. Semes, and Mr. Acosta warmly to the Governor’s Office. He was happy to hear of the project’s purpose and

expected outcomes. Governor Oliver noted and agreed that behavioral change is very much needed to address these issues. Governor Oliver related the change starts at home and we all need to take ownership to reduce pollution in our communities. He pledged the support of the Pohnpei State Government through the Environmental Protection Agency.

Executive Officer of EPA, Mr. Francisco Celestine also joined Governor Oliver to welcome the USAID team, looking forward to the training and working with the local government and students on environmental issues like Earth Day.

Mr. Roger Gardner thanked Governor Oliver and ExO Celestine for their support. He stated that it is important for us to learn from each other, through pooling our resources and collective energy. Thank you to U.S. Embassy Kolonia and USAID.

Charge’ d’Affaires, Ms. Alissa Bibb gave an overview of the clean cities, blue ocean program that aims to reduce plastic pollution in the Oceans and communities, develop capacities to improve solid waste management and help build behavioral change. The mayor of Kolonia Town, Hon. Betri Jacob, expressed gratitude on behalf of the Kolonia Town Government and advised all that Kolonia Town was locked and loaded to provide all the assistance required to move forward with the pilot project.

Governor Oliver delivered the final remarks of the day. He noted that on his way to the workshop, he witnessed

Ohmine Elementary fifth-grade students picking up trash on the side of the road, and was very encouraged to see students taking ownership of the cleanliness of their community. He thanked the U.S. Embassy and USAID for their continued support and assistance with important local issues at the municipal level with Kolonia Town Government. He noted that behavioral change was not enough, but behavioral upbringing is needed, starting in the households. Governor Oliver closed with a challenge to walk the talk, and not talk the walk when it comes to keeping our oceans and communities clean and safe.

Caroline Fisheries Corporation Leadership meets Governor Oliver

Pohnpei Enginkehlap News

May 19, 2023

Pohnpei--Caroline Fisheries Corporation (CFC) President and CEO, Marko Kamber, and former Governor of Pohnpei, Mr. Johnny David, representing the CFC Board of Directors, meet Governor Oliver. During their brief visit, Mr. Kamber and Governor David were updated by Pohnpei Port Authority (PPA) Seaport Manager, Baron Mendiola, on current seaport fees and policies. Both Mr. Kamber and Governor David thanked Governor Oliver and Mr. Mendiola for the important updates and all parties look forward to continuing cooperation and collaboration as CFC continues to contribute to the economic development of Pohnpei. Pohnpei State Government owns 42 percent of CFC.



Maria Marfel Sworn in as Yap's Department of Health Services new Director

DYCA - Media

May 5, 2023

Colonia, Yap—On May 12, 2023, Maria Marfel was officially sworn in as the new Director of the Department of Health Services in a formal ceremony. The oath of office was administered by Associate Justice Jonathan Machieng

and witnessed by Governor Charles Chieng, TH Lt. Governor Francis Itimai, Senator John Mafe Gilfiley, Giliko, Giltug, Chief of Staff Paul Ayin.

TH Governor Charles Chieng expressed his confidence in the newly appointed director and highlighted the importance of the department's role in ensuring

the health and wellbeing of the People of Yap. The Yap State Government congratulates Director Marfel' and wishes all the best.



Remembering & Celebrating the Life of JAMES T. STOVALL, III



July 8, 2023
3:00-4:00 PM EDT

Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church
100 W. Washington Street
Shepherdstown, West Virginia 25443

A reception will follow

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(Streaming will begin approximately 10 minutes before start time)

Those interested in attending in person are invited to RSVP
by email to dcmmission@fsmembassy.fm or by phone to (202) 223-4383

In lieu of flowers, donations are requested in Mr. Stovall's memory to either:

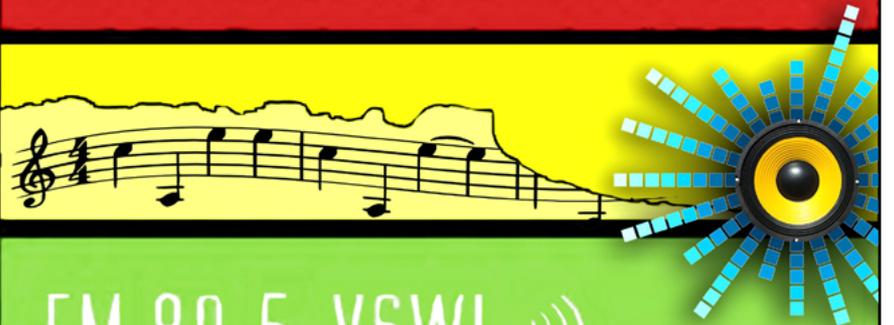
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The Digital FSM Project

Upgrading Connectivity:
Surveyor Training Underway for Kosrae



At the FSM Telecommunications Cable Corp, we believe in bridging the digital divide, and that starts with access to high-speed internet. Our goal is to make sure everyone has the opportunity to connect with the world and access the tools they need.

Survey work has begun in Kosrae with our surveyors working diligently to identify the optimal routes for laying fiber optic cables, while also assessing the land for potential hazards and informing residents on our work through the project. This survey is a crucial step towards delivering a more reliable and faster internet connection to the community, and enabling people to connect and conduct business in new and innovative ways. Upon completion of the survey, preparations for laying the optical cables will commence, helping us move closer to our goal of a digital future.

The Digital FSM Project aims to revolutionize the way we connect with each other, and the future is looking brighter than ever. Through the installation of fiber optic cables, we are preparing to bring high-speed internet to more people than ever before.

Join us on this journey towards a more connected future by following us on facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/DigitalFSMProject/>

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Regional cooperation a way to address climate resilience of Pacific financial systems

Pacific Island Forum Secretariat

May 17, 2023

Suva, Fiji--Climate-related challenges are increasingly recognized in the financial sector globally, and collective approaches are a key solution, according to a new regional study.

The study was part of discussions during a Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) and Agence Française de Développement (AFD) regional meeting today with Pacific Island central banks, development banks and development partners. The workshop on Pacific Financial Sector Climate Resilience discussed how the Pacific financial sector can meet the challenges of the climate crisis to be responsive and resilient. The International Monetary Fund, (IMF) estimates annual costs of climate adaptation in the Pacific range from 6.5 to 9% of Gross Domestic Product.

To further understand the resilience of the financial systems in the Pacific, GGGI and AFD carried out a regional study. Completed earlier this year, the study titled Prefiguration study for an integrated financial system in the Pacific Region points to financial institutions preference to use a regional approach when addressing climate related financial responses. The purpose of the study was to understand opportunities for regional financial cooperation to meet the challenges of climate change.

