

Pohnpei community gathers for traditional ANZAC Day remembrance and “Gunfire” breakfast



By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

April 25, 2025

Pohnpei—In the early hours of this morning, Australians and New Zealanders, along with ambassadors, and former and current Australian and U.S. service members, gathered for the annual Anzac Day commemoration.

Anzac Day is a day of national

remembrance in Australia and New Zealand, held every year on April 25. It originally marked the anniversary of the Gallipoli landings in 1915, when soldiers of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) fought together during World War I. The campaign was intended to capture the Gallipoli Peninsula to open a sea route to the Russian Empire but quickly became a drawn-out and costly stalemate, with heavy casualties on both sides.

Although the Gallipoli campaign ultimately failed, the bravery, endurance, and sacrifice of the ANZAC troops left a lasting legacy, shaping national identity and pride in both countries. Over time, Anzac Day has evolved to commemorate all Australian and New Zealand servicemen and servicewomen who have served and died in military operations.

Commemorations typically begin with dawn services, reflecting the time of the original Gallipoli landing, followed by memorial ceremonies, veteran marches, wreath-laying, and moments of silence. The day is not only a tribute to past generations but also an opportunity for younger Australians and New Zealanders to reflect on themes of service, sacrifice, and national unity.

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Compact Fund control sparks legal battle between Pohnpei and FSM Leaders

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

April 26, 2025

Pohnpei, FSM—Speaker Marvin Yamaguchi and the 11th Pohnpei State Legislature have filed suit against FSM Congress Speaker Esmond Moses, President Wesley Simina, and the National Government of the FSM.

The 167-page civil action (CA 2025-010) contains eight separate causes of action centered on a Congressional decision in September 2022 that, despite the President’s veto, resulted in the enactment of Public Law 23-30. That law increased the FSM National Government’s share of Compact funds from 0 percent to 10 percent. It also centralized control of

Compact infrastructure funds under the FSM Department of Transportation, Communications, and Infrastructure (DTC&I), which the civil action claims stripped the States of their autonomy.

The lawsuit also challenges Public Law 23-121, enacted in September 2024, which reduced Pohnpei State’s FY2025 Compact Budget Request from \$9,058,000 to

\$7,779,264 without the State’s consent. The suit claims that Pohnpei was forced to divert funds from its General Fund, impacting essential services such as healthcare and education.

CA 2025-010 asks the FSM Supreme Court to declare Public Laws 23-30 and 23-

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Australia Awards alumni celebrated in Pohnpei



Australian Embassy to the FSM

April 16, 2025

Pohnpei—The Australian Embassy hosted a special celebration in Pohnpei to honor alumni of the Australia Awards, bringing together graduates from across the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) for an evening of reconnection, reflection, and inspiration.

The event showcased the strength and vibrancy of the Australia Awards alumni community, highlighting personal stories of achievement and the lasting bonds formed through the program.

In her remarks, Australian Ambassador to the FSM, Jo Grant-



Curnow, emphasized the broader impact of the Australia Awards beyond academic achievements. "Australia Awards build invaluable friendships between people and trust between nations," she said.

Keynote speaker Suzanne Gallen, an alumna of the Australia Awards Pacific Scholarship, shared her own experiences studying at The University of the South Pacific. "My experience



at The University of the South Pacific should be the way university life is experienced. No rejections. No struggles. No drama. I was actually able to study, rather than work," Gallen reflected.

The evening served as a reminder of Australia's enduring commitment to supporting education and fostering mutual collaboration and lifelong partnerships throughout the FSM.

Organizers expressed their deep appreciation to all who attended, noting that every graduate—whether recent or from decades past—continues to be a valued part of the Australia Awards story.

The celebration ended on a high note, with calls for lifelong connections and continued success for all alumni.



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Bill Jaynes
Managing Editor

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May 14, 2025

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

Monday, May 12, 2025



Governor Joseph swears in new members to the Board of Education and Board of Public Land Trust



The ceremony was attended by family members, friends, and staff, as well as representatives of the Governor's Office.

Both Mrs. Kostka and Mr. Heine delivered brief remarks, expressing heartfelt gratitude to Governor Joseph, the 11th Pohnpei State Legislature, and their families for the trust placed in them. They each pledged to uphold their responsibilities with

integrity and to contribute positively to the boards they now serve.



Pohnpei Public Information

April 23, 2025

Pohnpei—In a ceremony held at the Governor's Conference Room, Governor Stevenson A. Joseph officially administered the oath of office to Mrs. Kathleen V. Kostka and Mr. Marvin Heine, appointing them to serve on two of Pohnpei State's vital boards.

Governor Joseph thanked both individuals for their willingness to serve the people of Pohnpei and extended appreciation to Speaker Marvin T. Yamaguchi and the 11th Pohnpei Legislature for their advice and consent in confirming the appointments. He encouraged the new Board members to work closely with the Directors of the Departments their Boards oversee, to act in accordance with State Law, and to recommend necessary legal amendments that will better serve the public.

Mrs. Kathleen V. Kostka was sworn in as a member of the Board of Education, while Mr. Marvin Heine was sworn in to serve on the Board of Public Land Trust, Board of Trustees.

The full video of the swearing-in ceremony is available courtesy of V6AH at the following link: <https://youtu.be/JWrd1vAMze4?si=YP5n5CfEhghyZk2N>



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...PNI VS FSM

Continued from front page

121 unconstitutional and to reinstate the distribution formula agreed to and signed by all parties at the Chief Executives' Council in Yap in 2023. It also seeks reimbursement to Pohnpei State for funds unlawfully withheld and consequential damages caused by the resulting budget shortfalls. Finally, it requests that the Court award attorney's fees and litigation costs.

As its first cause of action, the Pohnpei Legislature claims that the FSM Congress violated Sections 303(4) and 303(5) of Public Law 18-57 when it unilaterally modified the distribution of the States' Compact funds to the National Government without the consent of the States.

Secondly, the plaintiffs allege violations of Title 55, Section 306—by Congress, for changing Pohnpei's Compact budget request in 2024, and by the President, for "unilaterally" approving the modified budget. They argue that Pohnpei was not consulted prior to the reductions, and that this lack of consultation violated FSM law.

Thirdly, they argue that the same provision was violated when FSM DTC&I was assigned to manage all Compact-related infrastructure projects, resulting in a "governmental taking" of State-managed funds and administrative authority.

They further contend that Congress's passage of PL 23-30 violated the Yap agreement—a document signed by the FSM Congress Speaker, President Simina, each State's Speaker, and the State Governors. The agreement states,

in part, that "...no modification shall be made to the Distribution Formula unless considered and agreed to by the Leaders." They argue that "the breach not only undermined the fiscal expectations and legal rights of the States, but also betrayed the spirit of cooperation and mutual respect that underpinned the resolution and guided the States' participation in the Compact budgeting process."

