

Limtiaco concludes successful FSM swimming career

FSMNOC

July 28, 2024

Paris, France – Tasi Limtiaco, one of the most decorated swimmers in Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) history, concluded his FSM swimming career yesterday in respectable fashion at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

Limtiaco, who holds numerous FSM breaststroke and individual medley records, finished 5th in his heat and 29th overall.

“It was really great for me to be able to represent my country, and there is nothing else I could be prouder of.” said Limtiaco after the race. “I would not have swum in my second Olympics if it was not for me personally wanting to be a two-time Olympian and to elevate the love of the sport back home, not just in Micronesia but all of the Pacific.”

Limtiaco’s Paris Games also included him being one of FSM’s flag bearers at Opening Ceremonies and as a mentor to young athletes competing at the Games.

“Tasi has been one of the great ambassadors for our NOC and FSM sport.” said Jim Tobin, Secretary General of the FSM National Olympic Committee. “The entire NOC is so proud of his efforts and wish him much success as he begins his post-



“racing career.”

Team FSM and the FSM Olympic Committee would like to thank the following for their financial support and sponsoring of our FSM Olympic athletes, coaches and team officials at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games: International Olympic

Committee (IOC); Olympic Solidarity; Oceania National Olympic Committees (ONOC); Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government; Etscheit Enterprises; Pohnpei Ace Hardware; Isamu Nakasone Store; Bank of Guam; Pohnpei Ace Office Supplies; Caroline Fisheries; Moylan’s Insurance; Hornet International;

Bank of the FSM; VITAL; Pohnpei NAPA, and Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.

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Compliance gaps and policy issues found in FSM vehicle disposal audit

By Bill Jaynes
 The Kaselehlie Press

July 29, 2024

FSM— The FSM’s Office of the National Public Auditor recently released an audit report revealing significant compliance, policy, and internal control issues in the disposition of government vehicles. It is the first inspection on fixed assets disposal for the national government specifically related to vehicles.

Auditors said that the report (2024-03) was scheduled for compliance review after



“certain government officials” commented on the increasing number of unused vehicles parked at various locations within the National Government compound.

Additionally, they said that as taxpayers, FSM’s people would also like to know if and how some government elected officials have been able to take ownership

of government vehicles at the end of their official tenures and whether such actions are

Click here for continuation on page 3

Pohnpei Library hosts Summer Reading Program

U.S. Embassy to the FSM

July 26, 2024

Pohnpei—Members of the U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Embassy team joined friends, families, staff, and leadership of the Pohnpei Public Library in celebrating the completion of its Summer Reading Program on July 9.

The Summer Reading Program is an annual four-week program that hosts school children from incoming K-5 to incoming 8th grade. Activities and lessons taught in this program were not only educational but fun, with a goal to prepare these children for their next school year.

Head Librarian Trueleen J. Albert said the idea is to get kids used to the idea of learning in a library given how times have changed with the modern rise of technology and frequent use of electronic devices at home.

“Time away from the screen and making friends the old-fashioned way is what we also try to cultivate and nurture with this program”, she said. “After the four weeks, we display the accomplishments as creatively as possible and all the parents we have worked with have been amazing and supportive.”

Congratulations to all kids, parents, and library team for a successful summer program!



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Bill Jaynes
Managing Editor

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

August 14, 2024

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

Monday, August 12, 2024

Governor Joseph hosts U.S.D.A Forest Service ecologists for productive discussion on agroforestry and conservation initiatives

Pohnpei Public Information

July 17, 2024

KOLONIA, Pohnpei—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph welcomed esteemed ecologists Amanda L. Uowolo and Susan Cordell from the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, and Ms. Amy Gradin, Economic/Consular Officer, U.S. Embassy Kolonia to his office. Accompanied by Mark Kostka, Director of the Department of Resources and Development, and Eugene Eperiam, Chief of the Division of Forestry, the meeting highlighted the commitment to enhancing Pohnpei's natural resources through innovative agroforestry and conservation practices.

During their discussions, Governor Joseph and the ecologists explored various projects undertaken in Pohnpei

with the support of the Micronesia Conservation Trust, the Conservation Society of Pohnpei, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Focus was placed on watershed management initiatives in Kitti and Nett, as well as forest restoration efforts. The Governor emphasized the importance of working closely with local communities to develop effective management plans that ensure the sustainability of Pohnpei's rich biodiversity.

A part of the conversation included the advanced capabilities in wildfire mapping, where satellite imaging and integrated artificial intelligence are used to identify dry areas prone to wildfires. Director Kostka highlighted the use of drone technology in Pohnpei to detect invasive species, which are often more susceptible to fires. This technological integration enhances the island's ability to manage and mitigate

potential wildfire risks effectively.

The ecologists also the recent letter sent to President Biden after the 26th Micronesian Islands Forum, which Governor Joseph signed on behalf of Pohnpei. The letter underscores the state's dedication to fostering

international collaboration in addressing environmental challenges. Governor Joseph reaffirmed his administration's commitment to leveraging both traditional knowledge and modern technology to protect and preserve Pohnpei's natural heritage.



...Vehicle Audit

Continued from front page

permissible under the rules and laws of the government.

The first finding of the audit was that the FSM Congress places a higher priority on its administrative manual than on the FSM's Financial Management Regulations (FMR) on fixed asset disposal processes. They found the discrepancy was due to different understandings of relevant laws. There is an issue of who is actually responsible under the law to dispose of the assets of the legislative branch, so currently, the Department of Finance and Administration (DoFA) handles disposal for the Executive and Judicial branches while the Congress Administration handles the process for the Legislative branch. Congress Administration handles the processes differently than does the DoFA under the FMR.

DoFA Secretary Rose Nakinaga has suggested that the FSM Attorney General should issue a legal opinion on the matter though she agreed with each of the findings of the audit.

As a result, there were over \$10,000 worth of bidding proceeds that the Director of Congress Administration was carrying for a number of months because DoFA refused to receipt it in the finance system due to missing required documents and

their (DoFA's) lack of involvement in the bidding process.

Auditors also said that inconsistent procedures on handling public resources can lead to negative perceptions among the public, stakeholders, and potential bidders. It can be seen as unfair and exclusionary, damaging the reputation of the organization or government agency.

The response of Congress' Administrative Director extends to several pages in length and takes umbrage with this finding and that of the third finding which FSM ONPA has referred to its Compliance Investigation Division. "The fact is that Congress does not authorize the sale of any surplus Congress property outside of the public bidding process for anyone, and no private sales are authorized," Suda Rayel wrote. He added that the Congress Administrative Manual "requires that all surplus Congress property over \$50 can only be disposed of through the public bidding process. Any public official who wants to bid on a surplus Congress vehicle must submit a bid through the same public bidding process available to the public. This requirement applies to everyone, including Congress members and congressional staff."

The entire response listing the Congress processes can be found at www.fsmopa.fm.

The auditor's second finding was that the vehicle disposal method used by finance and the Office of the President over the past years lacks justification or any legal

basis. According to both the Secretary of DoFA and the Chief of Staff, it has been the practice set as a precedent in the past that Presidents are able to obtain full ownership of their assigned vehicles by making a specified payment determined by the DoFA. It is important to note that not all former presidents followed this practice. However, not only is the practice contrary to the requirements of the FMR, but no information was provided by DoFA to confirm how the prices were determined.

The audit showed a table listing three FSM Presidents who took their vehicles after their terms were complete, referring to them as Presidents X, Y, and Z. President X paid \$1,000 for a Nissan Pickup truck. President Y paid \$7,643 for a Kia Sportage SUV. Years of acquisition and acquisition costs for those vehicles were not available. President Z took a Nissan Frontier Pickup acquired for \$38,456, and a Nissan Armada for \$63,008 by paying \$35,000 to DoFA. Both of those vehicles had been acquired in 2022.

The third finding of the audit was a conflict of interest in the fixed asset disposal process due to ineffective internal controls.

"After examining the bidding records from both the Department of Finance and Administration (DoFA) and Congress, we found that certain members of Congress and their staff successfully bid for the vehicles during the public sale process. Additionally, the winning bid amounts for these vehicles were surprisingly low

considering their current conditions. It's worth noting that these vehicles were disposed of due to surplus reasons and are still fully functional and operational as indicated by their records," the auditors reported.

"Similarly, we also noted a couple of staff from within the Supply Unit and senior officials of the National Treasury Division that were also taking part in the fixed assets disposal process. Although these gestures may seem innocent and harmless to them, the perceptions of others with regard to their participation in the bidding of fixed assets may be viewed as questionable and biased, undermining the credibility and integrity of the process."

As their fourth finding, auditors report that missing documents reflect a lack of proper internal controls relating to the disposal of fixed assets. As an example, auditors could not confirm from records that public notices of bidding opportunities of public sales were actually advertised.

The final finding of the audit was that the required annual physical count of fixed assets is not being carried out, resulting in abandoned government vehicles still being on the books. Auditors said that the supply team is waiting on the Departments to initiate the process of disposal rather than performing the physical count of fixed assets annually. Also, there is an absence of any standard operating procedures for the supply unit to follow in order to carry out the counts.

Pohnpei Fishing Club hosts first self-sponsored bottom fishing tournament

By *Bill Jaynes*
The Kaselehlie Press

July 27, 2024

Pohnpei—The Pohnpei Fishing Club held its first-ever self-sponsored bottom fishing tournament on Saturday. For the photographer there to photograph the event, it was a long lens type of day; no big tuna or marlin to photograph—just beautiful

but small bottom fish.

The club awarded prizes under three species categories, though varieties under each species category were caught. Cash prizes were \$100, \$75, and \$50 for the top three anglers of each species.

Tim Jones was the top prize winner of the day, capturing all three of the top fish in the “Jacks” category and the top prize-winning snapper. The top fish was categorized as a Jack, though the club did not specify the sub-species of that two-pound fish. Jones’ two other winning fish in the category

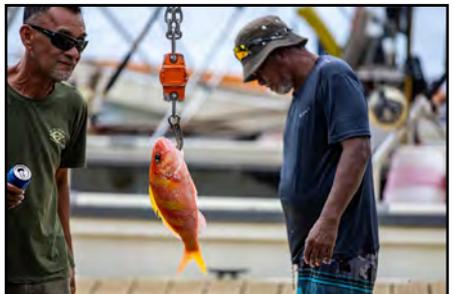
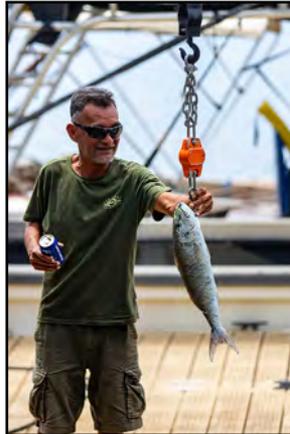
were Black Jacks of two pounds and 1.8 pounds, respectively.

Jones’ 4.2-pound Huku won the top prize in the snapper category. His was followed by Andy Musrasrik’s 2.8-pound snapper and Kazuhiro Fujita’s two-pound snapper.

Solomon Frank won the top prize in the grouper category with a beautiful five-pound grouper. He tied with William Richen for second with twin four-pound groupers.

Though fourteen boats pre-registered for the tournament, only seven ultimately showed.

The weigh-in and awards ceremony was followed by a fundraising auction for Kidi Oangoahng, a Pohnpei non-profit organization raising funds to bring a veterinarian to Pohnpei for another in a series of veterinary clinics.



Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Lisa Franchetti's meetings with senior leaders in the Federated States of Micronesia

United States Navy

July 22, 2024

FSM—Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Lisa Franchetti met with Vice President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) Aren Palik, FSM Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs Lorin Robert, and the Lt. Gov. of Chuuk, FSM, Hon. Mekioshy William, July 21-22.

During these engagements, she emphasized how the U.S. and FSM's shared commitment to their longstanding defense and security ties, underpinned by the Compact of Free

Association, support freedom, stability, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific.

The leaders discussed new prospects for defense posture cooperation, including in Yap State, and talked about enhanced exercise opportunities as the U.S. - FSM partnership grows stronger. They also underscored the importance of the U.S. Navy's Pacific Partnership 2024-2 - the largest maritime humanitarian and civic assistance mission conducted in the Indo-Pacific - to the people of FSM.

The CNO highlighted how the United States military serves as a defense force for the freely associated states,

including Micronesia, and how America's all-volunteer force draws strength from Freely Associated States citizens. Franchetti said she was grateful for the military service of Micronesian citizens, who serve at a higher rate per capita than any other U.S. state.

This was Franchetti's first meeting with FSM leadership.

(Editor's Note: Admiral Lisa Franchetti was appointed as the United States Navy's Chief of Naval Operations, U.S.



Navy's highest office, on November 2, 2023 and in so doing became the first woman to ever have served in that role and also the first woman on the Joint Chiefs of Staff.)

U.S. Navy's top officer recognizes sailors and marines currently serving in Pohnpei

*By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press*

July 20, 2024

Pohnpei—While on her visit to the FSM,

the U.S. Navy's top officer, Admiral Lisa Franchetti, took time to encourage Sailors assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 5 and Marines assigned to Combat Logistics Battalion 13 serving in Pohnpei.

During the short ceremony, the Admiral presented two medals. She awarded the Defense Meritorious Service Medal to YN1 Patrick Howard, currently stationed at the U.S. Embassy, and the Navy & Marine

Corps Achievement Medal to Sgt. Folly Amouzougan.

She also presented a Chief of Naval Operations Challenge Coin to HM3 Alexa Wintemberg, BU2 Adam Skeens, and LCpl Keyon Desiree.

The ceremony began with the Admiral presiding over the honorable discharge of CE2 Michael Holzknicht and his immediate reenlistment.

The Admiral took questions from the Sailors and Marines gathered for the command performance at the PICS gymnasium, answering with the clear knowledge that only the U.S. Navy's highest command officer could.



CyberGuard: Empowering digital resilience in the FSM



United Nations Development Programme

August 24, 2024

Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia- In the promotion of digital resilience and online safety in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Micronesian Productions hosted a Cyber Security Forum in Pohnpei, earlier this month. This forum, supported by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) Pacific Digital Democracy Initiative (PDDI) and the European Union (EU), will empower citizens and civil society through digital transformation.

Bringing together key stakeholders from government, media, the private sector, and civil society to be informed and empowered participants about the importance of proactively engaging in digital safety activities to protect themselves, their businesses, and their communities from online threats.

In his welcome remarks, Nigel Jaynes, Executive Director of Micronesian Productions, expressed gratitude to all participants:

“It is great to see new as well as familiar faces. Today, we are not only assessing threats and defenses, but

we are building a community that can stand strong against the challenges of the digital world.”

UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in the North Pacific, Kevin Petrini, echoed this vision, highlighting the need to protect users, especially women and youth, from online vulnerabilities.

“Digital platforms can be powerful tools for empowerment and advocacy. However, they can also be misused to intimidate, harass, stalk, and silence people, especially women and girls. This not only infringes on their rights but also perpetuates a culture of fear and discrimination, highlighting the importance of establishing robust cybersecurity measures,” he said.

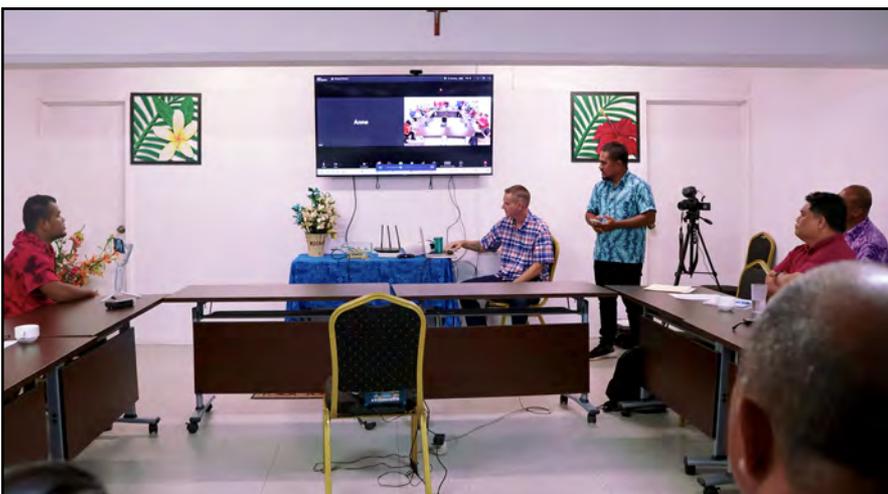
The forum featured speakers including AJ Harris from UNDP, who discussed prevention and response to cyber-attacks; Dhiraj Bhatu from the College of Micronesia, who addressed emerging trends and tools for protecting users, especially women and youth; and Anne Dunn, Chief Technical Adviser of the PDDI project, who led a dialogue on policy formulation to inform and support employees and individuals regarding cybersecurity issues.