Covering all six central banks and 22 development financing institutions in 14 Pacific countries and territories, the study brought to light some of the challenges for the financial sector in the Pacific including low awareness of climate change impacts, low capacity, delays in international climate finance access and fragmentation of Pacific financial systems. The preference for a regional cooperation approach to address challenges was consistently noted by respondents. Joint trainings and capacity building, as well as sharing knowledge and experience between countries and

institutions was highlighted as opportunities.

“Through this study we see clear directions and preferences of Pacific countries and territories, particularly the central banks, on mobilizing capital markets, applying green finance taxonomies and learning from the experience in other jurisdictions,” said GGGI’s Deputy Director General Helena McLeod. “The Global Green Growth Institute supports regional cooperation across our work and from this study we see a lot of potential.” Ms. McLeod added. The study will be published after further review by key stakeholders.

At the event Mr Philippe Orliange, Executive Director Geographies of AFD and Ms. Helena McLeod, Deputy Director General of GGGI signed a regional partnership agreement. The partnership agreement formally recognises cooperation across individual projects and paves the way for future cooperation on regional climate change priorities.

“I am grateful for today’s event and for the very good collaboration we have had with GGGI in the Pacific. I am happy to sign with Helena McLeod, Deputy Director General of GGGI, this new partnership which will bring our collaboration to a new phase,” Philippe Orliange noted. “Climate change actions will be at the heart of our work together in the coming years to support Pacific Island Countries and territories in implementing their own solutions.”

For the Pacific Islands Forum, acting Director of Programmes and Initiatives Denton Rarawa welcomed the discussions blending climate, finance, and adaptation. “Climate change impacts are taking their toll on our developing Pacific economies, and our Leaders have been very clear in their desire to see responses that reflect the vision of the 2050 strategy, and the realities of our region,” he said. “This collaboration is timely and takes an exciting step in an important direction.”

He extended thanks to the France Development Agency and the Global Green Growth Institute for the partnership supporting regional climate change priorities.



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The Program Officer will provide administrative and technical support while working under the overall direction of the Program Manager to undertake the following activities such as (1) ensuring sufficient time is given to the Program Manager to review documentation to ensure all key reporting deadlines are met (i.e. quarterly and semester IFRs, ongoing replenishments, annual financial statements, semester project reports), (2) providing day-to-day support to all World Bank funded project and thematic activities implementation with the aim to enable conformity to expected results, outputs, objectives and work-plans, (3) Coordinating, preparing, and leading CIU induction training to all new staff working under PIUs and the CIU, and (4) Coordinating WB missions to the FSM, mission announcement letters, meeting timetable and other duties required to name a few.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR's) for the assignment may be obtained through (www.dofa.gov.fm) or by e-mailing to the address indicated in this REOI.

The Central Implementation Unit (CIU) within the FSM National Government Department of Finance and Administration (DoFA) now invites eligible individual Consultants to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services (attach curriculum vitae with description of experience in similar assignments, similar conditions, etc. and the details of two references).

The criteria for selecting the Consultant are:

Mandatory

Bachelor's Degree from a recognized institution in Economics, Development Studies, Political Science, Social Science or related field; or a relevant Associate Degree with 5 years proven work experience.

At least three (3) years' work experience in one of the following capacities: administration/ finance/ education/ information technology in a private or public institution.

Experience with working in a team environment.

Fluency in written and spoken English.

Desirable

Competency in the use of computer applications, especially MS Office and Excel.

Organized and detail-oriented person; Good communication skills.

This is a full-time position based in Palikir, Pohnpei. Domestic travel may be required from time to time, including overnight travel away from the home office.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers" July 2016, Revised November 2017 and August 2018 ("Procurement Regulations"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours 0900 to 1700 Pohnpei Time (Local Time).

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the email addresses below by May 29th, 2023 to:

Secretary, Department of Finance and Administration,
Attn:
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Governor Oliver pays courtesy call on the President and Vice President of the Federated States of Micronesia

Pohnpei Enginkehlap News

May 22, 2023

Pohnpei--Governor Oliver paid a courtesy call on H.E. Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia and T.H. Aren B. Palik, Vice President of the Federated States of Micronesia.

Governor Oliver reaffirmed Pohnpei State's commitment to work in cooperation and collaboration with the FSM National Government. Governor Oliver also thanked the President for the quick response of the National Government for a medical evacuation request only one day into President Simina's term.

President Simina thanked Governor Oliver for his visit. He expressed his appreciation for Pohnpei's role in the development of the nation, including the use of land at the Palikir capital complex, for the benefit of the nation. He also expressed his appreciation for Pohnpei's contribution during the Pandemic, and looked forward to working with Pohnpei State, noting that there are many exciting things on the horizon.

Vice President Palik also thanked the Governor for his visit. He said he wanted to forge very close relationships with the States and will reach out for courtesy visits in the coming weeks, starting with Pohnpei State.

Joining Governor Oliver was Mr. Patrick Carl, Director of the



Department of Public Safety, Protocol Officer Emerson Eperiam and Public Information Officer, Patrick Pedrus. Attending from the FSM National Government, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Khandi Elieisar, Chief of Staff Jane Chigyal, Special Assistant to the Vice President Ari Skilling and Andrew Falcam from the FSM PIO office.



Pacific Energy and Transport Ministers call for bold action to reduce fossil fuels and increase access to energy and maritime transport for all Pacific people

Pacific Community

May 12, 2023

Port Vila, Vanuatu--Pacific Energy and Transport Ministers have called for Leaders to consider the development of a Pacific Energy Commissioner and called on developed countries and major emitters to meet their commitments and ensure access to funding for the Pacific to transition away from reliance on fossil fuels at the 5th Pacific Regional Energy and Transport Ministerial Meeting.

Ministers and representatives from 20 Pacific countries adopted the Efate Outcome Statement at this ministerial meeting hosted by Vanuatu Government in Port Vila convened by the Pacific Community (SPC).

Vanuatu Minister for Climate Change, Adaptation, Meteorology, Geo-Hazards, Energy, Environment and Disaster Management the Honourable Ralph Regenvanu co-chaired the Pacific Energy and Ministerial Meeting and commended the unified commitment by Ministers.

"The strong outcome of the day is trying to push forward all the work the countries are doing including the Pacific Community (SPC) and the partners. We are encouraging financing which is the

critical element of this call that came out which asks for development partners to increase their efforts to support members to mobilise new, additional, scaled up, timely and predictable funding."

Pacific Energy and Transport Ministers also called for Leaders to establish a Pacific Energy Commissioner to drive the acceleration required for the 64% of Pacific people that still lack access to regular power supply whilst preparing our region to reduce fossil fuel reliance.