The plaintiffs also claim that the actions of Congress and the President violated their right to due process guaranteed under the FSM Constitution. They argue that Pohnpei State was deprived of its property interest in Compact funds without notice or an opportunity to be heard.

As the sixth cause of action, the plaintiffs argue that the FSM Government's actions violate Article VIII, Section 1 of the FSM Constitution, which provides that "a power not expressly delegated to the national government or prohibited to the States is a State power." They contend that the authority to manage and determine how a State's share of Compact funds is allocated and implemented has never been expressly delegated to the National Government under the Constitution or any valid statute.

The plaintiffs further argue that the actions violated Article XIII, Section 3 of the FSM Constitution, which states: "It is the solemn obligation of the national and state governments to uphold the provisions of the Constitution and to advance the principles of unity upon which this Constitution is founded." They claim that the FSM breached this constitutional obligation by unilaterally decreasing Pohnpei's share of Compact revenues.

The final cause of action seeks declaratory relief from the FSM Supreme Court, asking it to order the FSM Congress to restore Pohnpei's share of Compact funds as agreed in the Yap agreement.

As of press time, the defendants had not yet filed a response to Pohnpei's civil action.

FSM PetroCorp/Vital Energy Board of Directors pays courtesy visit to Governor Stevenson A. Joseph

Pohnpei Public Information

April 24, 2025

Pohnpei—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph recently welcomed members of the Board of Directors of FSM PetroCorp/Vital Energy to the Governor's Office during an official courtesy call. The delegation was led by Chairman Faustino Yangmong, joined by Vice Chairman Redley Killion, Directors Cindy Mori, Chris Christian, Maria Laaw, Churchill Edward and Joseph Saimon, Executive Assistant to the Board and CEO.



The purpose of the visit was to strengthen communication and collaboration between FSM PetroCorp/Vital Energy and the Pohnpei State Government. Discussions centered on Vital's current operations, future plans to enhance energy security, infrastructure investments, and the ongoing transformation of Vital into a more resilient and future-focused energy provider.

Governor Joseph expressed his appreciation for the visit and emphasized the importance of sustained partnership between state and national institutions. He acknowledged the crucial role FSM PetroCorp plays in ensuring fuel accessibility across the islands and expressed optimism that Vital would continue to support and assist Pohnpei State in addressing its energy needs and development goals.

The meeting concluded with a mutual understanding of the need for continued collaboration, transparency, and shared vision in advancing the energy security and economic development of the Federated States of Micronesia, with Pohnpei playing a central role.

...ANZAC

Continued from front page

Today, Anzac Day holds deep cultural significance and is one of the most important national occasions in both countries. This year's commemoration marked the 110th anniversary of the campaign at Gallipoli, during which 8,700 Australians and 2,700 New Zealanders died.

Chief Petty Officer Michael Cameron served as the master of ceremonies for this morning's somber commemoration.

FSM Commander Steward Peter gave the prayer of remembrance. New Zealander and newly arrived Pohnpei resident John Hughes read the commemorative poem In Flanders Fields.

Ambassador Jenny Grant gave the official address, reminding those in attendance of the significance of Anzac Day—not as a celebration of war, but as a commemoration of the sacrifices made by all troops of the united forces during World War I.

Lt. Commander Paul Norton, Royal Australian Navy Maritime Security

Adviser to the FSM, delivered a moving commemorative address.

Wreaths were laid by representatives of the Australian Government, the people of New Zealand, the U.S. Veterans of Pohnpei Association, the people of the FSM, the Royal Australian Navy, and on behalf of the people of Australia.

The commemoration ended with the playing of the "Last Post," the Australian bugle call that is used in the same way "Taps" is used in the U.S. The crowd observed one minute of silence, followed by the raising of the national flags. Finally, the Australian and New

Zealand anthems were played.

As is traditional, the commemoration continued with a gunfire breakfast. The gunfire breakfast is often served after the dawn service on Anzac Day, symbolizing the simple meal that soldiers would have had before going into battle. The breakfast typically includes bacon, eggs, sausages, beans, and bread, and sometimes a drink of coffee or tea laced with rum—the "gunfire"—which soldiers would have been given to steady their nerves before combat. This morning's meal was no exception and included rum for those interested.

Mailo and Enlet eye FSM Supreme Court after Chuuk appeal dismissal

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

April 29, 2025

Chuuk—On April 15, 2025, a Chuuk State Supreme Court Appellate panel granted the motion of Narruhn and William to dismiss the appeal filed by Mailo and Enlet, legally clearing the way for the inauguration of Narruhn and William as Governor and Lt. Governor moments later. That decision was announced verbally. On April 21, the panel memorialized their legal opinion in writing.

The Kaselehlie Press incorrectly published in our last article on the election in Chuuk that the Chuuk State Supreme Court Appellate Panel was the court of last resort for Mailo and Enlet. It is not. According to their attorney, they have 42 days from the date of the release of the panel’s written opinion to file an appeal with the FSM Supreme Court, and his clients have directed him to do so.

The panel’s opinion was that Mailo and Enlet filed their election complaint with the incorrect body, that they had not done so on time, and that they had not verified the complaint as required. They pointed out that good arguments were made by attorneys on both sides of the issue regarding which version of the Election Commission had been legally authorized to conduct the election—the “holdover members” of the Commission or the members appointed by the Governor but rejected by the Chuuk Senate. It did not issue any opinion on that matter. However, whether legally appropriate or not, the “new” commission was the body that actually conducted the election. The panel ruled that any complaint regarding the conduct of the March 4 election should have been filed with the version of the commission that actually conducted the election. Mailo and Enlet filed their election complaint with the “holdover” commission.

The matter of which version of the Election Commission is or was legally authorized to conduct the election is still before the Supreme Court but is currently held in abeyance. Any appeal filed at the FSM Supreme Court would not deal with that issue.

The opinion said that the usual practice during elections is that the body

canvassing the election returns declares and makes known to the public the election results before those results are certified and the certifications are served on the candidates. “Here, through the unconfirmed Election Commission’s inexperience, or incompetence, or for some other reason, the public declaration was not made before the certification and service of the certification,” the opinion said. “In the absence of a declaration making the results known to the public, the triggering mechanism for the five-day period to file a statement of contest, an election complaint, has to be when the candidates were officially notified by service of the certified results on them,” it said. It was six days before Mailo and Enlet filed their complaint, and it was filed with the wrong body.

“Since we granted the first motion to dismiss Civil Appeal No. 004-2025, we did not need to address the second motion, although the absence of due process was disturbing,” the opinion said.