Mr. Harris emphasized the importance of being proactive in mandating cybersecurity awareness trainings within organizations and testing software updates before rolling them out.

“Know your company's system and how to handle updates to ensure they are working and appropriate. As the saying goes with great power comes great responsibility; the power of digitalization is upon us, and cybersecurity is our responsibility,” he said.

Mr. Bhatu reminded participants that while technology is expanding, especially in accessing information, it is essential to keep users informed about risks.

“We are making strides in making education accessible through technology, but we need to make sure everyone knows how to stay safe, especially with the increasing prevalence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and cryptocurrency,” he said.



Key topics covered included best practice for safeguarding business and personal data, strategies for identifying and responding to cyber threats, the importance of online safety and privacy, and resources and tools available for enhancing cyber security.

Insights and contributions from the forum will be shared through a radio program to disseminate information on cybersecurity to the wider community of Pohnpei.

The PDDI plans to run workshops with civil society organizations (CSO) to enhance their capacity in using digital tools such as data visualization techniques and social media analytics. Moreover, a South-South Summit on Digital Transformation is scheduled for the last quarter of the year in Suva, Fiji, where CSO grantees will share their experiences and further their collective knowledge on digital transformation.





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Successful Engagement Session on Business Startups and Opportunities with APIBC Delegation at COM-FSM

On July 15, 2024, the COM-FSM Center for Entrepreneurship, VPIA Office, and Business Division hosted a highly engaging and informative session on business startups and opportunities, in collaboration with the Australian Embassy in FSM, and the Australia-Pacific Islands Business Council (APIBC). The event featured a delegation from APIBC and included participation from COMFSM students, faculty, and staff. Keynote speakers for the event included Mr. Simon Gorman, President of APIBC and Managing Director of Reeves International/CCB Envico, and Mr. William Blank, Vice President of APIBC and Associate Director of Pacific Development at Hall Contracting. They shared invaluable insights and personal experiences on business startups, providing attendees with practical tips and inspiring stories. The event also featured distinguished guests such

as Australian Ambassador Jenny Grant-Curnow, Mr. Frank Yourn, Executive Director of APIBC, and five other esteemed members of the APIBC delegation. Their presence and contributions significantly enriched the discussions and provided a broader perspective on business opportunities within the Australia-Pacific region. Following the keynote addresses, an interactive Q&A session was held, allowing students and staff to engage directly with the speakers. This session provided an excellent platform for attendees to seek advice and clarify their queries on various aspects of starting and managing a business. Among the many insightful questions posed during the session, one student asked, "Where can I find the funds to start a business?" The speakers provided supportive and practical advice, emphasizing the importance of seeking initial support from family



and friends before exploring larger funding options. In response to a question about business start-ups as a woman, Mr. Blank shared his personal experiences, recounting how his wife's dream of becoming a lawyer came true thanks to the support from him and her family. The College of Micronesia-FSM Center for Entrepreneurship (CFE) would like to extend its heartfelt gratitude to Mr. Gorman, Mr. Blank, Ambassador Grant-Curnow, Mr. Yourn, and the entire APIBC delegation for sharing their valuable

knowledge and experiences with our community. Their insights have undoubtedly inspired and motivated the college students and staff. CFE also wishes to thank everyone who attended and contributed to making this event a success. The support and participation were instrumental in the fruitful exchange of ideas and knowledge. CFE looks forward to future collaborations with the Australian Embassy and the Australia-Pacific Islands Business Council.

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FSMNOC names Paris 2024 Olympic delegation

FSMNOC

July 5, 2024

Pohnpei, FSM—The Federated States of Micronesia Olympic Committee (FSMOC) is pleased to announce that it will be represented at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games by a delegation of eight consisting of three athletes and three coaches and 2 team officials.

Two of the athletes, Scott Fiti (Athletics) and Tasi Limtiaco (Swimming), are repeat Olympians having competed at the Tokyo Olympic Games. They will be joined by first-time Olympian Kestra Kihleng (Swimming)

“We are so excited for these athletes to represent our country and NOC,” said FSMOC President Aurelio Joab. “They will be the focus of so many Micronesians this summer and are so proud to have them carrying the FSM flag for Team FSM in Paris.”

Supporting the athletes will be Lestly Ashby Mendiola (Chef de Mission) and Jake Scaliem (Team Manager), plus coaches Karatel Phillip (Athletics), Derick Daniel (Swimming) and Susan Kihleng (Swimming).

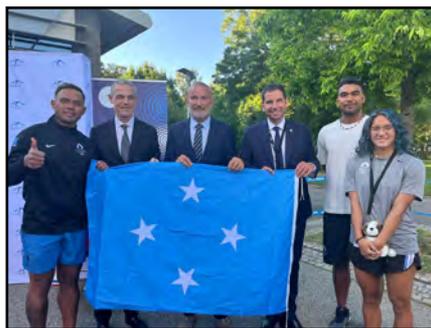
Also attending the Games in their leadership capacities for the FSMOC will be President Joab and Secretary General Jim Tobin.

“We are so fortunate to have such outstanding young ambassadors competing for us at these Games,” noted FSMOC Secretary General Tobin. “They are rising stars in their sports and the entire country will be able to see them not only march in Opening for the first time but compete in their individual events as well.”

The FSM athletes, coaches and Team Manager will arrive to Divonne, France on July 10 for a 2-week pre-games training camp. They will all then take a train to Paris on July 24 and move into the Games Village for Paris 2024 Olympic Games. The Opening Ceremony is July 26, with Tasi Limtiaco and Kestra Kihleng to be the Team FSM flag bearers.

Team FSM and the FSM Olympic Committee would like to thank the following for their financial support and sponsoring of our FSM Olympic athletes, coaches and team officials at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games: International Olympic Committee (IOC); Olympic Solidarity; Oceania National Olympic Committees

(ONOC): Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government; Etscheit Enterprises; Pohnpei Ace Hardware; Isamu Nakasone Store; Bank of Guam; Pohnpei Ace Office Supplies; Caroline Fisheries; Moylan’s Insurance; Hornet International; Bank of the FSM; VITAL; Pohnpei NAPA, and Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.



Team FSM meets FSM officials in Geneva

FSMNOC

July 19, 2024

(Pohnpei, FSM) – While training in nearby Divonne-les-Bains, France this month, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) delegation (Team FSM) to the Paris 2024 Olympic Games had the opportunity to meet with FSM’s Permanent Representative (Ambassador) to the United Nations the Honorable Akillino H Susaia in Geneva, Switzerland.

“It was a distinct honor for our athletes and coaches to meet Ambassador Susaia in Geneva,” said Jake Scaliem, FSM Team Manager, of the pre-games training camp. “He was very encouraging and supportive of our efforts to represent our country and wished us great success at the Olympic Games.”

Team FSM members in attendance included Scaliem (Team Manager), coaches Karatel Phillip (Athletics), Derick Daniel (Swimming) and Susan Kihleng (Swimming) plus athletes Scott Fiti (Athletics), Tasi Limtiaco (Swimming) and Kestra Kihleng (Swimming). The Team FSM pre-games training camp was held from July 10-24 in Divonne-les Bains, France. All camp costs were funded by the FSM Olympic Committee (FSMOC), with support from IOC Olympic Solidarity and DFAT Australian Government.

Team FSM also had the privilege of being able to visit the Olympic Museum in Lausanne, Switzerland this past week, hosted by IOC Olympic Solidarity.

“This has been an awesome camp for us,” said FSM Olympian male swimmer Tasi Limtiaco, who along with Kestra Kihleng, will be FSM’s flag bearers for the Paris 2024 Games Opening Ceremony in Paris the evening of Friday, July 26. “We are so appreciative of the funding and logistical support that our FSM National Olympic Committee (FSMOC) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) provided for us to participate and be part of these Olympic Games.”

On Wednesday, July 24, Team FSM will take a 7-hour bus ride from the pre-games training camp to Paris, and move into the Olympic Games Village. The Olympic Games accommodation site for over 14,000 Olympic athletes and coaches from 206 countries and territories around the world.

Jim Tobin, FSMOC Secretary General, confirmed that Tasi Limtiaco, FSM male swimmer, will swim the 100m Breaststroke 11am, Saturday, July 27. Scott Fiti, FSM male sprinter, will run 100m sprint in Athletics at 10am, Saturday, August 03. Kestra Kihleng, FSM female swimmer, will swim the 50m Freestyle at 11am, Saturday, August 03, in Paris.

Tobin also confirmed that the FSMOC and FSM Telecommunications Corporation have now set in place the live broadcast arrangements of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games with Digicel TV (the Broadcast Rights Holder for Oceania). FSM Telecommunications have tested and confirmed the satellite links to be broadcasted on a local cable tv channel on PacificaTV to all 4 FSM States. The broadcast cost was funded by the FSM Olympic Committee, with support from the Oceania National Olympic Committees (ONOC).

Team FSM and the FSM Olympic Committee would like to thank the following for their financial support and sponsoring of our FSM Olympic athletes, coaches and team officials at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games: International Olympic Committee (IOC); Olympic Solidarity; Oceania National Olympic Committees (ONOC); Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government; Etscheit Enterprises; Pohnpei Ace Hardware; Isamu Nakasone Store; Bank of Guam; Pohnpei Ace Office Supplies; Caroline Fisheries; Moylan’s Insurance; Hornet International; Bank of the FSM; VITAL; Pohnpei NAPA, Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission and FSM Telecommunications Corporation.

For updates follow us also in:
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Office of Insular Affairs announces \$233 Million contribution to the Compact Trust Fund for the people of the FSM

U.S. Department of the Interior

July 17, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Department of the Interior’s Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs Carmen G. Cantor today announced \$232,732,731 to the Trust Fund for the People of the Federated States of Micronesia, bringing the total United States contributions to the Trust Fund for fiscal year 2024 to \$250 million.

The announcement was made during a visit with Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) Ambassador Jackson Soram at the FSM Embassy in Washington. Assistant Secretary Cantor highlighted the Biden-Harris administrations implementation of provisions under Public Law 118-42, which enabled and provided funding for the recently negotiated agreement

on amendments to the Compact of Free Association (Compact) signed between the United States and the FSM on May 23, 2023.

“Interior is honored to provide nearly \$233 million in support of the Federated States of Micronesia as provided for under the newly amended Compact agreements,” said Assistant Secretary Cantor. “This contribution significantly bolsters the Compact Trust Fund for the People of the FSM and represents the first installment of United States contributions to the Trust Fund that will total \$500 million over a two-year period.

The Compact of Free Association Amendments Act was signed by



Under Public Law 118-42, updates have also been made to the list of services that individuals from the Federated States of Micronesia and the two other freely associated states are eligible for while living in the United States. An initial list of program and policy updates from various agencies that reflect the amended Compact are available here and will be updated as needed.

Also called for under the Compact agreement is an annual meeting of the Joint Economic Management Committee (JEMCO) which reviews and approves annual budgets for Compact funds. The JEMCO, which is chaired by Assistant Secretary Cantor, is planning to meet later this year.

President Biden on March 9. These funds will contribute to the economic advancement and long-term budgetary self-reliance of the FSM and will be used in accordance with the terms of the Trust Fund Agreement between the United States and the FSM.

FSM becomes a member of the Convention to Prohibit Biological Weapons

FSM Embassy to Washington D.C.

July 12, 2024

Washington, D.C.—On July 12, 2024, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) deposited its instrument of accession to the UN Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destructions (BWC). FSM Ambassador to the United States, Jackson T. Soram, had the honor of depositing said instrument with the United States Government which serves as one of the depositories of the BWC.

The objective of the BWC is to ban the development, production and stockpiling of biological and toxic weapons. In accordance with provisions of the Convention, the BWC will enter into force for the FSM on the same date of its deposit, making the FSM the newest member of the BWC.

The FSM Congress ratified the Convention at their last session in May 2024, thus allowing Secretary Lorin S. Robert of the Department of Foreign Affairs to sign the instrument of accession.

At a brief ceremony at the U.S. Department of State, Ambassador Kenneth Ward, US Special Representative to the BWC, congratulated the FSM on this historical milestone. In his remarks, Ambassador Soram underscored the importance the FSM placed on the absolute and universal prohibition of biological and toxin weapons. Referencing world peace and security as key objectives of the BWC, Ambassador Soram referred to FSM’s accession to the BWC as an extension of the commitment to its enduring bilateral partnership under the Compact of Free Association with the United States.

James R. Heller, Director of the Office of Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Affairs (ANP), Bureau of East Asian & Pacific Affairs (EAP), U.S. Department of State, wrapped up the ceremony by emphasizing the shared values that reflect the close relationship between the United States and the Federated States of Micronesia.

The event was attended by many U.S. officials including Christina Cavallo as the new Deputy Director of ANP, Ambassador Karen Stewart who served on the U.S. Compact Negotiations Team, and Ms. Megan Kleinstreiber, former FSM Desk Officer at ANP, and others. Attending from the FSM Embassy in D.C. were Teresa Filepin, Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM), and Raleigh Welly and Nena Waguk, the two First Secretaries with the Embassy.



NOAA, Biden-Harris Administration announce \$2 million for FSM project as part of Investing in America Agenda

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

July 26, 2024

Washington D.C.—Today, Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo announced that the Department of Commerce and NOAA have recommended \$2 million for a project in the Federated States of Micronesia to make the country's coast more resilient to climate change and other coastal hazards. The project encompasses the states of Chuuk and Yap. The awards are being made under the Biden Administration's Climate Resilience Regional Challenge, a competitive, \$575 million program funded through the nearly \$6 billion total investment under the Biden-Harris Administration's Inflation Reduction Act.

"As part of President Biden's commitment to combating the climate crisis, we are investing \$575 million to help make sure America's coastal communities are more resilient to the effects of climate change," said U.S.

Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo. "As part of this historic investment in our nation's climate resilience the Biden-Harris Administration is investing \$2 million to help underserved communities in the Federated States of Micronesia develop and implement new strategies to protect themselves from impacts of climate change."

Administered by the Department of Commerce and NOAA, the Climate-Ready Coasts initiative is focused on investing in high-impact projects that create climate solutions by storing carbon; building resilience to coastal hazards such as extreme weather events, pollution and marine debris; restoring coastal habitats that help wildlife and humans thrive; building the capacity of underserved communities and support community-driven restoration; and providing employment opportunities.

"Micronesia's population has experienced the severe impacts from climate change on coastal communities, including threats to food and water

supplies," said NOAA Administrator Rick Spinrad, Ph.D. "Equity remains at the center of all we do. This funding will bolster new ideas and opportunities that build on existing efforts to prioritize resilience and carry those priorities into implementation."

The recommended project, Strengthening Opportunities for Adaptive Response, includes \$2 million for work with Catholic Relief Services. The project will elevate the voices and priorities of vulnerable people in the coastal areas and remote islands of the Federated States of Micronesia and provide the technical and financial resources needed to jumpstart priority resilience projects. The project aims to reach 30,000 individuals across 39 coastal communities (14 in Chuuk and 25 in Yap), where they will build a network of

learning and foster coordination that leverages existing research, encourages the stewardship of natural resources and creates the evidence needed to expand coastal resilience work in the near and long term. This effort will work to address the challenges of sea level rise, including the impacts on drinking water and food insecurity.