"There has been a call from this meeting to the leaders to consider establishing an office of the Pacific Energy Commissioner and it was a key ask of the Port Vila Call and it happened here. We will contribute our lobbying efforts to see if we can get this established by our Leaders," he said.

SPC's Director of Geoscience, Energy and Maritime Ms Rhonda Robinson said as the region's mandated organisation on energy security and maritime transport, our team stands ready to support country priorities towards a carbon-neutral region whilst increasing access to sustainable energy and maritime services for all Pacific people.

"As SPC our role is really to get behind our national government members and



consolidate and bring some coherence around the region's priorities".

I acknowledge the Minister's commitment to increase access to the energy and maritime sectors for our women and girls with a bold position in the Efate Outcome Statement to find practical ways to ensure we have more women engineers, renewable energy experts, decision-makers in the community level and seafarers which supports us all for the prosperity of our Blue Pacific," she said.

Ministers also agreed the 6th Pacific Energy and Transport Ministers Meeting will be held in Papua New Guinea in 2026.

Efate Outcome Statement here <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/8k5hz>

Website and information papers here <https://gem.spc.int/meetings/5th-pacific-regional-energy-and-transport-ministers-meeting-2023>

Governor Oliver welcomes Hebele founder Matthew Coleman

Pohnpei Enginkehlap News

May 12, 2023

Pohnpei--Governor Oliver was visited by Mr. Matthew Coleman from a non-profit organization supporting Micronesian students – Habele.

Mr. Coleman and Habele started the Robo League in Yap back in 2011, which has since expanded across Micronesia. A Robotics team from PICS High School even went to Switzerland last year to compete in the First Global Robotics competition. Habele's generous donations to the team allowed them to travel to Switzerland and return to Pohnpei.

Mr. Coleman is visiting Micronesia and talking with educators and government

officials to see how robotics can continue to serve the students of Micronesia. He shared with Governor Oliver his idea of using robotics in vocational settings to encourage students who love to work with their hands and are more mechanically inclined to pursue careers in the engineering and technology fields. He also spoke of making the robotics league more FSM-centric, and to develop trainers in the states of the FSM, including Pohnpei.

Governor Oliver thanked Mr. Coleman for his work with our students and shared his words of advice to the Pohnpei robotics team on the eve and return of their trip to Switzerland. Governor Oliver challenged the students to use their knowledge and skills in robotics to tackle and solve local issues.



He expressed gratitude and appreciation to Mr. Coleman and Habele for their support of the PICS High School Robotics Team. Governor Oliver expressed his support for Mr. Coleman's aim with robotics for the training and advancement of our students, arranging a meeting with the Director of the

Department of Education, Mr. Stanley Etse, and Mr. Dennis Poll, Vocational Education Coordinator.

More information on Habele can be found on their website: <https://habele.org/>

Toward a Peaceful, Stable and Prosperous World

G7 Summit remarks by the Pacific Islands Forum Chair

Hon. Mark Brown, Prime Minister of the Cook Islands

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

May 21

Hiroshima--Excellencies – Kia Orana.

Thank you, Prime Minister Kishida. My visit this morning to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park to pay tribute to the memories of the victims of the very first nuclear attack was my very great honour.

May I acknowledge the presence of President Zelensky, and assure you Sir, we the 18 Pacific Forum Islands Countries that I represent here today stand with you and the people of Ukraine.

The Pacific IS peace.

We speak peace, we live peace, and we are proud of our legacy of peace and stability built on a bedrock of regional unity and the Pacific Way.

We are geographically isolated. It took four flights, and 30 hours of travel to be here in Hiroshima. But despite our isolation, our peace, our security, and our stability are threatened by forces external to us.

COVID-19, global conflict, and extraordinary global inflation over the last couple of years has significantly challenged how we in the Pacific work to ensure the ongoing security and prosperity of our people.

The illegal invasion by Russia of the Ukraine has significantly increased the cost of food and energy to our people, and exacerbated supply chain difficulties.

These new challenges have compounded existing vulnerabilities in our small, isolated, and climate-exposed island nations.

Amidst this, we remain steadfast in working together with the international community, to defend international order and uphold the rule of law.

But we do so in the shadow of externally imposed security paradigms seeking to impose their will on our Blue Pacific.

One of these impositions has been the legacy of nuclear testing in the Pacific by members of the G7.

We remain concerned with the structural integrity of the Runit Dome and the potential leakage of radioactive nuclear waste.

Our position on any discharge of nuclear treated wastewater into our ocean is well established – it must be safe. Our Pacific Ocean is our food basket; it feeds our people and people the world over.

As we reflect today, here in Hiroshima, on global governance, international law, and security, we will never forget the price that we have paid, and continue to pay, as Pacific countries for the security of the global



community.

Never again will we be a testing ground for nuclear weapons of mass destruction.

As a Pacific region, we have demonstrated over the years our ability to navigate the multilateral system to secure our interests and contribute meaningfully to world peace and prosperity.

The United Nations Law of the Sea was top of the agenda at the first ever meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum in 1971 and its successful adoption in international law has been vital to establishing rights over our ocean space.

In 1985, our Leaders established the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone through the Rarotonga Treaty.

And more recently, the Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the face of Climate change-related Sea-level rise reaffirms our determination to address the unique challenges posed by climate change and sea-level rise.

In July last year, Pacific Island Leaders adopted the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. This Strategy articulates our collective priorities as a region – by the Pacific, for the Pacific.

We are well aware the current narrative is that the Pacific is a hotly contested geopolitical region. That this new, and renewed commitment to working with the Pacific are in response to perceived threats by non-traditional partners.

We have said this before, and we will say this again; the Pacific has always had a “friend to all and enemy to none” existence. Because for us, in our own development context, there is no other option.

More importantly – this mindset, and way of existence, is what has ensured the peace and stability we in the Pacific have sustained for decades.

This year, the Cook Islands’ hosting of the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting will be under the theme of “Our Voices, Our Choices, Our Pacific Way; Promote, Partner, Prosper”.

Let me make clear to those who consider the Pacific pawns on a geo-political chessboard.

We the Pacific welcome genuine engagement from all our partners and see this engagement as an opportunity for collaboration rather than conflict.

But this collaboration will be on our terms.

This collaboration will be guided by our Voices, our Choices, and the Pacific Way.

We invite all of you, G7 members, and your partners to work with us, and to learn from us, the Pacific, on how we can ensure the security, stability and prosperity of the Blue Pacific and humanity at large.

Kia Orana e Kia Manuia.