The appellate panel’s opinion did not deal with any of the allegations made by either side regarding election wrongdoing. “As you can see, purely legal disputes,” wrote Narruhn and William’s attorney in an email. “Allegations of fraud never were tried because Mailo and Enlet never properly invoked jurisdiction to adjudicate those allegations. By the way, both sides have allegations of fraud that will never see trial.”

On April 21, Chuuk Senator Perpetua Konman sent a letter to FSM Secretary for Foreign Affairs Lorin Robert urging him to engage in immediate dialogue with the Chuuk State Government “to halt all undemocratic and illegal practices.” She asked him to engage with neutral international partners to support an independent review of the court’s actions and election conduct. She asked that “cooperation from development partners be conditioned upon the State’s return to democratic norms, judicial integrity, and the protection of civil and political rights.”

Her letter was copied to each of the resident embassies in the FSM, the United Nations permanent representative, and the Pacific Islands Forum. It was also widely circulated on social media.

Though Secretary Robert’s nine-page response on April 21 was not as widely

circulated on social media, it did appear there. On April 24, the FSM Office of the President posted a short summary of Robert’s letter on its official Facebook page, where it can still be found. It pointed out that her allegations “have already undergone judicial review.” “These rulings, whether some may like them or not, are legally binding and deserve the respect of all citizens,” the summary quoted Robert as having written.

The summary said that the accusation that the Chuuk State Supreme Court ruling is “illegitimate” undermines the stability of the FSM’s constitutional framework.

“Of particular concern,” the summary said, “was the dissemination of the Senator’s letter to foreign governments and on public platforms. ‘Matters of internal state governance—especially those actively being addressed through

our proper legal processes—should not be subjected to one-sided political narratives in foreign policy forums,” the Secretary stated. ““Doing so not only undermines national cohesion but risks inviting external scrutiny based on incomplete or misrepresented information,”” the summary quoted Robert as having written.

“The Secretary concluded his response by underscoring the Department’s commitment to ‘transparency, democratic values, and the rule of law,’ and encouraged all national leaders to uphold these principles through established constitutional processes and with respect for institutional integrity,” the Presidential summary concluded.

At press time, Mailo and Enlet had not yet filed an appeal at the FSM Supreme Court.

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“We come from greatness”: Heroes of Micronesia honors the heart of the islands



this afternoon. The public premiere was held on Friday evening at the Kolonia China Friendship Gym.

Produced by Nihi Indigenous Media, the artistic animation series of short films documents "leaders from across Micronesia who have led with love and courage to protect our islands and region for future generations," according to the invitation to the screening. "Featuring regional leaders like Tony de Brum, Hilda Heine, Mau Piailug, Willy Kostka, Gabriela Ngirmang, Joakim Peter, Tommy Remengesau, Julian Aguon, Kathy Jetnil-Kijner, and others, the series is a reminder that we don't have to look beyond our ocean for greatness."



By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

April 24, 2025

Pohnpei—"Dear children of Micronesia," the sonorous voice says. "You are the descendants of protectors, knowledge keepers, and dreamers. Let me tell you of our heroes."

So begins the new video Heroes of Micronesia, which premiered in Pohnpei at a special screening for Pohnpei's Governor and a few invited guests

"Heroes of Micronesia was created because we wanted to remind each generation that we come from greatness," said Siobhan Rumerong-McManus of Guam, one of the creators of the video series, when introducing the three short videos at the screening.

"And that 'micro,' right? Even though that word was sometimes used to call us small or small islands, there's nothing small about our islands. We actually come from a very vast ocean, a vast culture, a vast history, and Micronesia is mighty. Heroes of Micronesia specifically celebrates 12 elders and leaders from our region, celebrates the legacy of their lives, celebrates the struggles they had to overcome, but more specifically, it unites our whole region through the beauty and the strength of our homelands — what it means to really love, nurture, and protect our community," she said.

Nihi Indigenous Media is a non-profit organization. "We exist to really create stories and uplift stories, not just in the Marianas, but in Micronesia as a region. And we really want to uplift stories that highlight the love for our homeland, our ocean, and our people — and how that love really inspires the next generation to be protectors. We believe that every islander, at the end of the day, is a protector of their culture, their home, and their future," Siobhan said.

I have to admit to choking back both happy and sad tears as I watched the series. Though the presentations of each subject were quite short, I was struck not only by how much Micronesian leaders have accomplished for these beautiful islands and their people, but also by how important it is for Micronesian children to know about those accomplishments and have their own local heroes.

I thought of my own personal experiences with Joakim "Jo Jo" Peter. My first was sitting in his office at the Chuuk Campus of the College of Micronesia-FSM as he translated a recorded transcript of a debate between Gillian Doone and current FSM President Wesley Simina. Then there were many other times together, sitting at "his table" at a restaurant in Hawaii where he both "held court" and did research. Other leaders featured in the series have passed on, but Jo Jo's passing was the toughest for me.

I learned more about the accomplishments of other Micronesian leaders I had known but whose achievements I had not been fully aware of.

Siobhan said that their production of the Heroes of Micronesia series, as it currently exists, has certainly left out many notable Micronesian heroes and invited suggestions for other heroes to be included in future series.



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College Unveils First Impact Report on Cooperative Research and Extension Programs

Palikir, Pohnpei | April 23, 2025 — The College of Micronesia-FSM (COM-FSM) marked a major milestone in its commitment to transparency, accountability, and community engagement with the release of its first-ever Cooperative Research and Extension (CRE) [Impact Report](#). The announcement was made during the COM Land Grant Board of Regents (BOR) meeting, held at the President’s Board Room on Tuesday, 22 April at the National Campus.

The COM-FSM President, Dr. Theresa Koroivulaono, officially unveiled the landmark report and presented the inaugural copy to the COM Board Chairman, Dr. Emais Roberts (Palau). Vice President for Innovation and Sustainability, Steven Young-Uhk, distributed additional copies to Vice Chairperson Suzanne Gallen (FSM) and Secretary/Treasurer, Honorable Minister Gerald Zackios (RMI), signifying the report’s collective endorsement and importance at the highest institutional

level.

The BOR meeting brought together a distinguished group of participants, including presidents and vice presidents overseeing CRE programs at the three partner colleges in the Land Grant system, the College of the Marshall Islands, Palau Community College, and the College of Micronesia-FSM, alongside COM Land Grant staff and senior leadership.

The newly released report showcases the real-world impacts of federally funded programs implemented through COM-FSM’s CRE Department. These initiatives, supported by U.S. Land Grant funding and other international donors, focus on enhancing food security, climate resilience, sustainable agriculture, youth development, and community empowerment across the FSM.

“This report is more than a collection of data—it is a testament to the transformation taking place in our communities,” said Vice President



Steven Young-Uhk. “It reflects the hard work of our team and the meaningful changes brought about through applied research, local partnerships, and outreach efforts across our islands.”