Additional information is available on the Climate Resilience Regional Challenge website.



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Guarding FSM's Digital Frontier: How CSOs are laying the groundwork to protect the Island from online vulnerabilities

United Nations Development Program

July 18, 2024

FSM—The Pacific Digital Democracy Initiative, funded by the European Union, extends its efforts in enhancing digital readiness and promoting democratic engagement across the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). This initiative focuses on two major components: 1) Increasing government capacity development; and 2) Partnering up with civil society organizations (CSOs) to protect the digital landscape from cyberthreats and supported through Low Value Grants.



The project aims to promote whole-of-society digital transformation through extensive capacity building with civil society and providing training to government officials on digital transformation leadership. By doing so, it seeks to make public service delivery more transparent and efficient, ultimately benefiting citizens across the region. A key objective of this mission to the FSM is the Digital Readiness Assessment (DRA) Survey, a tool created by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to help countries identify their digital strengths and areas for improvement. Findings from the DRA are intended to inform policy-making and guide development planning.

The Low Value Grants programme addresses online vulnerabilities within the FSM. CSOs are leading initiatives focused on digital literacy, foundational cyber security, and combating hate speech online. Currently, 11 CSOs from Fiji, Tonga, Solomon Islands, and the FSM, have been awarded grants; three of these CSOs are based in the FSM, each playing a vital role in their respective communities.

"Digital transformation offers immense opportunities for education, economic growth and efficient public service delivery, but we also recognize the potential harms," says Kevin Petrini, UNDP Pacific Office in the FSM Deputy Resident Representative. "Engaging civil society groups and supporting

their work is crucial in developing an integrated approach that leverages digital transformation for inclusive and sustainable development, prioritizing people's well-being."

In July, a catch-up meeting highlighted the progress and achievements of these CSOs as they work towards creating a safer and more inclusive digital environment. The meeting also explored how UNDP can further support them in overcoming challenges.

One initiative **CyberGuard: Empowering Digital Resilience in FSM**, is led by Micronesian Productions in collaboration with Care Micronesia. This project aims to foster dialogue among government entities, businesses, and citizens to protect them from cyberthreats through education, ultimately creating safer and more secure digital spaces.

"A CyberGuard Forum is being designed to gather stakeholders to further delve into cybersecurity needs and to learn from each other's experiences," says Nigel Jaynes, Executive Director of Micronesian Productions. "To sustain efforts, we are also producing a radio program that will feature interviews with stakeholders and share information on cybersecurity with listeners."

Another initiative comes from the Ulithi Falalop Community Action Programme, represented by Executive Director

Mario Sukulbech and Program Director John Rumal. Their latest activities in Yap State include the establishment of "Unite the Future," a pioneering think tank focused on identifying collective needs as a community and developing tailored solutions.

"We are conducting four workshops across four inhabited islands in Ulithi atoll, involving surveys and focus group discussions," says John Rumal. "The value is in the journey. When people come together and discuss issues, change happens during this process."

These gatherings are not only for research purposes but also instrumental in changing attitudes and behaviors within the communities. Additionally, leadership training for young adults and elders will be conducted to prepare the think tank members for the community immersion series.

Way Forward

The Digital Democracy Initiative plans to run workshops with the CSO grantees to enhance their capacity in using digital tools such as data visualization techniques and social media analytics. Moreover, a South-South Summit on Digital Transformation is scheduled for the last quarter of the year in Suva, Fiji, where CSO grantees will share their experiences and further their collective knowledge on digital transformation.

Government of FSM and UNDP launch Climate-Resilient Land Management project with inception workshop

United Nations Development Program

July 24, 2024

Palikir, Federated States of Micronesia—The Government of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) through the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management (DECEM), in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Pacific Office in the FSM, has recently launched the “Strengthening Climate-Resilient Sustainable Land Management and Progress Towards Land Degradation Neutrality in the FSM” (FSM-LDN) Project.

An inception workshop was conducted to introduce and refresh key stakeholder’s understanding of the project objectives and activities, along with their roles and responsibilities in the project implementation. Over 40 representatives from across all four states – Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei and Kosrae – gathered in Palikir to reaffirm commitments for achieving a shared vision of environmental

sustainability and protection for the FSM.

The workshop convened representatives from key government departments/agencies, regional and international partners, NGOs and civil society to discuss the major components of the FSM-LDN Project and to also take ownership of the project goals and objectives. It was also intended to clarify roles and responsibilities of partners and familiarize them with the detailed project strategy and ways forward.

In his opening remarks, the Honorable Andrew Yatilman, Secretary of DECEM, underscored the importance of sustainable land management and how the FSN-LDN project is instrumental in the development process.

“Our islands are spread across a vast expanse of ocean, but the land that supports us is small in scale, and under many threats: Unsustainable development, erosion, wildfires, landslides, pollution, invasive species and climate change all contribute to land



degradation,” says Sec. Yatilman.

“Through careful planning and effective management, we can halt and hopefully reverse these negative impacts, securing our livelihoods for the future. The FSM-LDN Project is dedicated to this mission, and your contributions as key partners in this workshop are crucial to our overall success.”

Deputy Resident Representative, Kevin Petri emphasized the urgent need for collective action: “By sustainably utilizing the FSM’s rich natural capital, livelihoods can be enhanced while building resilience through concerted efforts in reducing land degradation and promoting green growth.”

“Maintaining a healthy ecosystem

UNDP Pacific Office in the North Pacific

Continued on next page

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...UNDP Workshop

Continued from previous page

through sustainable land management is deeply rooted in the FSM's traditional cultures and practices. It is the foundation for a secure, sustainable, and thriving future for the FSM. We are proud to be working across all four states and closely with communities to actuate this vision," Mr Petrini added.

During the Inception Workshop, representatives thoroughly reviewed and discussed the project document, Project Results Framework matrix, and project management arrangements. Additionally, roles and responsibilities for both the project management unit and the Project Board were defined and agreed upon.

Year 1 of the project will focus on stakeholder engagements at Community and State-level for verification of the project sites, and establishment of key community and State-level environmental working groups to facilitate and support coordination among government sector



entities, NGOs and local communities to plan, implement and monitor activities at the State level.

Funded by the Global Environment Facility, the FSM-LDN Project is a US\$5.1 million-initiative that aims to strengthen national/state efforts to address land degradation in terrestrial and coastal ecosystems that support critical ecosystem services and biodiversity, through embedding of the United Nations Convention on Combatting Desertification's (UNCCD) Land Degradation Neutrality approach.

The FSM-LDN, which will be implemented for six years, has five objectives:

1. Maintain or improve sustainable delivery of ecosystem services;
2. Maintain or improve productivity to enhance food security;
3. Increase resilience of the land and populations dependent on it;
4. Seek synergies with other social, economic, and environmental objectives; and
5. Reinforce responsible and inclusive land governance.

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President Simina attends the 10th Pacific Island Leaders Meeting (PALM10) meets with Prime Minister Kishida and visits Emperor Naruhito at the Imperial Palace

FSM Information Services

July 22, 2024

TOKYO, Japan – From July 16-18, 2024, His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), attended the 10th Pacific Island Leaders Meeting (PALM10) held in Tokyo, where leaders the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) and Japan gathered to strengthen their partnership. Co-chaired by Prime Minister Fumio Kishida of Japan and Prime Minister Mark Brown of the Cook Islands, the meeting resulted in the PALM10 Leaders Declaration and an accompanying Joint Action Plan.

In his address at the PALM10, President Simina emphasized the importance of "People-Centered Development," highlighting the deep and enduring bond, or "Kizuna," between the peoples of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) members and Japan. He commended Japan's commitment to enhancing people-to-people exchanges and noted the significant benefits these exchanges have brought to the FSM, including youth exchange programs like JENESYS and the Children Exchange Program with Micronesian Islands, technical training initiatives such as the SDG Global Leaders Program and the Japanese Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program, and various scholarship opportunities.

President Simina also acknowledged the valuable contributions of JICA volunteers to the FSM, calling them the best Japanese ambassadors to the island communities. He welcomed Japan's support for Phase 2 of the Pacific Regional Education Framework, which aligns with the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent's focus on People-Centered Development.

President Simina called for a collective commitment from Pacific leaders to improve health and well-being, strengthen resilience against future health system shocks, and address the shortage of well-trained medical personnel. He reaffirmed FSM's commitment to universal health coverage, as adopted during the recent 2024 Health Summit, and expressed readiness to collaborate with Japan and other development partners in this area.

Emphasizing the significance of women's leadership, President Simina highlighted his administration's efforts towards bridging the gap in gender equality, stating that women's "participation enhances governance, leading to more holistic decisions that benefit everyone."

President Simina also expressed appreciation for Japan's continued support for the East-Micronesia Cable (EMC) and other subsea cables under installation in the Pacific region. He reiterated FSM's commitment to working closely with fellow Pacific Island Countries to ensure the successful implementation of these projects, which aim to provide better health services and quality education to the Micronesian people.

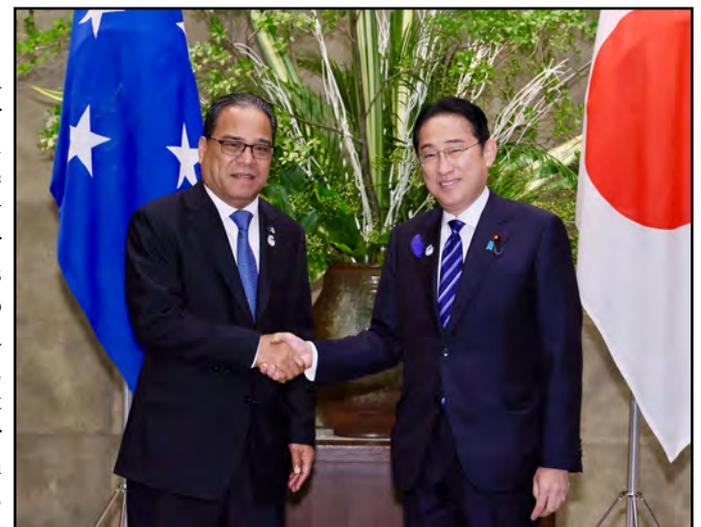
On the margins of the PALM10, President Simina held a productive bilateral meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida where they discussed areas of mutual importance and cooperation, including in sustainable fisheries, the East Micronesia Cable project and the new wharf to be constructed in Pohnpei state. Prime Minister Kishida noted President Simina's emphasis on unity in his administration and as such, stated that he has decided to enhance cooperation to support this vision. President Simina submitted the FSM's need for a cargo/passenger vessel, in order to support marine transportation across the vast expanse of the FSM. President Simina also raised the matter of the oil leakages from WWII shipwrecks that remain in Chuuk lagoon, and submitted the FSM's request for Japan's continued support to supplement and expedite the ongoing efforts to safely extract the oil.

On the margins of PALM10, President Simina and Madame First Lady Ancelly Simina, paid a visit to the Imperial Palace, where they met with their majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako. President Simina also met with the New Zealand Deputy Prime Minister Rt Hon Winston Peters where they discussed cooperation particularly on climate change as well as the upcoming PIF in Tonga. Concluding the President's bilateral engagements was a meeting with the President of JICA, Dr. Akihiko Tanaka to discuss the continued partnership and the way forward for future JICA volunteers.

The remainder of the President's itinerary while in Japan include the MRA (Micronesian Registration Advisors) Seminar, the one year anniversary celebration of the new FSM embassy as well as outreach to Kochi and Osaka prefectures.

(The PALM10 Leaders Declaration can be found at: https://forumsec.org/.../PALM10%20Declaration_Final.pdf)

(The Joint Action Plan can be found at: https://forumsec.org/.../Annex_PALM%2010%20Joint%20Action...)



151 students across FSM awarded Habele Tuition Scholarships

Habele

July 17, 2024

Colonia, Yap—A US nonprofit, established by former Peace Corps Volunteers, is awarding tuition scholarships to 151 students across the Federated States of Micronesia. Funded entirely by the donations of individual Americans, Habele scholarships help

cover tuition costs at high performing independent elementary and high schools within the FSM.

Habele's tuition scholarships ensure bright, hardworking students have access to the best elementary and secondary education possible. Based on need and merit, each Habele tuition scholarship is set at a level that

maintains family ownership in student achievement while lightening the financial burden. Habele scholars this year will be attending fifteen different schools across the FSM.

The scholarships cover roughly 75 percent of tuition and fees. Students must maintain and report high levels of academic achievement every term,

applying each year for continued support. Since 2006, more than 300 students in Micronesia have benefited from the program, which started with a single student seventeen years ago.

Of the students awarded scholarships this year, 90 are from Outer Islands of Yap and Chuuk States, 31 are Yapese, 21 are Pohnpeian, and 8 come from families within Chuuk Lagoon. The 2024 cohort consists of 94 females and 57 males. There were 102 scholarships issued to incumbent students, and 49 awarded to new applicants, with more than 150 new, complete on-time applications being received by Habele this year ahead of the June 30th deadline.

Owing to the spike in new applications this year, next year Habele will only accept renewal applications and re-applications from those who applied in 2024-25.

All funding for Habele's tuition scholarships is provided by individual donations made by private American citizens. All administrative costs are covered by Habele's endowment, also entirely funded by individual Americans.

Among the 151 scholarships were several Memorial Scholarships, a special type of Habele K12 tuition grant. Memorial Scholarships honor the legacy of Americans whose life or work demonstrated exceptional commitment to the people of Micronesia, and embodied the best of the longstanding US-Micronesian partnership. These include the Jim Stovall, Hon. Martin Yinug, Lee Huddleston, Dr. Marshall Wees, and Leona Peterson Memorial Scholarships.

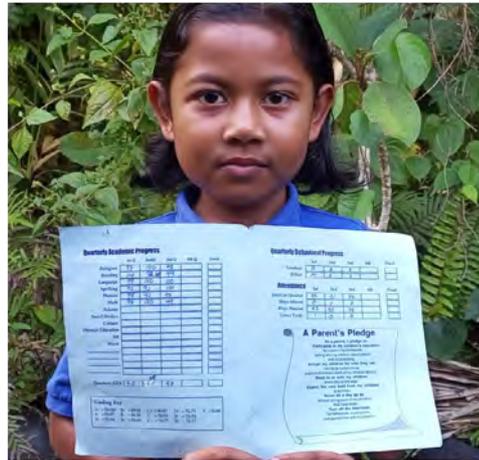
"Everyone -parents, teachers, and community members- want young people who are prepared to meet the challenges of the future" explained Neil Mellen, a former Peace Corps Volunteer and Habele's Founder. "These targeted privately funded scholarships provide support to engaged families who are making sacrifices to provide educational opportunities for their children. The individual Americans who comprise Habele want to ensure these ambitious hardworking students are prepared to sustain and improve quality of life for their islands."