Department of the Interior's Assistant Secretary Cantor awards the FSM Compact Infrastructure Grants to build new schools and a primary health care facility for Pohnpei State

U.S. Embassy Kolonia

May 22, 2023

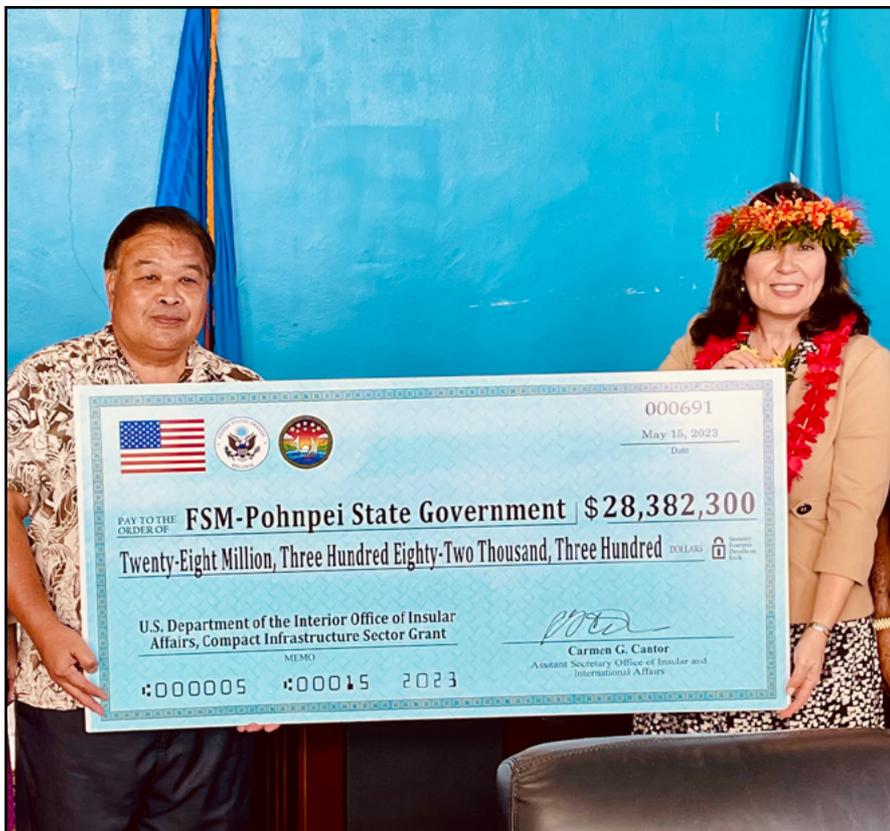
During a May 15 visit to the Pohnpei, United States Department of the Interior's Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs Carmen G. Cantor met with the Honorable r Reed B. Oliver, Governor of Pohnpei State to present three Compact Infrastructure Grants Sector Award Grants totaling more than \$28 million. In brief remarks, Assistant Secretary Cantor said:

"I am pleased to present for your consideration and acceptance, a Compact infrastructure grant award in the amount of \$9 million for the new construction of Palikir Elementary School; a Compact grant award in the amount of \$8 million for the new construction of Lukop Elementary School; and a Compact grant award in the amount \$11.3 million for the new construction of

a primary healthcare facility for the people of Pohnpei State."

We share your enthusiasm and anticipation in starting construction on these projects and more importantly, look forward to seeing these facilities put to future use by the people of Pohnpei State."

Assistant Secretary Cantor also met with the President of the Federated States of Micronesia, His Excellency Wesley Simina, was on-hand to celebrate initialing of Compact of Free Association agreements, and provided additional perspective on the U.S.-FSM relationship, stating "The relationship between the United States and the Federated States of Micronesia, exemplified through our commitment to shared values, democracy, a free and open Indo-Pacific and our mutually beneficial Compact of Free Association, has never been stronger."



PIF Chair gives opening remarks as U.S.-Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting

Pacific Island Forum Secretariat

May 22, 2023

Port Morseby, Papua New Guinea--Thank you Prime Minister Marape, and Secretary Blinken, Fellow Pacific Islands Forum Leaders and Ministers. Kia Orana and Warm Pacific Greetings to us all.

First and foremost, allow me to acknowledge the Government and people of Papua New Guinea for the arrangements and facilitation of this very auspicious occasion. Meitaki Ma'ata Prime Minister Marape for your leadership and support to bring these Summits together here in your wonderful homeland of Papua New Guinea.

In my capacity as Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, allow me to add my own personal welcome to you Secretary Blinken for joining us here in the region this afternoon. It is wonderful to see you so soon, after Hiroshima (at the G& Summit). While I will admit that there is a level of disappointment that the much-anticipated visit by President Biden, could not eventuate, we remain grateful to the U.S. Government for working at short notice to ensure appropriate representation at this engagement this afternoon. As Prime Minister Marape has said, we are all politicians. If there is an issue on the home front, you've got to deal with that first.

However, we welcome the invitation of the President to meet again in DC this Fall, and we look forward to receiving further details on that.

Excellencies and Secretary, today's discussion presents a valuable opportunity to gather and discuss issues of mutual importance for our region and the U.S. Our meeting today is a demonstration of our commitment to continue to strengthen our partnership and building on the very successful first U.S.-Pacific Island Country Summit in Washington, DC last September 2022.

It also provides an opportunity to consider a number of key updates and necessary actions on issues of key importance. I am sure we can all agree that we continue to witness a fluid and evolving geostrategic landscape. For instance, the region and indeed the world today has vastly changed from that which it was when you last visited the Pacific region just last February.

Dominating the global discourse since our last engagement has, of course, been the illegal invasion of Ukraine by Russia, which has had ripples across the globe. The impact of this event has materialised in the Pacific through increased costs in food and energy and equally concerning-- exacerbating supply chain difficulties. It is in times such as this, that our partnerships become fundamental to our ability to address these exogenous shocks and

challenges.

Excellencies, as a longstanding Forum Dialogue Partner, we are encouraged by the U.S.' recognition and application of the Forum Leaders' Blue Pacific Principles for Dialogue and Engagement. As we continue to reaffirm, the Forum is central to Pacific regionalism and collective action, and we are committed to progressing our priorities through collective engagement with partners under the auspices of the Forum family.

On this note, I was very encouraged by the recent outcome of the G7 Leaders' Summit which included recognition of and support for our 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. As well as other significant regional priorities, such as debt restructuring, and financial systems reform.

In this vein, allow me to reference briefly the Partners of the Blue Pacific Initiative. While we welcome the intent and rationale to establish such a mechanism, we do maintain some concerns with the current design and construct of this initiative, in that it must, at the very least, allow for joint consultation and ownership by the region, if it is to succeed.