Impact reports such as this play a crucial role in demonstrating the value of public investment in higher education and community development. They provide tangible evidence of returns on investment for taxpayers, policymakers, and development partners, and support

continued funding by highlighting measurable outcomes and success stories.

With this first edition, COM-FSM sets a new standard for evidence-based reporting and institutional accountability. The CRE Impact Report is expected to serve as a strategic communication tool and a platform for future planning, helping stakeholders understand the scope, scale, and significance of ongoing extension and research activities.

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Pohnpei Soccer Association Kids Club hosts spirited two-day tournament

Pohnpei Soccer Association

April 21, 2025

POHNPEI—Under clear blue skies and the cheerful buzz of community support, the Pohnpei Soccer Association Kids Club (PSAKC) hosted a spirited two-day youth soccer tournament on Wednesday, April 16, and Thursday, April 17. The event brought together players from three local elementary schools—Sekere, SDA, and PCS—alongside a team representing PSAKC players, Real Kolonia. Meanwhile, 17 other PSAKC players were competing in a separate tournament in Kosrae. Despite the stakes on the field, the event was more than a contest—it was a celebration of sportsmanship, unity, and youthful energy. Spectators witnessed a blend of competitive matches and moments of camaraderie, where players helped each other up after falls, laughed

together, and played with genuine joy.

Close Matches, Big Moments

The opening match set the tone for the tournament as PCS narrowly defeated Real Kolonia 3–2, sealing their win with a dramatic last-minute penalty. The excitement was matched by drama, as SDA’s Stephanie received a second yellow card for a hand foul and was sent off, leaving her team one player short. PCS continued their winning streak with a 2–1 victory over SDA, despite signs of fatigue. Their coach responded with timely substitutions that kept the momentum alive. Sekere and Real Kolonia drew 1–1 in a tightly contested match, while PCS edged past Sekere 1–0 to solidify their dominance. SDA, despite showing resilience, struggled in their final two matches. In a memorable moment, SDA’s Geonna Bing passed up

an open goal opportunity against Real Kolonia, choosing instead to share the ball with teammates—a touching display of team spirit.

Final Scores and Standings

PCS	Real Kolonia	3	2
PCS	SDA	2	1
Sekere	Real Kolonia	1	1
PCS	Sekere	1	0
SDA	Real Kolonia	2	4
SDA	Sekere	3	7

Team	Points	Goals	Goal Diff
1. PCS	9	6 / 3	3
2. Sekere	4	8 / 4	4
3. Real Kolonia	4	7 / 6	1
4. SDA	0	6 / 13	-7

PCS emerged undefeated, with Sekere and Real Kolonia tied in points but separated by goal difference. SDA, while winless, captured hearts with their spirit and teamwork.

Community at the Heart of the Tournament

The tournament’s success was the result of a strong community effort. PSAKC extended heartfelt thanks to school principals Mr. Loriano Martin (Sekere), Mrs. Yolanda Yamada Nanpei (PCS), and Mr. Franky Edward (SDA) for their support. Sponsors including Ace Hardware and former governor Marcelo Peterson also played key roles. Special recognition goes to Mr. Ramsie Joab of the Pohnpei Sport Commission; the dedicated coaches—Mrs. Valentina Beznis Kilafaken (PCS), Mr. Pearl Mwongela (SDA), and Mrs. Angelo Silbanuz (Real Kolonia); and volunteers such as Mrs. Crystal Jackson-Joab and Mrs. Bella Romanu, whose home-cooked meals kept participants energized. Emergency services were also on standby, led by Captain Lainos. For those who missed the action, a video of the thrilling PCS vs Real Kolonia match is available on the V6AH YouTube channel. As the final whistle blew on Thursday, it was clear: in Pohnpei, youth soccer is alive and thriving—not just in goals scored, but in friendships made and community bonds strengthened.

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Application Deadline
May 16, 2025



PCS



Real Kolonia



SDA



Sekere

2025 Inaugural Soccer tour to the State of the Sleeping Lady

By *Adi Asenaca B. Tamanitoakula*

Fifteen kids from Pohnpei Soccer Association Kids Club (PSAKC) aged 10—13 years were selected to represent Pohnpei State in the Kosrae Pohnpei Friendship Cup held in Kosrae from the 15th to the 17th of April. It was also the first time in history that a kid's state soccer team traveled to another island for a competition.

The Coach for the Pohnpeian team Ms. Liz Terk stated "there were several objectives for this pioneer tournament and that was to bring youths from Kosrae and Pohnpei together, to give a chance for the Pohnpei kids to build their skills in competition and inspire Kosrae to develop their youth soccer program".

The Pohnpeian team had a successful outing and won all their games against the resilient Kosraean side, from the Kosrae Soccer Association Kids Club (KSAKC). In fact, towards the end of the week, the score-lines became closer with the Kosreans showing more grit and determination.

Mr Chris Diau, the Coach of the Kosraean team, voiced several challenges in terms of their preparation as they only had few months of preparation but was forever grateful to the Pohnpeians for inspiring his players to play above his expectations. The kids were in high spirits even though they had lost their games, and are now looking in having a rematch in Pohnpei soon, an event at which the PSAKC has already invited the KSAKC and that will be held in accordingly to school time.

Ms. Terk also echoed his sentiments and hopes for the future of soccer in Pohnpei and Kosrae. "A lot of our kids are aging out of the under 13 so we are thinking of a new group 13-16years and are also planning to work with the sports office to hold a Liberation day tournament for U14. We are looking for other islands for our U14 team to compete with; ultimately, I think we'd hope to have a middle school and a high school league in Pohnpei."

On Thursday morning, Team Pohnpei visited Tafunsak Elementary School

for a soccer demonstration. The players demonstrated the fundamental principles of soccer as well as showcasing the skills they had honed over the past years. The children were then split according to age and several friendly matches were held with the kids from Pohnpei teaching the Kosrae kids the rules of the game

The Pohnpei team paid an official courtesy visit to the Governor of Kosrae's Office. In addition, they also toured the famous Lelu ruins, the bird cave, the Kosraean Clam farm and the Blue hole. This tour, hospitality, and the overall coordination were organized by Mr Osamu Abraham, the Kosraean Sports Coordinator, to which we are extremely grateful for the unique sense of welcoming we all experienced. Feeling at home abroad was simply the best thing these children could have.

A big Kulo as well to the Kosraean Community, Kosraean Sports Organization and the management of Island Hopper for hosting us during our short stay, we thoroughly enjoyed the unique taste of your Kosraean pie,

the specially prepared food, and the birthday party for one of our young players.