Habele Scholar Malaya Mailing is a first grader from Ifaluk, attending Pohnpei Catholic School



Habele Scholars and Cousins, Lyla Itiral, 3rd grade, and Laynah Yamata Igelamyalo, 1st grade, are from Ifaluk and attend Yap Seventh Day Adventist School



Habele Scholar Jesebel-Marie B. Fanechigiy, from Rull in Yap, is a second grader at Saint Mary's School



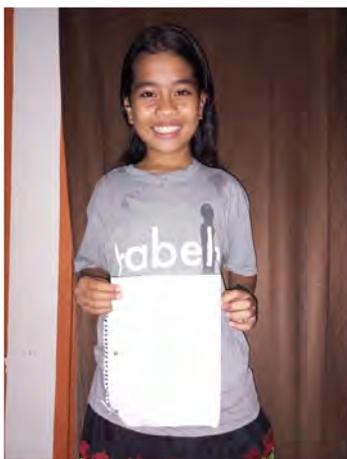
Nicole Gapey Dulkan, Rull in Yap, and entering her Junior year at Yap Catholic High School. She is the Chief Justice Yinug Memorial Scholar



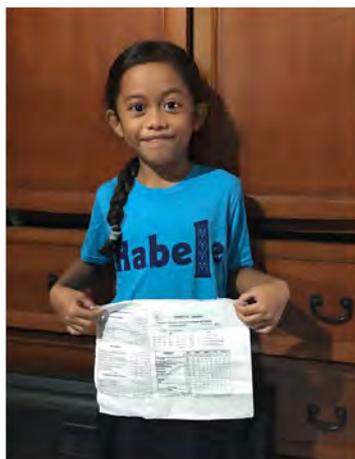
Habele Scholar Clara Letalimeshig's family is from Lamotrek and Ifaluk, and attend Faith Christian Academy in Yap



Habele Scholar Rixon Moufa, a freshman from Tonoas in Chuuk, attends Xavier High School



Habele Scholar Neichen Xyanne Tewatermai, from Ulithi, is a sixth grader at Saint Mary's on Yap



Habele Scholar Jashamae Rose Rosario, from Pohnpei, is a second grader at Pohnpei Catholic School



Habele Scholar Trinity Anson is a Junior from Kitti on Pohnpei, attending Our Lady of Mercy High School

Governor Stevenson A. Joseph delivers opening remarks at the Third Micronesian Expo

Pohnpei Public Information

July 22, 2024

Chuuk—Today, Governor Stevenson A. Joseph of Pohnpei State delivered a speech at the opening of the 3rd Micronesian Expo in Chuuk State, along with fellow Governors and Lt. Governor. Representing the people of Pohnpei, Governor Joseph expressed deep gratitude for the warm welcome and hospitality extended by the host state.

Governor Joseph began by highlighting the honor of standing before the diverse and vibrant FSM family. He emphasized the importance of celebrating the unique cultural heritage of each state, from Yap in the East to Kosrae in the West, underscoring the rich tapestry of traditions, languages, and customs that define the Federated States of Micronesia.

"This diversity is our strength," Governor Joseph remarked, "and it is the ocean that connects us, creating a bond that is unbreakable."

He praised Chuuk for exemplifying the traditional concept of **Tirow**—a way of life defined by respect, courtesy, and a profound sense of community. He commended Governor Naruhn and the people of Chuuk for their enduring spirit and exemplary values.

Reflecting on the recent approval of Compact 3, Governor Joseph conveyed a message of hope and determination. He emphasized that the Expo is not just a cultural showcase but an exercise in unity, a demonstration of collective strength, and a commitment to shared prosperity.

Governor Joseph invoked the term "KAMORALE," coined by Governor Jesse Salalu of Yap at the first Expo, to encapsulate the spirit of unity and mutual respect that the FSM strives to uphold.

"May this 3rd Micronesian Expo bring us closer together," Governor Joseph concluded, "reminding us of our unique heritage and inspiring us to move forward in unity, strength, and prosperity. Let us celebrate our diversity, honor our shared history, and look to the future with hope and determination."

Governor Joseph's remarks were met with resounding applause, setting a tone of optimism and solidarity for the Expo. The Pohnpei delegation, along with the attendees, looks forward to a successful and enriching event that will further strengthen the bonds within the FSM.



Governor Stevenson A. Joseph celebrates Pohnpei Day at the Third Micro Expo in Chuuk

Pohnpei Public Information

July 24, 2024

WENO, Chuuk—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph proudly welcomed distinguished guests, fellow Micronesians, and friends to Pohnpei Day at the 3rd Micro Expo in Chuuk. The event celebrated Pohnpei's rich culture, history, and remarkable crafts. "Today, we gather to celebrate the rich culture, history, and remarkable crafts of Pohnpei," Governor Joseph announced.

Governor Joseph highlighted the extraordinary beauty of Pohnpei, emphasizing its lush landscapes, pristine waters, and enduring cultural traditions. "Our traditions have been passed down through generations, and today, we proudly showcase them for all to see and experience," he said. The significance of sakau, a traditional drink, was underscored as a symbol of unity, respect, and community in Pohnpeian culture.

The Governor praised Pohnpeian artisans, calling them the heart and soul of the culture. He drew attention to the intricate Urohs en Pohnpei, traditional skirts adorned with unique patterns and stories.



"Each stitch, each design, is a testament to our heritage and our connection to our ancestors," Governor Joseph noted. He also lauded the weavers and carvers whose works reflect the resourcefulness, ingenuity, and exceptional craftsmanship of Pohnpei.

Concluding his speech, Governor Joseph expressed gratitude to the people of Chuuk for their warm hospitality and for hosting the event. "The Micro Expo is a wonderful opportunity for us to come together as a region, to learn

from each other, and to celebrate our unique and shared traditions," he stated. He urged everyone to support artisans, educate youth, and preserve traditions to ensure Pohnpei's heritage continues to thrive. "Enjoy the beauty, the crafts, the flavors, and the spirit of Pohnpei," Governor Joseph encouraged, ending with a heartfelt thank you.



Governor Stevenson A. Joseph's closing remarks at the Third Micro Expo

Pohnpei Public Information

July 26, 2024

Chuuk—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph delivered closing remarks at the 3rd Micro Expo, held at Rachels Beach Resort. Expressing immense pride and gratitude, Governor Joseph praised the beauty and richness of Micronesian cultures showcased by dancers, artisans, and cultural experts over the past few days.

Leading the Pohnpei delegation, Governor Joseph highlighted the vibrancy of Pohnpei's traditions and the strength of its community. He commended the delegation's dancers for their grace and passion, artisans for their extraordinary skill and creativity in urohs en Pohnpei, weaving, carved sculptures, tattoo designs, and modern clothing, and cultural experts for sharing invaluable knowledge and stories.

Governor Joseph emphasized that the Expo celebrated unique identities and strengthened the shared bonds among Micronesians. He extended heartfelt thanks to the organizers for their dedication and hard work, providing a platform to unite, celebrate, and inspire.

He urged fellow islanders to carry the spirit of the Expo back home, honoring and preserving traditions for future generations. Governor Joseph concluded by



emphasizing that Micronesian cultures are living, evolving expressions of identity that need to be nurtured to thrive.

"Thank you all for your participation, your support, and your unwavering commitment to our cultural heritage. May we leave this Expo with renewed vigor and a deeper appreciation for the rich tapestry of Micronesia. Thank you,

and safe travels to all."

Assisted by Chief of Tourism, Kukulynn Gallen, and Chief of Commerce and Industries, Michaela Saimon, Governor Joseph presented gifts to President Simina, Governor Narruhn, Governor Palik, Lt. Governor Itimai, Secretary Akinaga and Chuuk Visitors Bureau Director, Marz Akapito.

JCRP officially hands over key COFA documents to the Office of the President

FSM Information Services

July 19, 2024

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—In a significant ceremony earlier this week, the Joint Committee on Compact Review & Planning (JCRP) officially handed over essential documents pertaining to the Compact of Free Association (COFA) to the Office of the President on July 16th, 2024.

With the amended COFA now in force, the JCRP has successfully fulfilled its mission and will be closing its doors. The responsibility of implementing and managing the provisions of the amended Compact now transitions to the Office of the President.

The documents handed over included:

1. The Final Compact Act Text (H.J. Res. 96);
2. Exchange of Notes (Original signed copies of the following agreements as signed by FSM Chief Negotiator Leo A. Falcam Jr., and U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Compact Negotiations Joseph Yun);
3. Agreement Between the

Government of the Federated States of Micronesia and the Government of the United States of America to Amend the Compact of Free Association, as Amended (2023 Compact Amendments);

4. Agreement Concerning Procedures for the Implementation of United States Economic Assistance Provided in the 2023 Amended Compact Between the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia and the Government of the United States of America (2023 Fiscal Procedures Agreement or 2023 FPA);

5. Agreement Between the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia and the Government of the United States of America Regarding the Compact Trust Fund (2023 Compact Trust Fund Agreement or 2023 CTFA);

6. 2023 Federal Programs and Services Agreement Between the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia and the Government of the United States of America (2023 Federal Programs and Services Agreement or 2023 FPSA).

The JCRP has been instrumental in negotiating, reviewing and planning

the amendments to the 2023 Compact of Free Association. Established with the mandate to ensure that the FSM's interests were adequately represented and protected during the negotiation process, the JCRP has worked diligently over these past few years. Their efforts have been crucial in securing agreements that will support the FSM's economic stability and development.

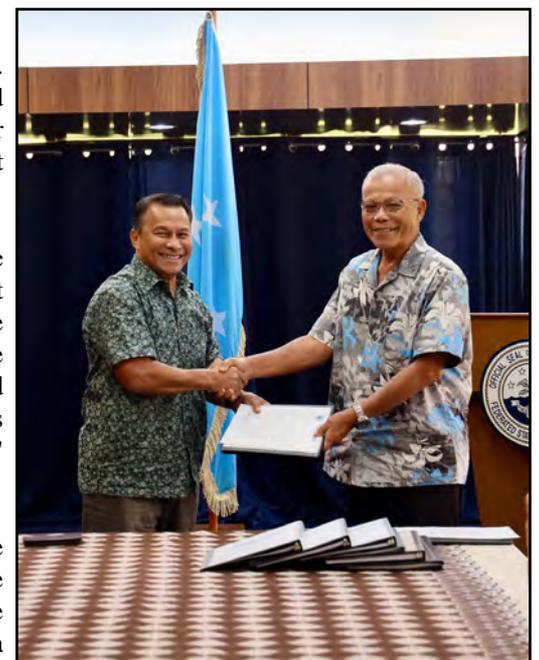
During the handover ceremony, T.H. Vice President Aren B. Palik thanked the members of JCRP and their dedicated staff for their commitment and service to the nation.

"The efforts of the JCRP have been invaluable in ensuring that our nation's future is secure. The agreements reached will provide significant benefits to our people, and we are grateful for the committee's commitment to this critical work," he stated.

Mr. Asterio Takesy, Chairman of the JCRP stated, "I am grateful to have had the opportunity to collaborate with individuals who share a

common vision for a better future and who are committed to making a positive difference in the lives of our people."

The handover ceremony signifies the phase of transition and implementation the FSM is entering in its enduring partnership with the United States, built on mutual respect and cooperation.



Opinion Editorial

Rooted Solutions: Mangroves for Climate Resilience

*Kevin Petrini
Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP
Pacific Office in the FSM*

Approaching the island from the air, Pohnpei is a sight to behold. As the plane circles around the lush greenery of mountains, forests, amid a vast, deep blue ocean, we are welcomed by nature's abundance. One thing that is truly exceptional about the island is that it is surrounded by thriving mangroves. These intricate ecosystems are more than picturesque, it demonstrates tremendous potential for harnessing nature-based solutions to enhance climate resilience and support sustainable livelihoods for coastal communities.

Every 26th July is Mangrove Day, the International Day for the Conservation of Mangrove Ecosystems.

Here in the Federated States of Micronesia, it is only fitting that we join the world in recognizing this day and use as a critical platform to raise awareness on the

significance of these unique yet vulnerable ecosystems, but more importantly, to contribute solutions for its sustainable management and protection to global efforts as a nation.

Mangroves are super ecosystems that provide critical ecosystem services to coastal communities. They act as buffers from flooding, storm surges, and tsunamis. They are an abundant source of food, livelihoods, and medicine supporting the well-being of those who rely on them. Their complex root systems trap sediments, improving water quality and providing habitat for marine species. As powerful carbon sinks, mangroves can capture carbon dioxide at a rate greater than other terrestrial ecosystems. Carbon sequestration plays a crucial role in climate change mitigation by reducing the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

Despite these benefits, the role of mangroves in climate resilience is often undervalued. Thus, their protection and sustainable use become less of a priority. Mangroves face threats from deforestation, degradation, and pollution that negatively impact people, marine biodiversity and overall environmental health. When mangroves are degraded, not only are we facing biodiversity loss, but the carbon dioxide captured by these ecosystems would be released back to the atmosphere, exacerbating an already vulnerable state of our climate. Coastal communities that rely on mangroves for food and livelihoods will face threats to their health, food security and safety from

damage brought on by adverse climate events. The importance of the mangrove ecosystem cannot be over emphasized. Coming together as a community to protect them is a must.

This is one of the overarching goals of the project, "Securing Climate-Resilient Sustainable Land Management and Progress Towards Land Degradation Neutrality in the FSM" (FSM LDN), implemented by the FSM Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management (DECEM) in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Pacific Office. The FSM LDN project, funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), is a six-year initiative that works to strengthen both national and state efforts to address land degradation in terrestrial and coastal ecosystems, which includes mangroves.

FSM LDN recognizes that to achieve this goal, we must work hand-in-hand with our local communities as partners. It is important that demonstrations on the application of integrated landscape interventions are done at the community level where members are actively engaged in planning and decision-making on best approaches to manage both agricultural and forest land as well as coastal ecosystems. Through this process, we aim to develop capacities through "learning-by-doing" and share knowledge on sustainable land management and climate



smart agriculture, which also covers best restoration practices for protection of FSM's ecosystems and biodiversity.

At the national and state levels, FSM LDN works to strengthen strategic institutional, policy and regulatory frameworks for addressing land degradation as well as enhancing information, decision support tools and capacity through engaging representatives from line departments and agencies across the states of Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei and Kosrae.

As stewards of land and this rich environmental resource, the people of the FSM have a great responsibility to ensure their sustainable use and protection. Through concerted efforts from all stakeholders, including the government, local communities, civil society, and support from international organizations including UNDP, we can raise the profile of mangroves, celebrating their environmental, economic and social value.

Vice President Palik and Australia Pacific Islands Business Council discuss economic collaboration

FSM Information Services

July 19, 2024

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—The Honorable Vice President Aren B. Palik convened with the Australia Pacific Islands Business Council and Australian Ambassador to the FSM H.E. Jennifer Grant Curnow on Monday July 15th, to discuss crucial topics affecting the private business sectors in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). The roundtable aimed to address key challenges and opportunities, with a focus on maritime connectivity, telecommunications, cross-country trade, and air transportation and connectivity.

Participating in the meeting was the president of the FSM Association of Chambers of Commerce (FSMACC), former Vice President Mr. Redley Killion, Secretary of FSM Dept. of Resources & Development T.H. Elina Akinaga and Secretary of FSM Dept. of Finance & Administration T.H. Rose Nakanaga.

The Australia Pacific Islands Business Council, known for fostering dialogue between governments and the private sector, expressed its commitment to working with the FSM in advancing mutual cooperation and finding innovative solutions to trade and

investment issues. The Council plays an instrumental role in promoting and facilitating business relationships between Australia and Pacific Island nations, helping to address economic challenges and encourage sustainable development in the region.

Vice President Palik expressed his appreciation for the visit by the Australia Pacific Islands Business Council and is eager to explore the possibilities of a renewed partnership.



U.S. Coast Guard rescues motor yacht crew 200 nautical miles west of Republic of Palau

Story by Chief Warrant Officer Sara Muir
U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia / Sector Guam

July 21, 2024

SANTA RITA, Guam—The USCGC Oliver Henry (WPC 1140) crew is currently towing the motor yacht Black Pearl 1, located approximately 200 nautical miles west of the Republic of Palau on July 21, 2024, after responding to a distress call.

"Our primary concern is the safety of everyone aboard the Black Pearl 1. The swift response and ongoing efforts by the crew of USCGC Oliver Henry exemplify our commitment to safeguarding lives at sea. We will continue to provide all necessary support to ensure the vessel and its crew reach safety," said Lt. Chelsea Garcia, the U.S. Coast Guard search and rescue mission coordinator for the case.

The 11-person yacht crew, who reported a locked rudder and flooding in the bilge, is being assisted by the Oliver Henry's crew with dewatering and damage control as they head toward Palau. Their estimated time of arrival is 33 hours. The weather on the scene is reported as 25 mph winds and 4 to 6-foot seas.