We therefore welcome the opportunity to dialogue with the U.S. and other partners on this initiative, to better understand its scope and to ensure it complements and does not duplicate regional efforts to progress our priorities through existing mechanisms.

My colleague Leaders with me this afternoon will also raise and reaffirm the key regional priorities that we continue to pursue as a collective. In addition to driving the progress of these priorities, I must underscore that significance and value of joint advocacy. I welcome the active engagement and joint advocacy of the U.S. with the Pacific Islands Forum on priorities such as climate action, development financing, and security.

With these brief remarks, Excellencies and Secretary, I thank you once again for making time in your busy schedules to gather and discuss pressing issues in our region. The agenda before us is critical to forging strengthened partnerships, and our expectations to achieve our broad ambitions remain high. I wish us all a successful discussion. I hope PM Natano that the prayer that you put forward would reinforce that due to time constraints, our talk and contribution would allow us to get through this meeting with everybody having a chance to have a say. So with those words, thank you very much again, Secretary Blinken-- I will now ask the Press to leave the room before Leaders will have the opportunity to put forward their comments.

Thank you very much.

Working Together to Address Multiple Crises

G7 Summit remarks by the Pacific Islands Forum Chair

Hon. Mark Brown, Prime Minister of the Cook Islands

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

May 20, 2023

Hiroshima, Japan--Excellencies, President of the G7 Summit, Colleague Leaders, Heads of International Organisations, Kia Orana and warm Pacific greetings.

It's an honour to represent the 18 island nations of the Pacific Islands Forum.

As a collective, our Pacific region contributes less than 0.03 percent to global emissions.

Our emissions are the equivalent of a burning matchstick in a forest fire.

While we continue to use our best efforts and ingenuity to protect ourselves and to protect our ocean, we urgently need developed countries, certainly those within the G7, to deliver on their climate finance commitments, first made in Cancun in 2010, followed by the Paris Agreement in 2015, and today still not met.

That finance must be directed to the most climate vulnerable countries of which many are SIDS in the Pacific.

We continue to face the ongoing onslaught of global climate change, a phenomenon that we did little to contribute to but whose impacts we suffer from the most. Shipping is our lifeline.

More than 90% of our trade, including food, medicines and building materials, reach us by sea. We already pay the most expensive shipping costs in the world – due to distance and diseconomies of scale.

The measures being proposed by G7 countries for the adoption of IMO operational and fiscal measures would add even more cost to us and seriously jeopardise the livelihoods of our people and our economies.

To borrow the words of the Honourable Prime Minister from Barbados, “poor countries paying the price of wealthier nations.”

Hear us when we say, the proposed

IMO measures will severely impact the already costly shipping services available to us and must therefore be assessed from the lenses of our most vulnerable communities.

Again, we call for the attention of the G7 to identify any disproportionate impacts and address them prior to the approval and subsequent adoption of any such measures.

We have been consistent from the outset that any funds raised through a punitive levy, now being considered at the IMO, to be imposed onto shipping must not come at the cost of the SIDS.

Our region, already suffering the highest transport costs, cannot and must not be further penalized by such measures.

It is up to the G20 countries, not least those within the G7, responsible for over 80% of global emissions, that we are beholden to for our survival.

The survival of our people in the Pacific is being held to ransom at the cost of the developed world ensuring the energy stability their society demands, expects, and needs through increased Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) production and long-term LNG shipping contracts through which they can manage the transition over the coming decades to the alternative fuels required for a Net Zero World within 2050.

This is far removed from our region's aspirations for a Just transition to a fossil fuel free Pacific as articulated in the Port Villa declaration.

In July last year, our Pacific Islands Forum Leaders endorsed the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.

The 2050 Strategy is our collective vision deeply rooted in the Pacific context, amplifying our united voices in



solidarity to support delivery of action-orientated solutions, particularly in the context of accelerated climate action.

The 2050 Strategy will accelerate climate action within our region and serve as a model for inspiring climate action worldwide.

For the Blue Pacific, development finance is critical to achieving our development goals.

As the G7, you are the most influential economic and political grouping in the global order – you have an obligation to lead on climate action – through actions, not just words.

Access modalities to all development financing mechanisms, especially climate finance, need to be reassessed – reform requires G7 leadership.

The Pacific calls on the G7 and Partners to recognise and support the development of the Multi Vulnerability Index, which appreciates the full dimension of vulnerabilities including economic and social, that is faced by our region.

The Pacific has established a Pacific Resilience Fund, one which is tailored to address the needs and vulnerabilities of our region.

We ask the G7 to support the Pacific through investment in the Pacific Resilience Fund.

The Pacific have been leaders in addressing crises faced worldwide.

It was the Pacific that over 30 years ago, called for the establishment of a loss and damage fund, which we celebrated at COP 27 in Egypt last year.

It was Pacific voices that led the call of ‘1.5 to stay alive’ – a call that led to the adoption of the Paris Agreement.

The Pacific was key to the negotiations on the now agreed fisheries subsidies agreement at the WTO, which we strongly urge countries to ratify.

But we alone cannot ensure our survival.

The current food and energy crisis, much like the climate emergency, can only be addressed through our collective global effort.

We the Blue Pacific, stand ready to support these global efforts and we look to the G7 to assume and deliver on its responsibilities as global leaders.

Thank you for your attention.
Kia Orana e Kia Manuia.

Opinion Editorial

Observing International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia in Micronesia

The International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) is recognized every year on 17 May to draw attention to human rights issues related to fellow human beings with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities or expressions. An important recognition as it was on this day in 1990 when the World Health Organization (WHO) removed homosexuality from the International Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD). Indeed, IDAHOBIT is a day to celebrate diversity and to raise awareness of the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer and other people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities (LGBTIQ+ people). It is a day when the United Nations and its member states are reminded of the promises we made to “reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights” and to ensure that the dignity and worth of every human are never forgotten or infringed upon. We have made these promises in the Charter of the United Nations in 1945, which still guides us today.

Recognized in over 130 countries, the theme of this year’s IDAHOBIT is “Together Always: United in Diversity”. This theme was chosen in consultation with LGBTIQ+ groups from around the world as an open invitation to unity, allyship and collective action. “Together Always: United in Diversity” allows for the celebration of human rights defenders, advances the struggle for LGBTIQ+ rights everywhere, and provides for inclusion of and space for allies to join the movement. Space in which Micronesian communities are doing their part.

I was pleased to learn that a few days ago, the organization “i AM”, advocating for rights of the LGBTQIA+ community, held an Urohs Fashion Show in Pohnpei, showcasing traditional FSM and Pohnpeian Urohs designs made by local designers. The fashion show used models of all identities, and it was a masterclass in showing how such a display of diversity and inclusivity can be a beautiful, fun, and important event for everyone.