Finally, the Pohnpeian soccer delegation would like to acknowledge the support of the Pohnpei State Legislation who funded the trip as well as several others who contributed – Congresswoman Abello, Speaker Moses, Mesenieng Credit Union, Pohnpei Sports Office, the College of Micronesia and CTEC in Kolonia, the Fijian Community of Kosrae, Dominic's Pizza, the Island Hopper Hotel, together with the parents, coaches, and all others who have unselfishly donated, and organized fundraising drives. Without you all this Tournament and trip would not have been possible, even less the success it was.

At the end of the day both Pohnpei and Kosrae benefited enormously through this new initiative in terms of sports development in the region, and hopefully the other States will come on board in the not-too-distant future.



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Vice President Palik represents the FSM at World Expo 2025 opening, concludes official visit to Japan



FSM Information Services

April 22, 2025

OSAKA, Japan—The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) is pleased to announce the successful completion of the first official working visit to Japan by the Vice President, the Honorable Aren B. Palik. The visit, which took place from April 8 to 14, 2025, marked an important step in strengthening the ties of friendship and cooperation between the FSM and Japan — a bond celebrated by both nations as *Kizuna*, symbolizing an unbreakable connection built on trust, shared values, and mutual respect.

A key highlight of the visit was the Vice President's bilateral meeting with the Chief Cabinet Secretary of Japan, the Honorable Yoshimasa Hayashi, held on April 10, 2025, at the Prime Minister's Office in Tokyo. During this important exchange, both sides reaffirmed their commitment to deepening the FSM–Japan *Kizuna*, acknowledging its role as the cornerstone of the two nations' longstanding and evolving relationship. The discussions addressed a range of shared priorities, including maritime security, infrastructure development, digital connectivity, climate change resilience, and economic growth through tourism and fisheries.

As part of his official itinerary, Vice President Palik also attended the

opening ceremony of Expo 2025 Osaka–Kansai on April 12, 2025, held at the Shining Hat Hall on Yumeshima Island. The high-profile event was graced by the presence of Their Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, as well as Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba and numerous international dignitaries.

At the Expo venue, the FSM is proudly represented with a national booth that showcases the rich culture, heritage, and natural beauty of our islands. Spearheaded by the FSM Department of Resources & Development (R&D) in close collaboration with the State Governments, the booth highlights traditional crafts and visual displays that celebrate the unique identity of the Micronesian people from Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei and Kosrae. It stands as a symbol of unity and pride, inviting the world to experience the spirit of the FSM.

Vice President Palik also took the opportunity to congratulate Japan on the successful preparations for Expo 2025 Osaka–Kansai and confirmed FSM's enthusiastic participation. He highlighted the importance of the FSM National Day celebration, scheduled for July 31, 2025, where the President of the FSM, His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, is expected to lead an FSM delegation.

Beyond the bilateral meetings, the Vice President's visit featured several key engagements, including visits to the National Museum of Ethnology in Osaka, academic dialogues at Osaka Gakuin University, including the President of the Osaka Gakuin University, who is also the FSM Honorary Consul-General in the Osaka region.



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NOTICE OF INVITATION TO QUOTE



Request for Quotations on Office Equipment and Furniture

The National Oceanic Resource Management Authority (NORMA) of the Federated States of Micronesia has received financing from the World Bank and intends to apply part of its proceeds towards the cost of Office Equipment and Furniture.

FSM NORMA is now seeking offers from suitably qualified and experienced vendors/suppliers to provide these Office Equipment and Furniture for use by its fisheries staff.

Bidding will be conducted through the Shopping procedures specified in the World Bank Guidelines for Procurement of Goods in Fragile and Small States in the Pacific, and is open to all FSM National bidders.

Interested eligible FSM National vendors/suppliers can obtain further information from and must also request an Invitation To Quote (ITQ) form preferably by May 9th, 2025 (Pohnpei Local Time) from the following email address.

Mr. OKean Ehmes
PROPER, Project Manager
okean.ehmes@norma.fm
copy email to valerie.hawley@norma.fm

Quotations in English in response to ITQs must be delivered to the address below at or before 5:00 p.m. May 25th, 2025 (Pohnpei Local Time). Late quotations will be rejected.

Mrs. Limanman Helgenberger
Acting Executive Director
FSM National Oceanic Resource Management Authority
2nd Floor of Ambrose Building
Attn: PROPER
FSM National Government
P.O. Box PS-122
Kolonia, Pohnpei 96941
Federated States of Micronesia
Telephone: (691) 320-2700/5181
E-mail address: okean.ehmes@norma.fm and copy to valerie.hawley@norma.fm

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (INDIVIDUAL CONSULTING SERVICES) (FSM Nationals Only)

Country: Federated States of Micronesia
Project: Pacific Islands Regional Oceanscape Program – Economic Resilience (PROPER)
Grant No.: IDA-E371-FM
Assignment Title: PROPER Project Assistant
Reference No.: FM-NORMA-487969-CS-INDV

The National Government of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Pacific Island Oceanscape Program – Second Phase for Economic Resilience and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The consulting services (“the Services”) include playing a vital role in ensuring the smooth execution of PROPER Project activities for an initial one (1) year period commencing approximately in May 2025.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment may be downloaded from DOFA website at dofa.gov.fm or at the NORMA website at norma.fm. The FSM National Oceanic Resource Management Authority (NORMA) now invites eligible individuals (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services.

The criteria for selecting the Consultant are:

- Required experience and educational background:
• Associate’s degree from a recognized institution in Accounting, Business Administration or other relevant degree.
• Minimum of three (3) year relevant experience.
• Experience working in a team environment.
• Fluency in written and spoken English.
• Competency in the use of computer applications, especially MS Office and Excel.
Additional Desirable Requirements:
• Demonstrated ability to work under pressure and pay attention to detail.
• Ability to learn quickly.
• Organized and detail-oriented person.
• Good communication skills.
• Experience in procurement, project accounting and/or administration using IT tools.

The attention of interested Consultants (including firms) is drawn to paragraph 3.14, 3.16 and 3.17 of the World Bank’s Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers dated September 2023 (“the Regulations”), setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours 0800 to 1700 hours Pohnpei local time.

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by e-mail) by May 05, 2025 or until a candidate is identified.

FSM National Oceanic Resource Management Authority
Attn: Mr. OKean Ehmes, PROPER Project Manager
PO Box PS 122
Pohnpei, FM 96941
Federated States of Micronesia
Telephone: (691) 320-2700/5181
E-mail: okean.ehmes@norma.fm and copy to Valerie.hawley@norma.fm

Sunny skies, tough bites: Highlights from the WCPFC and CFC Fishing Tournament

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

April 26, 2025

Pohnpei—Seventeen boat captains registered for the Pohnpei Fishing Club (PFC) tournament that took place today. Sponsored by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) and Caroline Fishing Corporation (CFC), the tournament boasted \$2,800 in cash prizes for winning anglers.