The cutter crew was on a routine patrol for Operation Rematau when they received the distress signal and immediately responded. The vessel is a 154-foot 497-ton Belize-flagged luxury yacht designed for dive excursions. They were reportedly en route to Cebu, Philippines, for maintenance.

At 3:37 p.m. on July 20, JRSC Guam watch received an Inmarsat C distress alert relayed from the team at JRCC Australia, identifying the motor yacht Black Pearl 1. Initial information lacked the distress nature or position, but the watch received an AIS position and diverted the Oliver Henry crew.

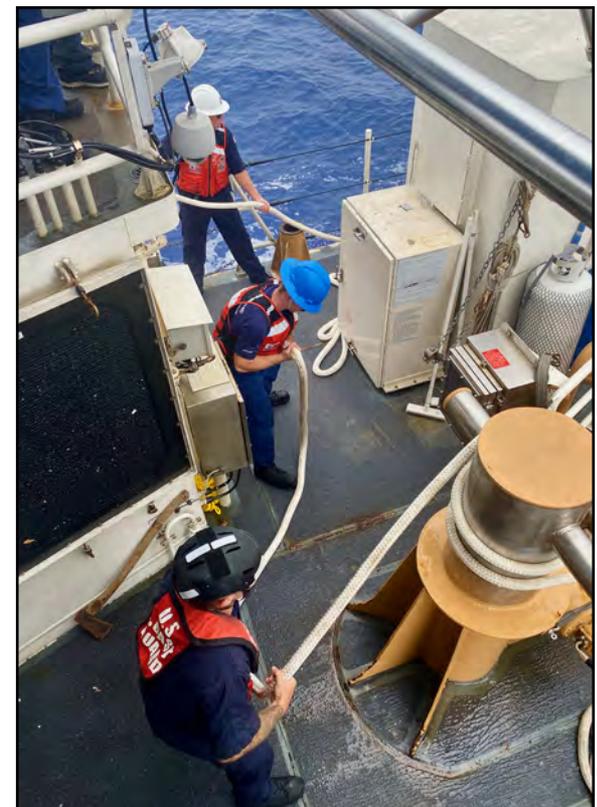
They also identified the U.S.-flagged general cargo vessel SLNC York, 135 nautical miles away, and requested their assistance through the Automated Mutual-Assistance Vessel Rescue (AMVER) program. They diverted from their voyage and arrived on the scene at 12:30 a.m. on July 21. They made first contact with the yacht crew and relayed to Oliver Henry that the vessel had a steering issue but was not requesting assistance, attempting their repairs. All persons aboard were in good health, and the vessel had power.

By 6:12 a.m. on July 21, the USCGC Oliver Henry crew arrived on the scene and noted the vessel's steering issues, including a locked rudder at 10 degrees, and that the vessel was taking on water.

At 6:53 a.m., the Oliver Henry crew placed a rescue and assistance team aboard the Black Pearl 1 to help with dewatering and assess damage control needs. JRSC Guam watchstanders are coordinating with the vessel's management company in China and the Palau search and rescue liaison officer for additional support from Palau Maritime.

"Search and rescue is the Coast Guard's no-fail mission, and our commitment to this responsibility is unwavering. Fast response cutters, like the USCGC Oliver Henry, are crucial in our ability to respond effectively to emergencies across this vast region. The AMVER system is another critical tool in our mission. Sponsored by the U.S. Coast Guard, AMVER is a global ship-reporting system that allows us to identify and divert participating ships to assist those in distress at sea without imposing additional obligations beyond international law. In an emergency like this, we are all partners," said Capt. Robert Kistner, commander of U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia.

U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia personnel, responsible for a 1.9 million square nautical miles search and rescue zone, continue to monitor the situation, ensuring the safety of life at sea for all. This incident underscores the Coast Guard's commitment to safeguarding maritime interests and security across the Blue Pacific, steadfastly dedicated to serving the nation and its partners.



President Simina delivers opening remarks at the FSM Captive Insurance Council Seminar

FSM Embassy in Japan Commemorates First Year Anniversary

FSM Information Services

July 25, 2024

TOKYO, Japan—On July 19, 2024, His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), attended and delivered the opening remarks at the FSM Captive Insurance Council (CIC) Seminar held in Tokyo, Japan while in the country attending the 10th Pacific Island Leaders Meeting (PALM10). The seminar, sponsored by the FSM CIC and the FSM Insurance Board, marks the second in-person seminar since 2019 and brought together key stakeholders from the FSM government, the insurance industry, and the Japanese business community.

The FSM CIC was established to promote and regulate captive insurance companies within the FSM. Captive insurance is a form of self-insurance where a company creates its own insurance company to

cover its risks. The FSM CIC provides regulatory oversight, industry guidance, and promotes the benefits of captive insurance to encourage a favorable business environment for insurance entities.

In his opening remarks, President Simina expressed his gratitude for the support from Japanese corporations and highlighted the longstanding relationship between the FSM and Japan. He stated, "Japan and the FSM have had long historical and cultural ties. Japan was one of the few countries that early on supported the FSM in gaining its independence and membership in the United Nations."

President Simina also noted the significant contributions of Japanese corporations to the FSM's economy: "Today we have over 175 Japanese owned Major Corporations registered in the FSM, about 1/5 of which are captive insurance companies. In fact, we have had at least 50 new Major Corporations register since the beginning of the pandemic in the spring of 2020." He emphasized that the support from these corporations has enabled the FSM to progress on many important projects, improving the lives of its citizens and contributing to the long-term FSM Trust Funds.

The seminar serves as a platform for dialogue and collaboration, aiming to strengthen the FSM's position in the global insurance market and enhance its economic development. The FSM CIC continues to support and grow the captive insurance sector, contributing significantly to the nation's financial stability and growth.

President Simina was also received a briefing by CIC member, MRA Advisors., also known as Micronesia Registration Advisors, where he was updated on the FSM-MRA public private partnership where MRA works to attract and assist major corporations, primarily captive insurance companies from Japan, to register in the FSM. In this briefing the President was joined by T.H. Floor Leader Quincy Lawrence, T.H. Senator Fabian Nimea, T.H. Secretary Elina Akinaga and T.H. Secretary Rose Nakanaga.

Following the productive seminar and MRA briefing, the FSM Embassy hosted an event to commemorate the first anniversary of the new FSM Embassy building in Japan and the 36th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two nations.

Among the distinguished guests included T.H. Floor Leader Quincy Lawrence, T.H. Senator Fabian Nimea, T.H. Yoshifumi Tsuge, State Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan, T.H. Masahiro Komura, Parliamentary Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan and T.H. Keiji Furuya, Chairman of the FSM-Japan Parliamentary Friendship League, along with the four Honorary Consul-Generals based throughout Japan: Mr. Nobutsugu Kuribayashi in Hokkaido, Mr. Keisuke Yamasaki in Kochi, and Mr. Motoyasu Shirai in Kinki.

Reflecting on the history of FSM-Japan relations, President Simina opened the event by highlighting the establishment of the Economic Liaison Office in 1985 and its upgrade to a full-fledged Embassy in 1988. President Simina emphasized the strong "Kizuna" or special bond shared between the FSM and Japan, which was further deepened during his recent participation in the 10th Pacific Island Leaders Meeting (PALM 10) where leaders from across the Pacific gathered in Tokyo to discuss common challenges and agree on solutions with tangible outcomes.

President Simina expressed gratitude for Japan's support, particularly in grassroots community projects through the Overseas Fishery Cooperation Foundation (OFCF) and technical assistance from JICA Volunteers. These initiatives have significantly contributed to the FSM's social growth and strengthened the bonds of friendship between the two nations. Looking ahead, President Simina announced his upcoming visits to Kochi and Osaka prefectures, aimed at further engaging with local communities and promoting people-centered development.

Vice Minister Tsuge closed the occasion with remarks, stating "Japan and Micronesia have been bound by a historical Kizuna for more than 150 years. We are friends who share fundamental values such as freedom and democracy, and have built a strong relationship through various forms of cooperation."



Governor Joseph welcomes Australia Pacific Islands Business Council to Pohnpei

Pohnpei Public Information

July 16, 2024

KOLONIA, Pohnpei—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph recently hosted a courtesy visit from the Australia Pacific Islands Business Council (APIBC) at the Governor's Office. Established in 2000, the APIBC aims to facilitate dialogue between the private sectors of Australia and Pacific Island nations, strengthening business and trade relationships. Her Excellency Jenny Grant-Curnow, along with Second Secretary Rachelle Wood from the Australian Embassy, accompanied the distinguished members of the Council.

Gorman, President, Mr. William Bank, Vice President, Mr. Ian Clark, former President, Mr. Daniel Grey, General Manager of Marine Infrastructure, Mr. Luke Jackson, Executive Committee & Export Manager, Mr. Adrian Weeks, Senior Trade Commissioner, Ms. Leata Alaimoana-Roberts, Pacific Trade Commissioner, and Mr. Frank Yourn, Executive Director. Discussions focused on the APIBC's mandate, which includes facilitating contacts, enhancing trade and business opportunities, and engaging with the governments of Australia and the Pacific Islands through its paid membership structure.

and combating non-communicable diseases (NCDs). He emphasized the pivotal role Australian businesses can play in addressing these challenges, particularly in sectors beyond fishing. "One of the biggest challenges we face is transportation" stated Governor Joseph. He noted the need for more infrastructure investment and the value Australian businesses could bring in providing cost-effective solutions.

sector in Pohnpei to engage with the Council and the FSM Chamber of Commerce for partnership opportunities, reaffirming Australia's supportive stance towards Pacific Island nations.

Governor Joseph and First Lady Dr. Aina Garstang had an opportunity to meet members of the council at the Australian Embassy compound residence, in a social setting, before the courtesy call.

The discussions also touched on the importance of alternative energy, telecommunications, and the distribution of Compact funds. The APIBC members shared insights on climate change resilience, technical assistance, and fast funding mechanisms. They encouraged the private

For more information on the Australia Pacific Islands Business Council, visit their website: <https://apibc.org.au/>

The delegation included Mr. Simon

Governor Joseph highlighted four key priorities for Pohnpei: food security, water, energy,



Governor Joseph attends Close-Out ceremony for Typhoon Wutip reconstruction program

Pohnpei Public Information

July 25, 2024

WENO, Chuuk—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph attended the close-out ceremony for the Typhoon Wutip Reconstruction Program today in Chuuk. This significant event marked the completion of a program that spanned three states in the Federated States of Micronesia, including Pohnpei, Chuuk, and Yap.

construction materials.

Governor Joseph, along with Governor Alexander R. Narruhn of Chuuk and Lt. Governor Jesse Salalu Itimai of Yap, received certificates of recognition from U.S. Ambassador to FSM, Jennifer Johnson. These certificates honor the collaborative efforts in rebuilding and supporting the affected communities.

The program, funded through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), provided essential assistance to beneficiaries in Pohnpei, helping them repair homes damaged by Typhoon Wutip in 2019. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) Micronesia facilitated the distribution of vouchers to purchase



PICRC undertakes pilot study to identify if different moon phases influence fish abundance and diversity at FADs

Palau International Coral Reef Center

July 26, 2024

Palau—Researchers from the Palau International Coral Reef Center (PICRC) are currently undertaking a pilot study at a fish aggregating device (FAD) to assess whether different moon phases influence the diversity and abundance of fish species. This project is using baited remote underwater video stations (BRUVS) to capture data which provides a permanent visual record of the different species encountered at sites. This survey method has not yet been trialed at FADs in Palau but is a common fish surveying tool around the world.

Fish aggregating devices (FADs) are floating objects used to provide structure in an open ocean environment. Pelagic

fish are attracted to FADs for various reasons, including to feed on prey or as reference points for schooling. These FADs aim to attract commercially important coastal pelagic species to provide an alternative source of fishing to local communities.

Surveys commenced on the 31st of May and will continue throughout the summer months. To gain equitable data, the BRUVS are deployed two hours after sunrise, four times a month (first quarter, full moon, last quarter and new moon) for 3 consecutive months. This pilot study hopes to gain an understanding of fish composition trends across the different moon phases and to assess the effectiveness of the BRUVS method.

PICRC researchers are aiming to

further monitor FADs in the future to gain more information on diversity, abundance, size and biomass of coastal-pelagic species and to understand the effectiveness of different FADs in Palau. The findings from this study can help identify if FADs have potential to aggregate pelagic species of commercial interest in the artisanal fishery zone of Palau. Differences between FAD structures around Palau could also highlight preferred aggregation sites.

PICRC contracted Mr. Hadely Renguul to assist on this project based on his knowledge and expertise as a local fisherman. PICRC acknowledges and thanks him for assisting our researchers to undertake these surveys. This research hopes to provide valuable insight into FADs and the role they



play in enhancing livelihoods and food security in Palau.

Governor Joseph administers oaths for new cabinet members

Pohnpei Public Information

July 16, 2024

KOLONIA, Pohnpei—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph administered the oaths of office to two key officials in the Pohnpei State Government on July 12, 2024. Mr. Stuard Penias was sworn in as the Director of the Department of Health and Social Services and a member of the Governor’s cabinet, and Mr. Erick Paul was sworn in as the Pohnpei State Public Auditor. The ceremony took place in the conference room of the Pohnpei State Hospital.

Governor Joseph and Lt. Governor Ioanis, with the advice and consent of the 11th Pohnpei Legislature, have one more cabinet position to fill. The Governor and Lt. Governor Ioanis appreciate the Legislature's support and assistance in forming their administration, thus far.

After taking their oaths and receiving their certificates of appointment, Mr. Penias and Mr. Paul delivered remarks. Public Auditor Erick Paul acknowledged the challenges of his new role, thanked former Auditor Iso Ihlen Joseph for his guidance, and declared, "I'm ready." Director Penias expressed gratitude and recognized the challenges ahead in his role in Health and Social Services. Both officials thanked the Governor, Lt. Governor, Speaker, and 11th Pohnpei Legislature for their confirmations and pledged their commitment to their positions.

Speaker Yamaguchi and Lt. Governor Ioanis also shared words of wisdom and advice. Lt. Governor Ioanis thanked Iso Ihlen Joseph for his years of service and noted his continued role on a new board of investment. He highlighted the recent lack of a permanent Director of Health, advising Director Penias to seek guidance from former Acting Directors. Speaker Yamaguchi reminded the newly appointed officials of the Legislature's vetting process, ensuring they are well-prepared for their roles.

With these key positions filled, the Joseph-Ioanis administration seeks the continued support of the 11th Pohnpei Legislature to confirm the remaining nomination of Director of the Department of Public Safety and ensure the cabinet is fully equipped to execute the laws and code of the State of Pohnpei effectively.



Governor Joseph launches Pohnpei Conservation Officer Reserve program

Pohnpei Public Information

July 15, 2024

KOLONIA, Pohnpei—The Pohnpei State Government, in collaboration with the Conservation Society of Pohnpei (CSP) and OneReef, under the leadership of the Pohnpei Department of Public Safety (DPS) and its Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), proudly announces the launch of the Pohnpei Conservation Officer Reserve Program. This initiative, supported by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), aims to enhance the management and protection of the state's natural resources. Governor Joseph called for improved resource management and coordinated enforcement by DPS, DFW, Municipal Police, and Community Conservation Officers.

Community Conservation Officers, will be trained and certified to support the Division of Fish and Wildlife within DPS. They will ensure swift responses and community presence to address Pohnpei Protected Areas Network conservation challenges.

Funding from OneReef and the Conservation Society of Pohnpei will cover training, gear, uniforms, and establish a Reserve Fund to support the officers. The program promotes a strong partnership among CSP, DPS, and the Pohnpei State Government, fostering collaboration for managing and conserving Pohnpei's natural environment.

The program focuses on capacity building and enforcing conservation laws through a community-driven approach. 25 selected officers, including

During the signing ceremony, Governor Stevenson A. Joseph expressed confidence in

the program's potential to enhance resource management for the long-term sustainability of the resources for the present and future generations. A special thanks to the Pohnpei State Attorney General's Office for drawing up the MOU that was signed

by Governor Joseph on behalf of the Pohnpei State Government, Acting Director Ricky Rodriguez on behalf of the Department of Public Safety, and Mr. Eugene Joseph on behalf of the Conservation Society of Pohnpei.