I was also pleased to hear about the work of Yoske “Yaya” Matul, a human

rights defender from Palau and one of the founders of living all-inclusive Belau, LAIB, Palau’s first Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex and Allies (LGBTIQ+) organization. Yaya’s work was showcased by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) as part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Pacific Voices (#UDHR75PacificVoices) campaign, currently ongoing and will feature many others from the region.

Indeed, IDAHOBIT is a day that helps us remember to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another. A day when we recognize that everyone deserves dignity and respect, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, age, identity, culture, and nationality. Let us use this day to build our knowledge and understanding of the legal and social barriers faced by LGBTIQ+ persons. Let us accept and support LGBTIQ+ persons ensuring that all are treated equally. And let us speak out against discrimination and proactively ensure that our homes, our social spaces and our workplaces are safe and inclusive. We all have a role to play!

In line with this year’s IDAHOBIT theme, let’s reaffirm that we are indeed together, and united in our diversity.

Jaap van Hierden

The author is the resident coordinator for United Nations in Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Kiribati. As the designated representative of the UN Secretary-General in Micronesia, the UN Resident Coordinator guides UN’s engagement in development, humanitarian and peacebuilding activities in five Micronesian countries.



Joint Media Statement of the US-Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Dialogue in PNG

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

May 22, 2023

Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea—We—the Pacific Islands Forum, represented at this meeting by the governments of Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu, and the United States of America—meet on the occasion of the U.S.-Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Dialogue in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea on May 22, 2023.

At the first ever U.S.-Pacific Islands Summit in Washington, D.C. in September 2022, we announced the Declaration on U.S.-Pacific Partnership. Today, we reaffirm our shared vision for a resilient Pacific region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion, and prosperity.

We are committed to bolstering Pacific regionalism, with a strong and united Pacific Islands Forum at its center. We will continue to work together to tackle shared challenges such as the climate crisis, to advance inclusive economic growth and social equity for the people of the Pacific and

to jointly advocate on shared priorities.

We reaffirm our commitment to comprehensively address the legacies of conflict and the promotion of nuclear nonproliferation, and we acknowledge the nuclear legacy of the Cold War. We remain committed to addressing the Republic of the Marshall Islands’ ongoing environmental, public health concerns, and other welfare concerns.

We support the vision of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and recognise its centrality in the strengthening partnership between the United States and the Pacific Islands Forum. This meeting builds on three decades of close cooperation between the United States and the Pacific Islands Forum and we look forward to the Second U.S. – Pacific Islands Forum Summit in 2023.

Finally, and most importantly, we commend and acknowledge the warm hospitality of the Government and people of Papua New Guinea for hosting this Dialogue.



Opinion Editorial

To develop China-FSM Friendship conforms to the interests of the two countries and the trend of history

By Mr. ZHANG Weitao, Charge d’Affaires ad interim of the Chinese Embassy in the FSM

China extends warm congratulations to the new leaders of the Federated States of Micronesia elected on May 11. At this important moment, many friends have asked me how I see the past and future development of China-FSM relations. Not long ago, Mr. Michael Henry published an opinion editorial on The Kaselehlie Press, offering his insights on the China-FSM relations. Although I don’t know him personally, I pay tribute to him as well as to the thousands of people who support and maintain China-FSM friendship. In this context, I’d like to share with our friends of FSM some of my observations:

1. China-FSM cooperation has yielded fruitful results. Bearing in mind the fundamental interests of the two peoples and with extraordinary wisdom and foresight, the leaders of China and the FSM made the wise decision to establish diplomatic ties on September 11th, 1989, opening a new chapter in our bilateral relations. Over the past 34 years, thanks to the joint efforts of both sides, China-FSM relations have achieved fruitful results, not only bringing tangible benefits to the two countries and two peoples, but also promoting the regional peace, stability and prosperity.

China has long been providing assistance to the FSM with no political strings attached. In the process, we fully respect the will of the national government, state governments and people, who sincerely welcome Chinese assistance as it has strongly boosted their economic and social development. For example, China assisted the construction of the Secondary Road project located in Madolenihmw, the Kahmar Bridge, the Chuuk State government building, the Kosrae bridge, and several China-FSM friendship multi-purpose gymnasiums. China also provided one Yun-12 aircraft and three cargo and passenger ships to the FSM. The list goes on and on.

In addition to the above-mentioned major infrastructure projects, we focus

on development by coaching one to fish rather than giving one fish. China stays attentive to the actual needs of the FSM, works to align assistance with the FSM’s development plans, focuses on improving the livelihoods of local communities, and building local capacity for independent development. For example, We carry out Pilot Farm project to teach local people how to grow vegetables, breed pigs and use bio-gas. We offer many types of government scholarships to the FSM students and encourage them to go to China for further study. Most of them return to the FSM after graduation and devote themselves to the nation-building of the FSM.

China and the FSM have always stood in solidarity, offered mutual assistance and worked together to fend off the virus since the outbreak of COVID-19. Immediately after the outbreak of the COVID-19, the FSM provided one hundred thousand US dollars to China to support its fight against the virus. True friendship will stand the test of adversity. China appreciates the valuable understanding and support of the FSM, and this is something we Chinese will not forget. As a nation who always reciprocates kindness, China has been supporting the FSM’s COVID-19 response as best as it can, including hundreds of thousands of US dollars in cash donations, multiple batches of anti-epidemic supplies and 30 modular isolation units for the purpose of COVID-19 response, which have played an active role in helping the FSM defeat the pandemic.

All things considered, it is in the common interests of the two countries to maintain and develop China-FSM relations. We should cherish the path our predecessors have blazed and their painstaking efforts, carry forward traditional friendship, stick to the right direction, advance the cause of friendship and move toward the goal of win-win cooperation.

2. The People’s Republic of China is a reliable friend and partner of the FSM. Both China and the FSM are developing countries with painful experiences of

being bullied and oppression by foreign colonial domination. Both uphold the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, abide by the basic norms governing international relations of respecting sovereignty and territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs. Both are committed to the common goals of independence, economic development and a better life for the people.

China is one of the first countries to recognize the FSM’s independence, establish diplomatic ties with the FSM and support the FSM’s membership in the United Nations. Since the establishment of diplomatic ties 34 years ago, China has always supported the FSM in exploring its own development and revitalization and achieving common prosperity. China has always upheld mutual respect, equality, mutual benefit and sincere cooperation with the FSM. We never interfere in the FSM’s internal affairs, never bully the FSM as a small country, and never force the FSM to do something against its will.