It was also a marlin and tuna jackpot tournament. The record for marlin

caught during a PFC tournament stands at 450 pounds. For tuna, the record is 140 pounds. No one collected the long-growing jackpot for either fish today.

It was a beautiful day for fishing, though fish didn't seem to be going after the trolled baits. Still, Ryan Hawley landed the most outstanding fish of the day—a 79.4-pound yellowfin tuna—to win the top prize for biggest fish, earning \$700.

Kevin Sehpin landed a nice 24.2-pound dogtooth tuna for the second-biggest fish, winning a cash award of \$500. He also landed a beautiful 23.8-pound

giant trevally to take the third-biggest fish prize of \$400. Not a bad day of fishing for Kevin Sehpin.

Brandon Reed caught the fourth-biggest fish with his 18.2-pound barracuda, earning him \$300.

Prizes were also awarded for the biggest fish within five species that did not win a prize in the biggest fish category. Each prize amount was \$150. No one caught a mahi mahi or wahoo during this tournament. Astoundingly, it was a yellowfin tuna of only 4.4 pounds that won Detrickson Anson

the top prize for that species. Yonne Isaac had the biggest skipjack tuna at 11 pounds, while Dane Nighswander's 15.8-pound barracuda won him the top prize for that category.

The top lady angler was Lilon Gilmete, whose 14.2-pound dogtooth tuna earned her the top prize of \$100.

The WCPFC and CFC tournament had been postponed to today due to the potential for bad weather on the originally scheduled date. Watch for announcements about the next tournament.



Pohnpei Public Library staff inspire students at Salapwuk Elementary School

Friend of the Pohnpei Public Library

April 23, 2025

Pohnpei—On April 23rd at 11:00 AM, a dedicated team from the Pohnpei Public Library brought books, inspiration, and a special guest to Salapwuk Elementary School in a heartfelt outreach effort. The team included Assistant Librarian Emyleen P. Albert, Library Technician Erika Billen, and Andrew Trigg, an Australian volunteer currently working with the library. Together, they met with 52 enthusiastic students from grades 1 through 8, bringing the joy of reading and stories of success beyond the classroom.

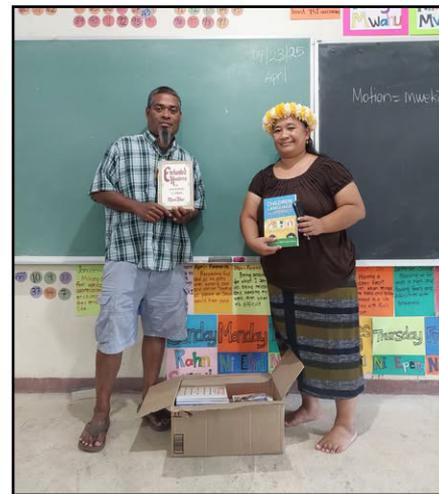
The visit was highlighted by the presence of Nixon Alten, a former student of Salapwuk Elementary who is now a practicing lawyer and public defender for Pohnpei State. His return to his alma mater as a guest speaker was both a proud moment and a powerful message for the students: that with determination and education, they too can achieve their dreams.

Alten shared his journey from the classrooms of Salapwuk to the courtrooms of Pohnpei, offering words of encouragement and emphasizing the

importance of education, perseverance, and community support. His story resonated deeply with the students and faculty, sparking meaningful conversations and hopeful smiles.

The outreach visit is part of the Pohnpei Public Library’s ongoing commitment to community engagement and youth development. By connecting students with role models and reinforcing the value of learning, the library continues to be a vital resource not just in Kolonia, but across the island.

The Salapwuk Elementary School Principal Dosiwo Damiano expressed heartfelt gratitude for the visit, noting the excitement it brought to the students and the inspiration they received from both the library team and Mr. Alten. The Pohnpei Public Library looks forward to continuing its outreach efforts and building stronger ties with schools throughout the state. This serves as one of the strongest evidence of the importance of the kind of assistance we are able to provide to the children of Pohnpei with the help from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.



U.S. provides legal training to strengthen FSM’s security forces

U.S. Embassy to the FSM

April 25, 2025

U.S. Ambassador Jennifer Johnson addressed and presented award certificates to an esteemed group of leaders and participants of the Defense Institute of Internal Legal Studies (DIILS) training program on April 24, 2025, in Palikir. The training had participants from nearly a dozen entities and ran from April 21-24.

DIILS is a lead U.S. Department of Defense Security Cooperation resource for global legal engagement with partner nations’ security sector institutions and personnel. Its broad mission is to advance U.S. national security and foreign policy interests by building the capacity of foreign security forces like the FSM’s to respond to shared security challenges in a responsible and legally compliant manner.

Conducted by a group of U.S. Army national security experts in an effort to enhance FSM’s legal expertise, the training covered a range of topics crucial to the legal aspects of detainee operations, law of armed conflict, international humanitarian law, and human rights to name a few. Participants completed the week-long on-site training, and they represented the following departments: FSM Department of Justice, Division of Cybersecurity & Intelligence, Division of Anti-Human Trafficking, Department of Health and Social Affairs, SPC, Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Resources & Development, Department of Environment, Climate Change & Emergency Management, Department of Education, and the Office of the President.

Ambassador Johnson along with Secretary of FSM Department of

Justice Leonito Bacalando Jr. spoke and personally congratulated the participants and presented award certificates. This reaffirms the commitment of the United States Government to support current and future FSM leaders to continue to

improve their skills and serve their country in their respective fields.

Through security and maritime defense support, the U.S. remains committed to strengthening people-to-people ties and fostering mutual understanding.



Governor Stevenson A. Joseph delivers remarks at FSM System Transformation Grants launch

Pohnpei Governor Hails “A Bold Step Forward” for Indigenous Learning Across the Nation

Pohnpei Public information

April 16, 2025

Pohnpei—In a landmark event held this week to officially launch the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) System Transformation Grants, Governor Stevenson A. Joseph delivered inspiring remarks that emphasized the importance of embedding indigenous knowledge and cultural identity into the nation’s formal education system.

Speaking before national dignitaries, educators, traditional leaders, and community representatives, Governor Joseph expressed deep gratitude for the opportunity to be part of what he described as a pivotal moment for the future of learning in the FSM.

“This morning, we celebrate more than just the awarding of a grant. We celebrate a bold step forward — a step that acknowledges the deep value of our indigenous knowledge, our ways of knowing, our languages, our stories,

and our sacred connection to land and sea,” said Governor Joseph.