Governor Stevenson A. Joseph honors the late Senator Mikhail "Mike" Loyola

Pohnpei Public Information

July 16, 2024

KOLONIA, Pohnpei—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph attended the state funeral of the late Senator Mikhail "Mike" Loyola, Kirourohi Nett, at the Pohnpei Legislature chamber. During the solemn event, Governor Joseph delivered a heartfelt tribute, honoring Senator Loyola's remarkable life and his numerous accomplishments in government, community, and traditional capacities.

In honor of Senator Loyola's passing, Governor Joseph signed Executive Proclamation 2024-07, ordering all flags to be flown at half-mast for three days. This gesture serves as a testament to the profound impact Senator Loyola had on the state and as a mark of respect for his enduring contributions.

Governor Joseph concluded his tribute by expressing his condolences to the family of Senator Loyola and the people of Pohnpei. Senator Loyola's legacy will forever remain in the hearts of those he served and the traditions he upheld.

Senator Loyola's career in government was marked by his commitment to the betterment of Pohnpei. His efforts in the Legislature and his active involvement in community initiatives showcased his devotion to the island and its residents. Additionally, his role in traditional capacities underscored his respect for and preservation of Pohnpei's rich cultural heritage.



U.S. Marines and Sailors support humanitarian aid Efforts in Chuuk

Story by 1st Lt. John Carter
1st Marine Logistics Group

July 22, 2024

CHUUK—In a demonstration of solidarity and resilience, U.S. Marines and Sailors from Koa Moana 24 have been instrumental in helping deliver humanitarian aid support across the archipelago of Chuuk, Federated States of Micronesia. Combat Logistics Detachment-West, the resident Koa Moana formation from Combat Logistics Battalion 13, Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st Marine Logistics Group, provided limited foreign humanitarian assistance in a distributed, maritime environment. In support of the International Organization for Migration, this initiative strengthens disaster preparedness in the second island chain through the application of Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations concepts.

Building Resilience with the International Organization for Migration

In partnership with the International Organization for Migration, a crucial United Nations agency addressing migration challenges, the U.S. Marines and Sailors have taken proactive steps to enhance the region's resilience against natural disasters. By leveraging their expertise and resources, they supported the IOM to implement agile crisis response strategies that safeguard lives and improve migration pathways.

Throughout the event, the Marines and Sailors distributed over two thousand bags of rice and three thousand cases of water to Chuuk's outer islands. These resources will play a critical role in fortifying disaster relief preparations for communities on Uman, Dorr, and Utot islands. Distribution of this humanitarian assistance brought great pride to the Marines and Sailors supporting by making a difference to the Chuukese community.

Gunnery Sgt. Sean Arnold, the staff non-commissioned officer in charge of CLD-W, emphasized the significance of this mission: "I couldn't be prouder of my Marines here on Chuuk Island supporting IOM as part of Koa Moana 24. This humanitarian effort to prepare for natural disasters and supply Chuuk's outer islands showcases our commitment and dedication to our

partners in Chuuk. It's an honor to serve alongside the Marines on Chuuk Island, making a tangible difference while proudly representing the United States Marine Corps."

Preparedness and Innovation in Action

The Marines and Sailors of CLD-W were prepared for this opportunity to support. Prior to deployment, all members renewed their swim qualifications knowing they would be operating around the Chuuk Lagoon's many inner islands. Under the leadership of Gunnery Sgt. Arnold, who serves as a Marine Corps Instructor of Water Survival, swimming sustainment is emphasized as a routine facet of the unit's physical training program.

The humanitarian mission utilized a custom pontoon work barge, owned and operated by IOM UN Migration and the U.S. Agency for International Development Disaster Coordination Office. The vessel, with its aluminum ramp and minimal draft, proved invaluable in navigating the waters and delivering aid efficiently and safely.

Local Impact and Enduring Partnerships

The local communities' reception was overwhelmingly positive, with residents expressing gratitude and appreciation for the aid delivered by the U.S. Marines.

The provision of rice and water is not merely a short-term solution but a catalyst for strengthening community resilience and unity. This intervention underscores the U.S. Marine Corps' commitment to humanitarian causes and highlights the enduring partnership between the U.S. and the Federated States of Micronesia.

Lt. Col. Brian McCarthy, commanding officer of CLB-13, reiterated the importance of the mission: "The competition in this region, on these islands, is active. If the United States isn't present doing the thing, then those influences will remain. Our mission is to demonstrate the Marine Corps' steadfast commitment to our partners in the Pacific. We stand ready to continue supporting communities across the region. What Koa Moana is accomplishing here in Chuuk exemplifies what we can achieve when non-DOD agencies, the U.S. Marine

Corps, and the host partner work together for a common purpose."

Looking Ahead: A Model for Future Collaboration

As Koa Moana 24 continues through the summer, CLB-13's Marines and Sailors are poised to deepen their engagement with Pacific Island partner nations. Beyond delivering humanitarian aid, they aim to extend their engineering expertise and forge positive relationships with local communities, inspiring future generations through their dedication and service.

U.S. Ambassador Jennifer Johnson praised the mission's success: "We are incredibly proud that our teams were able to assist with the delivery of much-needed supplies to the outer islands of Chuuk. As always, we stand ready to work with and help our close friend and ally – the Federated States of Micronesia. Engagements like Koa Moana are just more evidence that we continue



to renew our vows of friendship. We look forward to welcoming the Marines back for Koa Moana 2025."

This initiative not only strengthens regional partnerships but also underscores the profound human impact of military service, showcasing the personal commitment of U.S. servicemembers to making a lasting difference in communities worldwide.





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Governor Stevenson A. Joseph welcomes participants to Island Research Ecology course at COM-FSM CTEC Campus

Pohnpei Public Information

July 15, 2024

KOLONIA, Pohnpei—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph delivered welcoming remarks today at the start of the three-week-long Island Ecology Course held at the COM-FSM CTEC Campus in Kolonia. Sponsored by the Micronesia Conservation Trust, the course brings together participants from across the region to address critical issues related to invasive species in Micronesia.

Governor Joseph emphasized the importance of conducting more Micronesia-centric research and data collection on invasive species. He noted the existence of significant gaps in basic invasive species data and stressed the need to build a comprehensive repository of regional invasive species data resources.

In his remarks, Governor Joseph also highlighted the need to increase Micronesia's research capacity to tackle the biological and climate threats to the region's natural resources. He referred to discussions at the 26th Micronesian Islands Forum, where these issues were prominently addressed. "We believe in the powerful combination of traditional knowledge and scientific research," Governor Joseph stated. "Our ancestors have long understood the importance of living in harmony with nature. By blending their wisdom with modern science, we can create a sustainable future for our islands." He warmly welcomed all lecturers and students from near and far.

COM-FSM President Bale Theresa Koroivaulaona also delivered remarks, underscoring the importance of the course and echoing Governor Joseph's sentiments on the synergy between traditional knowledge and scientific research. She praised the efforts of the Micronesia Conservation Trust in organizing the course and highlighted the critical role of education and collaboration in addressing environmental challenges in the region.



The Republic of the Marshall Islands welcomes delegates for Women's conference

Secretariat of the Pacific Community

July 22, 2024

Majuro--The 15th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women opened with an esteemed and vibrant welcome ceremony on Saturday, 20 July 2024 in Majuro, Marshall Islands. The 15th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women will take place from 22 – 24 July, followed by the 8th Meeting of Pacific Ministers for Women on 25 July, and the Pacific Islands Forum Women Leaders Meeting on 26 July.

Held at the College of Marshall Island's Sgt Solomon Sam Memorial Court, the Government of Marshall Islands hosted guests to a culturally rich ceremony featuring traditional performances and heartfelt welcoming gestures. Government delegations from 22 countries as well as representatives of civil society organizations, traditional leaders, and representatives of the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) agencies attended the welcoming ceremony setting the stage for empowering discussions and exchanges over the coming days.

"We are capable of creating waves that can transform our world," Marshall Island's Presidential Envoy for Women, Children, and Youth, Senator Daisy Alik-Momotaro, told guests who arrived from across our Blue Pacific at the welcome ceremony, emphasizing on the theme of this year's conference: An Pilinlin Koba Ekaman Lometo - For a Resilient and Sustainable Future."

"We are thrilled to inaugurate the 15th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women. This gathering underscore our commitment to fostering inclusive dialogue and tangible actions that empower women throughout our diverse Pacific communities.



Each of you, like individual droplets, contributes to the vast and powerful ocean of change and progress," she said.

SPC's Human Rights and Social Development Director Miles Young said: 'The next few days will bring together the full complement of stakeholders to deliberate and take decisions on issues concerning women and girls, gender equality and the realization of human rights for women in the Pacific.'

High-profile guests slated to speak at the Triennial convenings include Her Excellency, Hilda Heine, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands; Honorable Feleti Teo, Prime Minister of Tuvalu; Honorable Lynda Tabuya, Minister for Women, Children and Social Protection, Fiji; Honorable Jess Gasper Jr, Minister for Culture and Internal Affairs, Marshall Islands; Reverend James Bhagwan, General Secretary of the Pacific Council of Churches; and Ofa Guttenbeil-Likiliki, Director, Women & Children Crisis Center, Tonga.

World Bank Announces US\$21 Million for Financial and Climate Resilience in the Republic of the Marshall Islands

World Bank

July 19, 2024

WASHINGTON DC,– The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors has approved new support to strengthen fiscal management and enhance disaster and climate resilience in the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI).

RMI faces substantial long-term uncertainty due to climate change, population decline, and a limited private sector, and critical reforms are needed to ensure long-term economic sustainability. With US\$21 million in grants, the Enhancing Fiscal Management and Building Disaster and Climate Resilience Development Policy Operation (DPO) aims to support these reforms and contribute to the country's sustainable and resilient development.

"This is the first operation of its type in the Republic of the Marshall Islands and it comes at a critical time to support

the country's resilience and sustainable development," said World Bank Resident Representative for the North Pacific Omar Lyasse. "It complements other World Bank-financed projects in the Marshall Islands on fiscal management, urban resilience, and climate adaptation, and supports a robust policy framework to meet the country's national development goals and international commitments."

A low-lying atoll nation, RMI is one of the world's most climate-vulnerable countries, facing threats that exacerbate disaster risks and undermine poverty reduction and economic growth. This operation will support policy actions to manage the impacts of climate change and natural hazards while providing access to prompt financing for catastrophic events.

The operation includes a US\$9 million development policy grant and a US\$12 million Catastrophe

Deferred Drawdown Option (Cat DDO) development policy grant, which will be available for post-disaster efforts if an eligible catastrophic event occurs. This ensures that the country can quickly mobilize financing in response to emergencies such as typhoons, floods, droughts, and other climate-related hazards, as well as health-related emergencies.

The operation also aims to establish robust financial management and procurement processes to improve spending efficiency and enhance governance and administration in the country. The operation will support critical reforms for the country, including adapting to sea level rise, implementing a modernized Disaster Risk Management Act— updated for the first time in over 35 years—and enacting new legislation to regulate the country's first national building code. These reforms will enhance RMI's resilience to natural and climate-related

hazards and guide the design of future development initiatives in the country.

The operation aligns with the Republic of the Marshall Islands National Strategic Plan 2020-30, emphasizing government accountability and efficient resource allocation. It also supports RMI's Paris Agreement climate commitments through policy actions aligned with the implementation of RMI's Climate Change Policy 2050, its Nationally Determined Contributions, and its National Adaptation Plan.

"This support will help our government address critical needs across a range of priorities, including climate and disaster resilience," said Minister of Finance for the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Hon. David Paul. "Climate change poses an existential threat to the RMI, but this initiative is an important step to create a safer and more resilient future for Marshallese people."

PALM10 Declaration by Pacific Islands Forum and Japan will address shared priorities

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

July 19, 2024

Tokyo—The 18 members of the Pacific Islands Forum came together with the Government of Japan to strengthen our shared partnership from 16-18 July. The 10th Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM10) was held in Tokyo, and Leaders have endorsed the PALM10 Declaration and Joint Action Plan.

Prime Minister of the Cook Islands and Forum Chair Mark Brown said the PALM platform is integral to the Pacific region’s partnership with Japan. “Almost 30 years since the first PALM, we continue to value the opportunity to discuss our concerns and priorities based on our mutual commitment to effective, open and honest partnership. The PALM10 Declaration reflects our shared priorities and commitments.”

He continued, “as Leaders of the Pacific, we will work as one united region. We seek partners who want to work with us through our systems; understand us from our vantage point; and most importantly, align and commit themselves to the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, and its Implementation Plan.”

The partnership with Japan will address key areas of cooperation, in particular climate change, which remains the single greatest existential threat to the

Blue Pacific.

PIF Leaders welcomed Japan’s support at the international level on issues including:

- securing the legal certainty of the Blue Pacific by Preserving Maritime Zones in the face of Climate Change-related Sea-level Rise.
- the conservation and sustainable use of Marine Biological Diversity in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction
- addressing marine pollution, including through the development of an ambitious international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution

The Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF) is a Pacific-owned and led climate and disaster risk financing solution for vulnerable communities. “We welcome Japan’s indication that they are considering a contribution to the Pacific Resilience Facility, but we encourage Japan to confirm earlier rather than later” said Forum Chair Mark Brown.

Leaders discussed the discharge of ALPS treated water into the Pacific Ocean from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station. Recognizing their shared commitment to safeguarding the Pacific region, PIF Leaders acknowledged the Government of Japan’s assurances to continue to provide sincere explanations to Pacific Island Countries based on scientific evidence in a way that is highly transparent, and to never approve the discharge in a manner that endangers well-being, livelihoods, human health or the marine environment.

The Government of Japan will continue working closely with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and has decided to contribute to the development of regional scientific capacity through the IAEA. PIF Leaders requested this assistance be delivered through engagement by the IAEA in the region.

To realize the potential of Pacific people and

resources, the partnership will address economic challenges including correspondent banking relationships and strengthening investment and trade links, including through a Pacific-Japan Investment Seminar later this year.

Fisheries are a key resource, and Leaders continued to urge partners to support resource development efforts such as the East New Britain Initiative. It is another Pacific-led solution which will enhance the benefits from tuna fisheries by establishing collective and inclusive investment pathways.

Japan’s strengths and long-standing record of cooperation in technology and connectivity will support PIF ambitions for a well-connected region with enhanced systems and services in line with the Lagatoi Declaration on Digital Transformation of the Pacific.

PIF Leaders recognize that despite great progress and investments to improve Pacific health and education outcomes, much more needs to be done. Japan is a long-standing partner in this area, contributing capacity building, peer-to-peer learning, scholarships and technical knowledge, and this partnership will build on this.

Forum Chair Mark Brown expressed his appreciation to the Government of Japan for hosting Forum Leaders and said “let us ensure our joint efforts support improved development outcomes for our island communities”.



Responders rescue 15 boaters reported near Aguijan Island, CNMI

*Story by Chief Warrant Officer Sara Muir
U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia
/ Sector Guam*

Monday, July 22, 2024

SANTA RITA, Guam—Fifteen boaters are safe thanks to the combined efforts of the U.S. Navy, good Samaritans from Cabras Marine Corporation, the Saipan Department of Public Safety (DPS) Boating Safety, and the U.S. Coast Guard, following a report they were disabled 15 nautical miles west of Aguijan Island, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, on July 21, 2024.

Two of the 15 boaters were hoisted by U.S. Navy Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25 (HSC-25) arriving to Guam on July 21, and the other 13 were rescued by the crew of the U.S.-flagged offshore supply vessel Triton operated by Cabras Marine Corporation arriving to Saipan in the early morning hours of July 22.