As a responsible major country, China stands upright with honor. For Pacific island countries, China is not a “stranger”, but an “old friend” who has been well known and trusted for many years. The all-round development of China’s relations with island countries is not a result of reverie and empty talks, but an outcome of vision and painstaking efforts. The facts have proved that the exchanges between China and the FSM did not and will not affect regional security and stability. What we focus on is economic development, what we care about is improving people’s well-being, and what we are doing is building roads and bridges. We have no intention of competing with anyone for influence, nor are we interested in engaging in geographical competition.

On this planet, a rich country cannot always be a rich country, and a poor country cannot always be a poor country. The 21st century should be an era for developing countries to accelerate their development. While pursuing Chinese modernization with high-quality development, China is willing to help and support Pacific island countries, including the FSM, to jointly realize the historical mission of accelerating development and revitalization.

3. The red line of the one-China

principle must not be trampled. The Taiwan question concerns China’s internal affairs that involves China’s core interests and the Chinese people’s national sentiments, and no external interference will be tolerated. The one-China principle is the political foundation for China’s relations with all the countries including the FSM. It is also the basic norm of international relations and the prevailing consensus of the international community. Some of FSM friends might ask what one China means? The only right answer is, there is but one China in the world, Taiwan is an inalienable part of China’s territory, and the government of the People’s Republic of China is the sole legal government representing the whole of China. Just as the word “Unity” is engraved on the national emblem of the FSM, every Chinese has the same dream of reunification.

A total of 182 countries have established diplomatic relations with China on the basis of the one-China principle. All of those fully demonstrate that the one-China principle meets the shared aspiration of the people and constitutes an irresistible trend of times. On upholding one-China principle, truly far-sighted statesmen in the world will not fail to see the trend of times, and great statesmen with fundamental interests of their people in mind will never hesitate to make the rational and right choice.

Since the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries, successive FSM governments have adhered to the one-China principle and worked for advancing bilateral relations with China. Any attempt to slander China-FSM friendly cooperation or shake the political foundation of bilateral relations will not succeed. Last month, the 22nd FSM Congress passed a resolution to reaffirm its support for the one-China policy, which fully demonstrated the common aspiration of the people. Looking ahead, China-FSM relations embrace new opportunities and broad prospects for development. China is ready to work with the FSM to firmly support each other’s core interests, strengthen and expand practical cooperation in various fields, and jointly promote in-depth development of China-FSM Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, so as to bring greater benefits to our two peoples.

Interior's Office of Insular Affairs Announces \$4,279,808 in FY2023 Grants Benefitting the Insular Areas

Supports health, youth education, judicial training, weather forecasting for climate change resilience, natural resource conservation, and more

United States Department of the Interior

May 23, 2023

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs has announced \$4,279,808 in fiscal year (FY) 2023 Technical Assistance Program grant funding that will support and benefit a variety of programs including healthcare for populations from the nuclear-affected atolls in the Marshall Islands, youth education and outreach, judicial training, natural resource conservation, and weather forecasting for climate change resilience in the Pacific Insular Areas.

"We are pleased to support these cross-cutting programs that touch on a wide variety of issues that are important to the Insular Areas," said Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs Carmen G. Cantor. "The funding this year will support health programs for nuclear-affected populations, youth education, judicial training, weather forecasting for climate change resilience, natural resource conservation, and more."

Technical Assistance Program grant awards totaling \$4,279,808 will be awarded to Insular Areas governments or non-profit organizations as follow, with one project being funded in collaboration with the Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit as follows.

Insular Area Governments

- \$1,302,077 to the Republic of the Marshall Islands Ministry of Health and Human Services for the Section 177 Health Care 4 Atolls Program. The above figure supplements the first half of FY 2023 funding in the amount of \$938,148 that was awarded in February for a grand total of \$2,240,225 for the Section 177 Health Care 4 Atolls Program in FY 2023.
- \$378,078 to the Government of

Guam to fund travel of territorial staff to the Territorial Climate and Infrastructure Workshops (TCIW) for 2023 and 2024. This funding will support travel costs for government officials from American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands to the TCIW. The 2023 TCIW was held in Honolulu from March 8 to 12, 2023.

Non-Profit Organizations

- \$631,590 to the Prior Service Trust Fund (PSTF) Benefit Payments Program for retired employees of the former Government of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. PSTF beneficiaries hail from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau.
- \$520,977 to the Junior State of America Foundation for the Insular Areas Youth Civic Education Program for students from all the Insular Areas.
- \$497,882 to the Pacific Mission Aviation's Helping Our Pacific Economy program to fund an aircraft and hangar maintenance and repair program on Yap and Palau as well as provide equipment for repair of airstrips on Woleai and Fais islands in Yap State in the Federated States of Micronesia.
- \$250,000 to We Are Oceania in Honolulu for the Youth Empowerment Center project to support students from the freely associated states residing in Hawai'i.
- \$227,542 to the University of Hawai'i Pacific Islands Ocean Observing System for the Dynamical Downscaling for El Niño Events for Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and for Improved Atmospheric Forecasts for the Pacific Insular Areas using state-

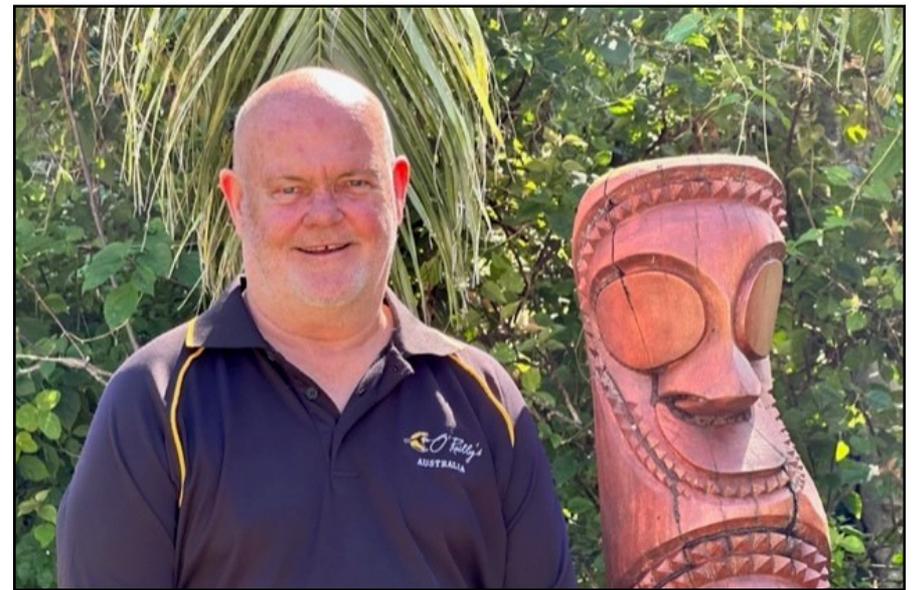
of-the-art data assimilation.