The FSM System Transformation Grants, totaling \$2.5 million, are supported by the Global Partnership for Education and implemented in collaboration with key partners, including the Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL) and UNICEF. The initiative aims to restructure educational systems throughout the FSM to be more inclusive of traditional knowledge systems and cultural values.

Assistant Secretary of the FSM Department of Education, Mr. Miyai Keller, echoed the sentiment shared by many at the event: that this transformation is long overdue. He underscored the significance of finally integrating cultural identity into the core of the nation’s formal learning structures.

Governor Joseph highlighted Pohnpei

State’s own pioneering work through the Indigenous Learning Recovery (ILR) program, currently being implemented in select elementary schools. “In these classrooms, our children are being taught our culture, our language, and our stories by none other than our very own elders — the keepers of our traditions,” he noted, calling the experience both “uplifting and encouraging.”

The Governor also emphasized that this initiative represents more than a change in funding — it reflects a deeper shift in mindset.

“For too long, the formal structures of learning in our islands have overlooked the profound depth of knowledge that resides in our culture. Today, we say clearly: our knowledge matters. Our values matter. And they belong at the center of our children’s learning,” he said.

The launch ceremony also featured

vibrant cultural presentations by elementary school students, including traditional dancing and the weaving of baskets — live demonstrations of the cultural teachings that the transformation grant will seek to elevate and mainstream.

Governor Joseph concluded his address by calling for continued collaboration and unity across the FSM to carry this work forward: “Let this be a beginning — not only of a program but of a renewed commitment across our FSM family to walk forward together, grounded in our values, unified in our vision, and proud of our identity.”

The Pohnpei State Government extends its full support to this national initiative and commends all agencies and individuals whose dedication and cultural wisdom are shaping a stronger, more rooted future for the children of the FSM.



Governor Stevenson A. Joseph welcomes distinguished members of the COM Land Grant Board of Regents

Pohnpei Public Information

April 23, 2025

Pohnpei—The Office of the Governor was honored to welcome distinguished members of the College of Micronesia (COM) Land Grant Board of Regents during a courtesy visit to Governor Stevenson A. Joseph earlier today. This visit reaffirmed the strong partnership between the COM Land Grant program and the State of Pohnpei, emphasizing shared goals in education, agricultural research, and sustainable community development throughout the region.

The visiting delegation included several regional leaders:

- Dr. Emais Robert, Chairperson of the COM Land Grant Board of Regents, Governor of Peleliu, and former Minister of Health of the Republic of Palau
- Mr. Patrick Tellei, President of Palau Community College

- Mrs. Suzanne Gallen, Vice Chairperson of the COM Land Grant Board and Chair of the COM-FSM Board of Regents
- Dr. Theresa Koroivulaono, President of the College of Micronesia-FSM
- Dr. David Newnham, President of the College of the Marshall Islands
- Mr. Gerald Zackios, Minister of Health, Republic of the Marshall Islands National Government
- Dr. Manooj Nair, representing the COM Land Grant Program in Pohnpei

Designated as a Land-Grant institution by the U.S. Congress in 1980, the College of Micronesia continues to uphold its mission through the Compact of Free Association with the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. The program operates through three core components: extension services, agricultural research, and academic instruction.

In Pohnpei and across the region, extension programs provide hands-on technical training and outreach in areas such as agriculture, aquaculture, youth development, and natural resource management.

The research programs, housed at Agricultural Experiment Stations and substations across the islands, explore sustainable solutions for food security, environmental adaptation, and local innovation.

Meanwhile, instructional programs at COM-FSM and partner colleges build capacity among Micronesia’s next generation of scientists, educators, and community leaders.

Governor Joseph acknowledged the significant impact of COM Land Grant programs in Pohnpei, particularly their work with local communities in aquaculture and agriculture. He also highlighted a concern shared by the



visiting Board members: that while the program is doing meaningful work, greater public awareness is needed. The Governor and the delegation agreed that steps must be taken to better inform the public about the programs and opportunities available through the Land Grant system.

During the meeting, discussions focused on strengthening outreach, enhancing intergovernmental collaboration, and ensuring continued investment in food security, sustainability, and regional development.

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Governor Stevenson A. Joseph welcomes Mrs. Sophia Pretrick, PASAI Regional Director, in courtesy visit

Pohnpei Public Information

April 25, 2025

Pohnpei—The Governor of Pohnpei, Stevenson A. Joseph, extended a warm welcome to Mrs. Sophia Pretrick, the newly appointed Regional Director of the Pacific Association of Supreme Audit Institutions (PASAI), during a courtesy visit to the Governor’s Office today. Mrs. Pretrick, a Pohnpei native, made history as the first Director from Pohnpei to hold this esteemed position in PASAI.

Governor Joseph expressed his deep pride in Mrs. Pretrick's appointment, acknowledging the crucial role she will play in strengthening governance across the region. “We are incredibly proud of Mrs. Pretrick for reaching this remarkable achievement. Her leadership within PASAI is vital not only for Pohnpei but for the entire region,” said Governor Joseph. “Her work will be instrumental in helping strengthen audit processes and improve transparency in government operations,

which is essential to the fight against fraud, waste, and mismanagement.”

During the meeting, discussions focused on improving financial governance and oversight, with a particular emphasis on strengthening municipal financial management, enhancing audit capabilities, and implementing robust oversight mechanisms. Governor Joseph emphasized the need for consistent financial reporting and accountability across government agencies.

strengthening financial investigation capabilities. She suggested comprehensive workshops involving multiple agencies to address complex financial challenges, including emerging technologies like AI and cryptocurrency forensics.

The meeting underscored a shared commitment to improving financial transparency, preventing fraud, and enhancing institutional capacity across the government sectors of Pohnpei and the broader Micronesian region.

Accompanying Mrs. Pretrick was Pohnpei’s Public Auditor, Mr. Erick Paul, who expressed his excitement and pride in introducing Mrs. Pretrick to the Governor. Mr. Paul noted that her appointment as Regional Director is a significant milestone for both Pohnpei and the entire Pacific region, particularly in advancing institutional capacity building across the North Pacific.



Public Auditor Erick Paul highlighted the challenges of budget allocation, noting that the current public auditor’s budget represents less than 5% of the total government budget. He stressed the importance of ensuring financial independence to facilitate effective auditing.

As Regional Director of PASAI, Mrs. Pretrick proposed collaborative training initiatives aimed at

Key outcomes of the meeting included plans for:

- Comprehensive agency training programs
- Enhanced financial oversight mechanisms
- Strategies to improve municipal accounting capabilities

Mrs. Pretrick’s appointment marks an exciting new chapter for PASAI and the people of Pohnpei, reinforcing the critical role the island plays in the ongoing efforts to enhance public sector accountability and institutional integrity across the Pacific region.