“We thank all partners involved in this critical search effort, including Saipan DPS, DPS Tinian, and the crews of U.S. Navy’s HSC-25, MSC’s Jack Lummus, and Cabras’s Triton. Their

collective efforts are invaluable in our mission to locate and rescue missing boaters. The hoist capable helicopter crew and local good Samaritans aboard the other vessels were vital to affecting a timely response and saving lives in this case,” said Lt. Chelsea Garcia, search and rescue mission coordinator.

At 11:50 a.m. local time, on July 21, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Saipan team notified the JRSC watch that Saipan Department of Public Safety (DPS) Boating Safety personnel were responding to a report of a distressed boater. Due to marginal weather conditions and long periods of no contact, Saipan DPS faced significant challenges maintaining communications with the boater and search and rescue units.

U.S. Coast Guard watchstander issued an urgent marine information broadcast to all mariners and sought aerial support from HSC-25, while continuing to coordinate with Saipan and Tinian DPS, also providing recommended search patterns based on the limited known information.

Around 5:20 p.m., HSC-25’s crew

advised they located the boaters. The boaters, sighting the helicopter, lit off a flare to signal their position and distress. The deteriorating weather conditions and waning daylight led HSC-25’s crew to hoist two of the boaters before they needed to depart the scene for fuel, returning to Guam. Saipan DPS again tried to reach the remaining boaters but due to conditions were forced to return to port.

The crew of the 673-foot naval logistics vessel USNS Jack Lummus operated by Military Sealift Command was transiting the area and volunteered to assist. They located the vessel with the remaining 13 people aboard around 8:30 p.m. They remained on scene with the 28-foot recreational vessel until the crew of the Triton arrived. The 175-foot motor vessel was a safer platform to recover the boaters due to their respective size and design. The Triton crew delivered the 13 survivors to Saipan where they were met by law enforcement personnel. Homeland Security Investigations, U.S. Coast Guard Investigative Service, Saipan DPS, and Guam Customs are involved.

“We urge all mariners to avoid

overloading their vessels and to always check weather conditions before setting out. These transits are extremely dangerous and put lives at significant risk. This is the third significant rescue of this type we’ve effected between Guam and the CNMI since January,” said Lt. Garcia. “While this case appears to involve the transit of foreign nationals from the CNMI, we cannot comment further on the ongoing law enforcement investigation.”

The 28-foot vessel remains adrift and is a potential hazard to navigation. It is not currently known how they became disabled and adrift. The U.S. Coast Guard did not receive any reports of injuries.

A small craft advisory remains in effect for the Mariana Islands alongside a special weather statement for Invest 93W, expected to move west-northwest through the Mariana Islands today and tonight, causing scattered to numerous showers and isolated thunderstorms, with locally heavy rainfall and wind gusts to 30 mph or more. Combined seas in the 6 to 8-foot range are also likely.

Pacific Islands Forum Leaders endorse high-level mission to New Caledonia

Pacific Island Forum Secretariat

July 23, 2024

Fiji—Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Leaders have endorsed a high-level mission to New Caledonia. This is in response to the request from New Caledonia to support a long-lasting resolution to the ongoing political situation.

Prime Minister of Cook Islands and PIF Forum Chair Mark Brown said “New Caledonia is a PIF Member and we have a responsibility to take care of our family in a time of need. We wish to support the de-escalation of violence and promote understanding and dialogue between all parties. Our objective is to help all parties resolve this situation as peacefully and expeditiously as possible.”

The ongoing violence in New

Caledonia is of grave concern to the Forum Family. A Forum Ministerial Committee provides a regionally-led, contextualized and neutral approach to the impasse in New Caledonia. Forum Leaders recognize that any regional support to New Caledonia on this matter will require the agreement of the French Government. The Pacific Islands Forum has requested the support of the French Government and will work closely with officials to confirm the arrangements for the mission.

The Forum Ministerial Committee (FMC) will be led by the Prime Ministers of Cook Islands, Fiji and Tonga, who comprise the current Forum Troika.

The FMC will ensure that the mission is facilitated in an objective and comprehensive manner.

“It is the collective expectation of Forum Leaders that the mission takes place in August and a report

from the mission be presented to Leaders for their consideration and further discussion at the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in Tonga on 26-30 August”, said Forum Chair Mark Brown.



Cost savings will grow as renewable energy investment increases—PSDI

Pacific Private Sector Development Initiative

24 July 2024

Sydney, Australia- Pacific island countries have ambitious targets to increase their investments in renewable energy, which will reduce electricity generation costs and improve supply reliability, according to a new policy paper published today by the Asian Development Bank’s (ADB’s) Pacific Private Sector Development Initiative (PSDI).

The policy paper, *Powering the Pacific: The Cost Implications of Renewable Energy*, examines the impact of transitioning from fossil fuels to renewable energy in six Pacific island countries and provides recommendations to maximize the benefits of renewable energy, including the cost savings.

“While Pacific island countries are still in the early stages of their energy transition, investments in renewable energy are

already lowering the generation costs of electricity,” says PSDI State-Owned Enterprise Reform Expert and one of the authors of the report, Laure Darcy. “As renewable energy becomes a larger part of the energy mix, costs for consumers are expected to decrease, especially as the costs of battery storage systems fall.”

However, because electricity tariffs are well below the cost of service in many Pacific countries, the savings from renewable energy are effectively already factored into tariffs. Five of the six utilities in the paper’s sample experienced financial losses in 2021 due to the cost of service exceeding the costs passed on to consumers. Energy Fiji Limited, which had the highest renewable energy share in the sample, was the only utility with a tariff that fully covered the cost of service.

“Bringing down electricity costs and improving supply reliability involves multiple factors beyond just investment

in renewable infrastructure. Utilities also need to follow commercial principles and improve operational efficiencies to curb high system losses,” says report co-author, Renewable Energy Specialist Denzel Hankinson. “International experience has also shown that increasing competition in the energy sector can also reduce the cost to consumers.”

The paper highlights that the transition to renewable energy brings other important benefits beyond cost savings, most notably improved energy security from a more reliable supply and lower carbon emissions. To maximize these benefits, the paper advocates for the transition to renewable energy to be incorporated within a least-cost generation plan, which most Pacific utilities already have. Additionally, aligning sector policy, regulation, and stakeholder oversight to allow utilities to operate commercially, investing adequately in system reliability, and



allowing competition where appropriate, are all crucial for ensuring a successful transition.

PSDI is an ADB technical assistance program undertaken in partnership with the government of Australia and New Zealand. It supports ADB’s 14 Pacific DMCs to improve the enabling environment for business and to achieve inclusive, private sector-led economic growth, including through reforms designed to improve the performance of state-owned enterprises and increase private sector participation in infrastructure service delivery.

Back to our roots – building upon age old indigenous knowledge and skills

From July 23-26, the Conference Hall at the Tuna Commission rang out with chants and song and dance. This was not a rerun of Micronesia Cultural Day but rather a workshop to discuss how indigenous knowledge and learning can effectively improve teaching and learning so that children not only learn better but also serve as guardians of the rich cultural heritage which has been fostered over the centuries.

Having identified mainstreaming, strengthening and resourcing indigenous knowledge into curriculum delivery as the priority reform area for transforming the education system in September 2023, this time national and state education agencies in the Federated States of Micronesia gathered in Pohnpei to design a new programme to translate this vision into concrete actions.

Organised by the FSM National Department of

Education and UNICEF in partnership with the Institute of Education (IoE, USP) and with funding from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), the consultations and discussions provide the inputs and direction for FSM’s application for the GPE System Transformation Grant of US\$2.5 million.



PacIOOS to redeploy crucial wave monitoring buoy in Pohnpei waters

By *Bill Jaynes*
The Kaselehlie Press

July 30, 2024

Pohnpei—A team from PacIOOS (Pacific Islands Ocean Observing System) is in Pohnpei to redeploy a waverider buoy approximately 1.5 miles off the north coast of Pohnpei. Last week, the team successfully deployed a similar buoy in Kosrae (pictured below right).

The buoy is being “redeployed” after having been initially deployed several months ago because some boater, for reasons unknown, cut the extremely heavy rope that secured it and set it adrift. Fortunately, the buoy was retrieved through electronic tracking. Organizers say that this time they will be using heavy-duty cable to secure the buoy.

Team member Andreia Queima of PacIOOS at the University of Hawaii said that part of the purpose of the team’s visit to Pohnpei this time is to provide public information on the project.

In an email, she wrote: “The buoy collects and transmits information about wave height, period, and direction, surface current speed and direction, water temperature, and air temperature. Data is sent via satellite every 30 minutes and available at: www.pacioos.hawaii.edu. The main purposes of the buoy are to improve ocean safety, enhance community resilience, and prepare for climate change. The Pohnpei wave buoy is owned and operated by PacIOOS. The US Department of State provided the initial funding to purchase and deploy the buoy. The buoy was deployed with the support of the Office of Fisheries (OFA), Pacific Community (SPC), Conservation Society of Pohnpei (CSP), and Pohnpei Surf Club. Data are managed by the Coastal Data Information Program (CDIP) at Scripps Institution of Oceanography.”

Those involved in the project are trying to educate Pohnpei boaters on the importance of the data. They also say that boaters should know that using the buoy as a mooring anchor will disrupt the proper collection of that data, which is important to Pohnpei. Naturally, they would like to avoid the possibility that any boater will take it upon themselves to set the extremely expensive and important buoy free again for whatever reason.



Statement by UNICEF Executive Director, Catherine Russell, following her trip to Vanuatu and Fiji

UNICEF

20 JULY 2024

Fiji—“Pacific Island nations are collectively

responsible for less than one tenth of one per cent of the greenhouse gas emissions that are warming our planet. Yet these countries, including Vanuatu and Fiji where I visited this week, are on the frontlines of the climate crisis.

“In Vanuatu, I met 15-year-old Camilla, one of many young people across the Pacific and around the world who are taking action to protect their future from rising sea levels, stronger and more frequent storms and hotter temperatures. ‘Our journey is like taking a canoe,’ she told me. ‘We want to

get everyone on board.’

“But she knows that today, not everyone is onboard. The world – and world leaders in particular – must listen, and step-up global efforts to significantly reduce emissions, mitigate risks and build the resilience communities so desperately need.

“On Nguna, one of Vanuatu’s many islands, I met a head teacher named Rossie who showed me the destroyed school where she used to teach until it was wiped out by back-to-back cyclones in March 2023. A new school is nearly finished, built further inland and with a stronger structure. But

Rossie, 36, who has lived on the island her whole life, told me that climate change is already upending lives here. ‘It affects everything,’ she said, explaining that rising seawaters and changing weather patterns are killing crops. ‘Some of the students don’t have food. Before, we all had enough to eat,’ she said.

“Climate hazards are forcing some of Vanuatu’s children to move because of more frequent and intense storms, and warmer oceans are eroding coral reefs and



See continuation on next page

...UNICEF Statement

Continued from previous page

fishing stocks, damaging livelihoods and culture. An entire generation of people living in Vanuatu and other Pacific nations are looking at the very real possibility of being forced from their homes.

“In Fiji, the situation is much the same. Officials and young people I spoke to there expressed the very same worries about what the climate crisis will do to their lives, especially it amplifies other issues such as poverty and extremely high levels of violence against children.

“All of the Pacific’s more than 1.2 million children are impacted by the climate crisis, affecting the health, well-being, and very survival of children. With emissions targets to curb global warming wildly offtrack and funding for disaster risk reduction and adaptation woefully lacking, their futures are largely reliant on decision-makers in larger, wealthier countries who continue to drag their feet.

“In response, UNICEF is calling on all countries to commit to better protecting children in their national climate action plans, and to investing the resources necessary to turn those plans into reality.

“But quite frankly, the current climate commitments fail children. They fail because they do not address the unique and disproportionate impacts of climate change on children. They do not adequately strengthen the services children rely on – such as health, education, justice and food systems. They are not inclusive of all children and young people’s rights and roles as stakeholders and drivers of change. We need more bold and innovative steps.

“In the Pacific, UNICEF has deployed an innovative finance solution with the Today and Tomorrow initiative, the world’s first integrated climate and disaster risk finance mechanism specifically targeted at and designed for children. Today and Tomorrow enables us to protect up to 14 million children and families against tropical cyclones in eight countries over three years, including in Fiji, Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands. Since commencing, the pilot has released over US\$ 4.5 million in parametric insurance payouts including over US\$ 380,000 in payouts triggered by six cyclones across the three Pacific Island countries.

“It is time decision makers fully commit to taking action and for child-sensitive climate finance to be radically increased. Governments can leave the best possible legacy by investing in the bold, child-focused climate action that children and future generations so desperately needs. As Camilla reminded us: ‘It is not too late. We just need the world to get onboard.’

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Which is used in connection with Anti-lock braking systems [ABS] for automobiles; Structural parts for automobiles; Accelerator cables for automobiles; Accelerator pedals for automobiles; Air bags for vehicles; Air masters for automobiles; Air tanks for automobiles; Arms for vehicles; Ashtrays for vehicles; Torque converters for automobiles; Anti-theft alarms for vehicles; Anti-theft devices for vehicles; ATA Oil pans for automobiles; ATA valve bodies for automobiles; Axles for vehicles; Axle carriers for automobiles; Axle housings for automobiles; Axle knuckles for automobiles; Ball joints for automobiles; Axle bearings for land vehicles; Wheel bearings for land vehicles; Safety belts for automobile seats; Brakes for automobiles; Brake boosters for automobiles; Brake discs for vehicles; Brake drums for vehicles; Brake cylinders for vehicles; Brake pads for automobiles; Brake pedals for vehicles; Brake shoes for automobiles; Brake linings for automobiles; Bumper covers for automobiles; Bumper energy absorbers for automobiles; Bumper guards for automobiles; Bumper lips for automobiles; Mouldings for automobile bumpers; Bumper rails for automobiles; Bumper stays for automobiles; Bumper steps for automobiles; Cabins for automobiles; Brake calipers for vehicles; Cap mounting cylinders for automobiles; Automobile covers [shaped]; Center facia for automobiles; Frames for automobile chassis; Child restraints for vehicle seats; Clutch boosters for automobiles; Clutch cables for automobiles; Clutch covers for automobiles; Clutch discs for automobiles; Clutch housings for automobiles; Clutch master cylinders for automobiles; Clutch pedals for land vehicles; Clutch power cylinders for automobiles; Clutch release cylinders for automobiles; Clutch release forks for automobiles; Concentric slave cylinders for automobiles; Console armrests for automobiles; Cooling fan clutches for land vehicles; Couplings for land vehicles; Cowl cross bars for automobiles; Cowl top covers for automobiles; Crash pads for automobiles; Crossmembers for automobiles; Constant-velocity joints for automobiles; Decks for trucks; Differential carriers for automobiles; Differential cases for automobiles; Disc & clutch covers for automobiles; Disc brake seals for automobiles; Automobile door checker; Automobile door handles; Automobile door steps; Automobile door visors; Drag links for automobiles; Emblems for automobiles; Automobile engines; Engine covers for automobiles; Engine mounting rubbers for automobiles; Engine oil pan for automobiles; Engine undercover for automobiles; Undercover for fenders for land vehicles; Air filter cartridges for land vehicles; Oil filter cartridges for land vehicles; Floor consoles for automobiles; Frame mouldings for automobiles; Caps for vehicle gas tanks; Doors for vehicle gas tanks; Fuel pump senders for vehicle gas tanks; Fuel tanks for vehicles; Garnish for automobiles; Gears for land vehicles; Generators for automobiles; Generator Rectifier for automobiles; Generator rotors for automobiles; Generator stator for automobiles; Glass mouldings for automobiles; Glove boxes for vehicles; Head linings for automobiles; Headrests for vehicle seats; Hood insulating pads for automobiles; Hood strips for automobiles; Idle speed control apparatus for automobiles; Interior trim for automobiles; Leaf springs for land vehicle suspensions; Levers for automobiles; Lever cables for automobiles; Anti-theft locks for use on automobile steering wheels; Electrical anti-theft installations for vehicles; Mudguards; Over running clutch for automobiles; Body panels for vehicles; Door panels for land vehicles; Parking brakes for automobiles; Pillers for automobiles; Planer carriers for automobiles; Power steering gear seal for automobiles; Transmission mechanisms for land vehicles; Motors for powered windows for land vehicles; Propeller shafts for automobiles; Pulse generators for automobiles; Radiator grills for automobile; Mirrors for use on vehicles; Rearview mirrors; 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Automobile windscreen sunshades; Sun visors for automobiles; Surge air intake tank for automobile engines; Synchronizer rings [parts of land vehicles]; Unfinished window glass for vehicles; Tailboard lifts [parts of land vehicles]; Connecting rods for land vehicles, other than parts of motors and engines; Tires; Torque converters for land vehicles; Tow bars for vehicles; Rubber tracks for automobiles; Transfers for transmissions for land vehicles; Transmissions, for land vehicles; Universal joints for land vehicles; Solenoid valve for automobiles; Brake valve for automobiles; Expansion valve for automobiles; Weather strips for land vehicles; Automobile wheels; Wheel brake cylinders for land vehicles; Wheel covers for land vehicles; Wheel cylinders for land vehicles; Wheel guards for automobiles; Automobile wheel hubs; Cap for automobile wheel hubs; Windows for vehicles; Nozzle for windshield washer; Windshield wiper blades; Motor for windshield wipers; Wiper motor arm for automobiles; Wood grain upholstery for vehicles; Electronic automobile dashboards; Back-up warning alarms for vehicles; Automobile horns; Anti-theft devices for automobiles; Oil screens for automobiles; Gaskets for automobiles, in International Class 12;