- \$60,480 to the Tãno Tãsi yan Todu organization for projects that link science and conservation to the community, elevate indigenous knowledge and language on science and conservation and will fund a Marianas Islands Conservation Conference in 2024 and 2025.

Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit

- \$411,182 will be provided through a Reimbursable Support Agreement to the Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit to fund the Pacific Islands Judicial Education Programs in the Pacific Territories and Palau.

Australian volunteer completes volunteer assignment in Yap



Australia in Micronesia

May 19, 2023

Yap—Australian volunteer, Terence (Terry) Watson, has just completed a remote volunteer assignment through Australian Volunteers Program with the Yap Visitors Bureau (YVB) in Micronesia. As an avid traveller and with a long-held fascination in how people live and how communities develop, Terry leapt at the opportunity to volunteer with YVB. Although it was a remote volunteering role, Terry was able to build the capacity of YVB in organisation and information management, promoting Yap as an ideal tourist destination and boosting tourism in Micronesia in the process.

'It is very fulfilling witnessing the partner

organisation engage with different stakeholders in their community and working for their benefit. They are so eager for knowledge and committed to bringing all of their stakeholders along on the journey,' says Terry.

Reflecting on his assignment, Terry found his volunteer experience both rewarding and inspiring, and he feels proud to have made a real difference in assisting YVB in developing Yap's tourism industry. The success of this assignment will see him soon undertaking a hybrid volunteering role to continue supporting YVB. This hybrid approach will include another remote volunteer assignment and an opportunity to volunteer in-country in Yap.

Investments in people vital to Pacific region’s prosperity, new World Bank report finds

World Bank report for nine Pacific Island countries finds improving the efficiency of public spending in health and education will deliver significant – and sustained – economic benefits

World Bank

May 18, 2023

NUKU’ALOFA—More effective, consistent government investments in the health, education, and wellbeing of Pacific people will ultimately deliver sustained economic and social benefits to the region, a new World Bank report into public spending in the Pacific has found.

Raising Pasifika: Strengthening Government Finances to Enhance Human Capital in the Pacific, prepared by the World Bank alongside nine Pacific countries – Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu – includes analysis of the region’s fiscal situation, domestic revenues and spending, alongside outcomes in education, health, and social protection.

The report highlights that improving the efficiency of public spending while strengthening domestic tax revenue will be vital to boosting the region’s prosperity over the coming years. The report follows recent similar reports for Fiji and for Solomon Islands, and includes a set of recommendations for each of the nine countries studied.

The report suggests that as six of the nine surveyed countries are at a high risk of debt distress, a gradual adjustment to government spending is vital for balancing budgets and avoiding sharp cuts to public services in the years ahead. The report recommends that, together with more efficient spending, improvements to tax collection must be a priority for Pacific governments to ensure individuals and businesses are contributing their fair share to the region’s economies.

The Raising Pasifika report also recommends Pacific countries allocate more to social assistance and protection –such as through cash and in-kind transfers to vulnerable households - with the aim of bringing Pacific spending towards the global average of 1.5 percent of GDP. These investments would help reduce poverty and inequality, while also supporting communities in tough times, including in the aftermath of climate-related disasters or major economic shocks, such as the region saw from the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent natural disasters in Tonga and Vanuatu.

“We welcome the launch of this timely report, and while some of the findings present challenging messages for the region, they are important for Tonga and the other 8 Pacific nations to consider,” said the Hon. Tiofilusi Tiueti, Minister of Finance for the Kingdom of Tonga. “I was particularly pleased to see the consideration into how we can more effectively build the potential and opportunities of our people, so they are best prepared to seize the opportunities of the future.”

“While they’re challenging topics; reducing debt, strengthening revenue and improving the quality of government spending are critical areas for Pacific countries to address,” said Stephen Ndegwa, World Bank Country Director for Papua New Guinea & the Pacific Islands.

“If the report’s suggested reforms are implemented, Pacific countries could deliver government revenues and budget savings equivalent to between three and 43 percent of GDP. These resources could represent a unique chance for increasing education, healthcare, and other necessary public investments across the region – which would mean more opportunities and better outcomes for Pacific people.”

INVITATION TO BID REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) FOR SERVICES



Project Title:	Shuttle or taxi services for SPC’s Micronesia Regional Office (MRO) in Pohnpei, FSM
Location:	Micronesia Regional Office, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia
Date of issue:	19/05/2023
Deadline for seeking Clarification	09/06/2023
Closing Date:	19/06/2023

The Pacific Community (SPC) invites interested bidders to submit a proposal for the procurement of Preferred Service Provider for local transportation of SPC staff/consultants and family members for SPC related meetings, activities and airport transfers.

The Request for Proposal (RFP) and other related documents can be downloaded from the SPC website at <http://www.spc.int/Procurement>.

Direct link: <https://spc.int/procurement/tenders/preferred-service-provider-for-local-transportation-in-pohnpei-fsm>

For any additional information or clarification on the RFP process, please send your request by e-mail to procurement@spc.int.

All proposals must be submitted in two separate emails (one Technical Proposal and one Financial Proposal) no later than 19/06/2023 by 11.59 PM Pohnpei Time.

UN Resident Coordinator Jaap Van Hierden and Utwe Elementary School students test water supply

UNICEF

years old

May 22, 2023

Kosrae--Water is every child’s right. UN Resident Coordinator Jaap Van Hierden, together with UNICEF, visited Utwe Elementary School, Kosrae, Federated States of Micronesia, on May 22-23, 2023, to test the different water sources in the school. After one day, the water samples changed color based on the level of contamination. Four out of the seven samples turned black, indicating that the water sources were not safe for drinking.

Water safety is a growing global concern. We need urgent #WaterAction to protect the lives of children. Safe water keeps children health, in school, learning, and helps them to survive and thrive.

Van Hierden also paid a courtesy call on Lieutenant Governor Arthy G. Nena to explore future collaboration between the United Nations Multi-Country Office and the Kosrae State Government. UNICEF handed over three units of sterilizers and health kit for the Kosrae Department of Health Services and announced UNICEF-Japan support for WASH in Schools and the Kosrae State Hospital.

“Water quality testing by UNICEF at Utwe Elementary School,” Van Hierden wrote in a Tweet. “The samples taken from the water tanks came out clean (yellow), but the water from the taps became black overnight due to the many bacteria present. The samples were taken by the children.”

“I learned that this demonstration helped us know if the water is clean or dirty. I hope that there will be more of these water testing kits to help the community know whether their water is safe to drink or not.”

– Landon Malisou, 8th grade student, 14