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Any inquiry regarding said trademark may be referred to the attorneys for Hyundai Mobis Co., Ltd. as follows:

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OPPORTUNITY: TRADE COMMISSIONER – PACIFIC TRADE INVEST (PTI) AUSTRALIA

The Pacific Islands Forum

The Forum (PIF) is an Employer of Choice in the region, aiming to recruit and employ staff based on merit and organisational needs, and ensures that employment selection upholds its values and commitment to Forum membership, gender balance and building a diverse and inclusive organisation. PIF is committed to achieving gender balance and being fully representative of our member countries. Our workforce is currently over 50% female, and we have representatives from twelve of the eighteen Forum member countries. To achieve greater workforce representation from our member countries we strongly encourage applicants from the following countries to apply: Federated States of Micronesia, French Polynesia, Nauru, Niue, New Caledonia, and Palau

The Opportunity

The Forum invites suitably experienced and qualified individuals from Forum member countries only to apply for the position of Trade Commissioner – PTI Australia. The role is based in Sydney Australia and reports to the Director Programmes & Initiatives under the supervision of the General Manager PTI for the operational and strategic outcomes of the PTI Australia Office. The position holder's accountabilities will be aligned, but not limited to the key responsibilities outlined below:

- Leadership and People Management;
- Services delivery, Liaison and Networking;
- Work Programming and Marketing;
- Administration/Reporting; and
- Financial & Management Support/Advice.

Applicants should have a postgraduate university degree in one of the following fields: Business Studies, Business Administration, Management, or International Marketing and minimum of eight (8) years demonstrated experience of the same at practitioner level. Candidates with trade facilitation and investment promotion experience between Australia and the Pacific will be held in high regard.

Further, candidates with a track record in strategic planning, financial management, marketing, international trade and or investment and practical knowledge and experience in business including enterprise development and facilitation and proven knowledge and understanding of global and regional social and economic conditions, are encouraged to apply.

The Benefits

The position carries a competitive and attractive remuneration benefits package:

- **Starting salary:** AUD101,530 / annum.
- **Cost-of-living allowance:** AUD32,490 / annum.
- **Housing Allowance:** AUD83,400 / annum (capped).
- **Education allowance:** AUD94,347* / annum (*capped amount for three dependent children).
- **Vehicle:** Sydney office vehicle for official and private use (incl. fuel, maintenance and insurance)
- **Insurance:** Health (family cover), Life and Accident cover

Note: Salary and allowances are paid in SDR. Stated amounts are as of 1 May 2024 foreign exchange rate and actual amounts will be based on foreign exchange rates at the time of payment.

How to apply

Interested applicants can find out more information on our website: www.forumsec.org where an information package containing the full responsibilities, selection criteria and remuneration details is available. Candidates must include in either their application or Curriculum Vitae the full contact details of three referees. To be eligible for this position, the applicant must be a national of a Forum member country*. Applicant must be willing to travel periodically via economy class.

Deadline for applications is at 5pm (Fiji time), Friday 2 August 2024.

*Member States of the Pacific Islands Forum: Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

Regional Director of United Nations Development Coordination Office makes introductory visit to the FSM

FSM Information Services

July 19, 2024

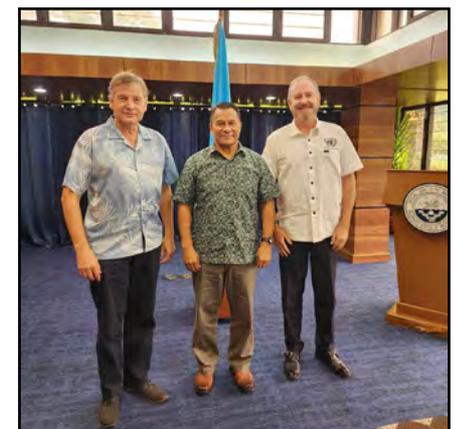
PALIKIR, Pohnpei—On July 16, 2024, the Regional Director for the UN Development Coordination Office for Asia and the Pacific, the Honorable David McLachlan-Karr, met with the Honorable Vice President Aren B. Palik during his introductory visit to the FSM.

This marked the Regional Director's first official visit to the FSM since the establishment of the United Nations Multi-Country Office for the North Pacific. Accompanying the Regional Director was T.H. Jaap Van Hierden, Resident Coordinator for the United Nations Multi-Country Office in the FSM and Ms. Maryann Eperiam, Partnership Officer for the FSM UN-Multi-Country Office.

Vice President Palik welcomed Mr. McLachlan-Karr to the FSM, and expressed his gratitude for the ongoing UN support to the Micronesia region, particularly to the FSM. He also acknowledged the establishment of the UN Multi-Country Office in Pohnpei and reiterated FSM's commitment as the host nation, highlighting progress made on securing the site for the One UN House.

Mr. McLachlan-Karr expressed his appreciation and confirmed the UN's commitment to strengthening its partnership with FSM. He commended FSM's proactive approach in allocating the site for the One UN Micronesia House and encouraged the effective use of UN agencies present in FSM to address the nation's priorities.

Mr. McLachlan-Karr also announced the UN's initiative to engage more youth from diverse backgrounds in the preparation for the Summit of the Future, to ensure young people's participation and perspectives are integrated into the process, which is set to be held on the margins of the next United Nations General Assembly.



U.S. Chief of Naval Operations visits Indo-Pacific for second time, strengthens regional ties

United States Navy

July 26, 2024

FSM—Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. Lisa Franchetti visited Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM); Perth, Australia; and Manila, Philippines, to meet with partner navies, government and military leaders, and attend the 2024 Indian Ocean Defense & Security (IODS) Conference, July 21-26.

The international trip began in Pohnpei, FSM where CNO held an all hands call with Sailors assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 5 and Marines assigned to Combat Logistics Battalion 13, and thanked them for their hard work and commitment to the region.

“Thank you for serving on the Navy-Marine Corps team in a very strategic location and so far from home. The work that you’re doing here is vitally important to our Nation,” said Franchetti. “We’re never going to do anything alone. We are always going to operate with Allies and partners, and each of you are ambassadors and diplomats for the United States. Your presence and your efforts send a message of deterrence to our adversaries and a message of reassurance to our Allies and partners.”

While in Pohnpei CNO visited the Nan Madol cultural heritage site, held meetings with Ambassador Jennifer Johnson, U.S. Ambassador to FSM and Rear Adm. Greg Huffman, commander, Joint Task Force-Micronesia, as well as with FSM Vice President Aren Palik and FSM Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs Lorin Robert.

Franchetti then flew with Johnson and Palik to Chuuk, FSM and met with Hon. Mekioshy William, Lt. Gov. of Chuuk. During these engagements, Franchetti emphasized how the U.S. and FSM’s shared commitment to their longstanding defense and security ties, underpinned by the Compact of Free Association, support freedom, stability, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific.

“It’s an honor to be here at such a historic time in the relationship between the United States and the Federated States of Micronesia,” said Franchetti. “We have a longstanding partnership, and the renewal of the Compact of Free Association provides many opportunities for economic prosperity and security for both our countries. It will help advance our shared vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific.”

Franchetti then traveled to Perth, Australia to visit HMAS Stirling, which will play a role in Australia’s future fleet of conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered submarines as home to Submarine Rotational Force – West, and hold the first-ever trilateral meeting of the AUKUS Chiefs of Navy. Chief of the Royal Australian Navy Vice Adm. Mark Hammond, Royal Navy First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff Adm. Sir Ben Key, and Franchetti communicated their shared commitment to the historic agreement.

“AUKUS is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to bring together the exceptional capabilities of Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States. We will continue to build on our relationship, strengths, and interoperability, while at the same time uplifting the industrial bases of our three countries,” said Franchetti. “We will bring to bear the innovative spirit of our three nations while significantly bolstering our posture in the Indo-Pacific, contributing to security and stability, and maintaining the rules-based international order in this critical region and around the globe.”

The three Heads of Navy also spoke on two panels at the IODS conference where they discussed AUKUS and Security in the Indian Ocean and Naval Cooperation and Security in the Indo-Pacific.

“The Indian Ocean is a critical waterway for the free flow of resources, trade, and commerce all around the globe,” Franchetti said. “It’s important that we work together as Allies and partners to promote the rules-based international order that has supported freedom of navigation - in all oceans - and our collective prosperity for the last three quarters of a century.”

While at the conference, CNO conducted bi-lateral engagements with her counterpart in the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force, Adm. Akira Saito, as well as her counterpart in the Republic of Singapore Navy, Rear Adm. Sean Wat.

Following her engagements in Australia, CNO traveled to Manila, Philippines, where she met with Ambassador MaryKay Carlson and her U.S. Embassy Manila country team as well as Philippine Secretary of National Defense Gilberto Teodoro, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines Gen. Romeo S. Brawner Jr., and Philippine Navy Flag Officer-in-Command Vice Adm. Toribio Adaci Jr. While there Franchetti expressed steadfast U.S. support for the Philippines.

“The U.S. commitment to the Philippines is ironclad and our Maritime Cooperative Activities are a testament to the strength and importance of our relationship,” said Franchetti. “I look forward to building on the success of exercises Balikatan



Defense Visual Information Service photos



and Sama Sama to increase our interoperability and accelerate our capability to support our shared interests in this critical region.”

This was Franchetti’s first trip to FSM, Australia, and the Philippines as Chief of Naval Operations and her second trip to the Indo-Pacific to communicate the strategic importance of this region to the globe.

U.S. Government completes Typhoon Wutip Reconstruction Project, restoring 136 homes in Chuuk

U.S. Embassy to the FSM

July 29, 2024

Chuuk—United States Agency for International Development (USAID), in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Federated States of Micronesia's Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management (FSM-DECEM), held a close-out ceremony in Weno, Chuuk on July 25.

The ceremony was held at the Chuuk State Governor's Auditorium, to celebrate the significant contributions of the Typhoon Wutip Reconstruction Project (WRP) in enhancing the capacity of the FSM Government to prepare for, respond to, and reconstruct, following the February 2019 typhoon. This project aided more than 11,000 people who were impacted by the destruction of a total of 136 homes, 42 public infrastructures, and agricultural crops.

The U.S. Government, through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), provided over \$37 million in funding to USAID to carry out relief and recovery activities in response to the disaster. Over the past 10 years, USAID and FEMA have implemented more than \$91 million for FSM's Typhoon Maysak in 2015, Tropical Storm Jelawat in 2018, and now Typhoon Wutip in 2019.

In her remarks at the closing ceremony on Thursday, U.S. Ambassador to the FSM, Jennifer L. Johnson, explained how funding was provided to IOM as the implementing partner for the U.S. Government's disaster response and reconstruction in the FSM. In a cooperative effort with FSM DECEM, the state governments, and the affected communities, family homes and local infrastructure was rebuilt in rapid fashion, noting that it took a whole of community effort to repair the damage, limit losses, and reduce suffering.

"USAID-Philippines led the reconstruction efforts while USAID's Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance led the relief activities, delivering food baskets and agricultural inputs across the vast affected area with FEMA's funding," she said. "Now that USAID-Pacific Islands has been established in Fiji, they will take the lead on reconstruction for future disasters."

Provisions of the Compact of Free Association for the FSM provide a timely response to the full range of these natural disasters: the agreement creates a special Disaster Assistance Emergency Fund (DAEF), with annual contributions of \$200,000 from both the U.S. and FSM, which can be drawn upon by the FSM for an immediate response to declared disasters which threaten lives and property. Similarly, the FSM would have access to immediate USAID disaster assistance through the U.S. Mission in the FSM.

Ambassador Johnson read out the first few lines of Article 10 of the compact that read, "In order to save lives and to protect property and public health and safety, and to supplement resources in alleviating damage, loss, hardship, or suffering, the Government of the United States shall provide disaster preparedness, relief, and recovery assistance to the Federated States of Micronesia in accordance with this Article." She noted that whether it is a devastating storm, typhoon, tides, rogue waves, or drought, the United States and FSM will continue to work together in times of natural disasters as described within the compact.

IOM trained residents to help with the reconstruction work, which included resilient designs and high-quality materials that could help buildings withstand future disasters. In addition to this, USAID provided materials and vouchers to the community members whose homes were destroyed and whose livelihoods were threatened. Everyone involved worked tirelessly to strengthen disaster preparedness and management capacity and improve readiness to provide humanitarian assistance to the affected communities.

"It's an honor to be here to celebrate the completion of the Typhoon Wutip Reconstruction Project that has involved so many of the people and organizations that are with us today," said Ambassador Johnson. "Many of you went through Typhoon Wutip back in 2019, so I don't have to tell you how strong that storm was, and how it devastated so many communities and families." For this, she added that both the U.S. and FSM are fortunate to have recently renewed the COFA for another 20 years.

Prior to the ceremony, Ambassador Johnson toured the weather stations in Guam, Pohnpei, Yap, and Chuuk to learn how they provide weather alerts during emergency situations. During the tour, she witnessed how the FSM DECEM works with state governments, IOM, USAID, and the local communities to prepare for disasters. She also had the privilege to visit the Chuuk warehouse in Weno that stocked many supplies ready to be deployed when needed. "It's all very impressive, and I commend you all, and your teams, for your great work," she said.

The Ambassador acknowledged all those involved in the Typhoon WRP for their continuous support of the U.S. Government disaster experts in assessing the damage and identifying the most effective ways to respond. "It has often been said that 'there is no limit to what we can accomplish when we work together' - the Typhoon Wutip Reconstruction Program is a great example of this," she concluded.



Joining the ceremony were the Hon. Vice President Aren B. Palik; Hon. Governor Alexander Narruhn and First Lady; Hon. Lieutenant Governor Mekioshy William and his respective cabinet members; Hon. Governor Stevenson Joseph, Pohnpei State; Hon. Governor Tulensu Palik, Kosrae State; Hon. Lieutenant Governor Francis Itimai, Yap State; Hon. Secretary Andrew Yatilman, DECEM; Hon. Secretary Elina Akinaga, FSM Department of Resources and Development (R&D); Assistant Secretary Abigail Kim Lambert; Hon. President Arno Kony and members of the 17th Chuuk State House of Senate; Hon. Speaker Lester Mersai and members of the 17th Chuuk State House of Representatives; Hon. Mayor of Weno Faustino Stephen and respective Mayors of Chuuk State; Justin Fritz, Chuuk State Disaster Coordinating Office; and all Senior Government Officials, Chief of Staff, Directors, and Mayors.