FSM Passport Services now accepting credit card payments in Guam

FSM Information Services

April 25, 2025

FSM—The Department of Justice of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) is pleased to announce the launch of a pilot program that allows credit and debit card payments for passport applications submitted at the FSM Consulate in Guam. The program officially began on April 23, 2025.

determine the feasibility of expanding credit card payment services to other FSM Consulates.

It is expected that this service will make the passport application process more convenient for FSM citizens residing in Guam.

This new payment option is in addition to existing methods—Money Order and Cashier’s Check—and is part of ongoing efforts to improve service delivery and accessibility for FSM citizens abroad.

The pilot program will be evaluated over the next two months to



FSM Launches National Education Transformation to embed indigenous knowledge into classrooms

FSM National Department of Education

child in the FSM.

April 16, 2025

Pohnpei—The Federated States of Micronesia officially launched its new System Transformation Grant (STG) to mainstream indigenous knowledge into the curriculum on April 16, 2025 at a national ceremony held at the Pohnpei Governor’s Conference Hall, marking a bold step toward an education system that is more inclusive, equitable, and grounded in traditional knowledge and culture.

Funded by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and implemented in collaboration with UNICEF, the grant will enable FSM to transform its education system to make it more relevant and culturally rooted. The reform aims to ensure that children across the country not only gain foundational academic skills but also learn in ways that reflect and celebrate their unique cultural identity.

The event brought together leaders from the National Department of Education (NDOE), State Departments of Education, school principals, teachers, cultural practitioners, and students, reaffirming a shared national commitment to a relevant and culturally grounded education system for every

Delivering the opening remarks, Governor Joseph expressed his support of this initiative “that seeks to transform the educational system, not by importing foreign solutions but by recognizing the wisdom that already lives within our people.” He also hoped that this endeavor would not only be implemented with good results, but would also carry on, even after the funding ends.

FSM NDOE Acting Secretary Miyai Keller expressed his gratitude to the Global partnership for education and UNICEF for supporting this reform which is very close to the hearts of the people, and also looked forward to forging on and working together with all the states to make this vision a reality. Also speaking at the event, UNICEF Officer-in-Charge and Education Specialist Dechen Zam said “UNICEF is humbled by our partnership with the FSM government in this truly transformational programme of work. We commend FSM’s leadership in advancing culturally rooted education transformation across the Pacific.”

NDOE Secretary Gardenia Aisek, although unable to attend the event, had left a strong message supporting the new programme, “We must

embrace who we are and preserve our identities. Mainstreaming indigenous knowledge, cultures and languages into the FSM education curriculum requires transformative shifts in teaching and learning. And we should be ready to accept the challenges and take responsibility to ensure a transformed FSM education system provides quality and relevant learning and instills in every FSM child values to help them lead successful lives.”

The event also recognized the participation of 13 schools from Pohnpei State currently engaged in the Indigenous Learning and Resilience (ILR) pilot of PREL. These schools include: Wone Elementary School, Enipein Elementary School, Palikir Elementary School, Nett Elementary School, Parem Elementary School, Awak Elementary School, Saladak Elementary School, ESDM Elementary School, Lukop Elementary School, Sapwalap Elementary School, Temwen Elementary School, Mand Elementary School, and Wapar Elementary School. Children from these schools showcased their skills in weaving and basket making and presented a traditional dance as well.

All 4 states of FSM were represented at the launch and the directors of Chuuk,

Yap and Kosrae participated on behalf of their states by presenting stories and chants indigenous to their own culture.

With the launch complete, FSM will begin the process of co-developing a culturally responsive curriculum framework and teaching learning materials, building teacher capacity, and engaging communities to ensure the reforms are locally driven and long lasting.

This programme aligns with the broader goals of the Pacific Regional Education Framework (PacREF) and puts FSM at the helm of Pacific Island Countries efforts to put in place a culturally responsive education system which prepares children and youth to be true pacific citizens with a strong sense of identity and belonging to their land, as well as resilient global citizens.



Vice President Palik concludes official working visit to China

FSM Information Services

April 14, 2025

FSM—At the invitation of Secretary General Zhang Jun of the Boao Forum for Asia, The Honorable Vice President Aren B. Palik conducted an official working visit to the People's Republic of China from March 22-31, 2025—his first official visit to China as Vice President of the Federated States of Micronesia.

Vice President Palik was accompanied by Madame Adelita Palik, Second Lady of the Federated States of Micronesia, and delegation members comprising key senior officials and staff such as T.H. Carlson D. Apis, Secretary of the Department of Telecommunications, Communication & Infrastructure; T.H. Rose Nakanaga, Secretary of the Department of Finance and Administration; T.H. Leonito Bacalando Jr., Secretary of the Department of Justice, T.H. Kenmore Salvador, Assistant Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs; and Mr. Ari Skilling, Special Assistant to the Vice President. Additionally, the delegation included leadership from Kosrae State Government—T.H. Governor Tulensa W. Palik and First Lady Mary Tulensa Palik along with T.H. Speaker Semeon J. Phillip and Madame Hanrika S. Phillip.

The arrival of Vice President Palik and his delegation in the city of Yantai in Shandong Province, marked the beginning of the official working visit to China. During their time in Yantai, delegation toured key facilities such as the Dongfang Electronics Corporation, Shandong Zhonglu Oceanic (Yantai) Foods Company, Yantai Jinzheng Eco-Technology Company, World Innovation and Research Center for Sewage Reutilization—Membrane and Assembly Workshop, and the CIMC Offshore Engineering Research Institute. The following day, the group traveled to the city of Liaocheng, another city in Shandong Province. There, they visited the China-Pacific Island Countries Climate Action Cooperation Center and the Zhongtong Bus Holding Company. These site visits allowed both cities to highlight different technologically advanced industries as well as explore opportunities and potential areas of collaboration.

Vice President Palik and his delegation had the opportunity to meet with the leadership of both Yantai and Liaocheng. Vice President Palik commended the efforts of Yantai and Liaocheng in Shandong Province in combating climate change, particularly the establishment of the International Zero-Carbon Island Organization in Yantai, in which the FSM is a proud founding member of, and the China-Pacific Island Countries Climate Change Center in Liaocheng. He expressed interest in replicating advancements in green energy solutions, water desalination technologies, and climate-resilient road construction in the FSM. He also voiced his support for Yantai's initiative to establish the International Zero-Carbon Island Organization. During his meetings with the leadership of Yantai and Liaocheng, Vice President Palik also took the opportunity to reaffirm and encourage continued sister-city cooperation between Shandong Province and Kosrae State, and the recently established sister-city relations between Kolonia Town and Yantai City. He emphasized leveraging these relationships to further deepen collaboration on education and vocational training, green energy, climate-related initiatives, and enhanced tourism promotion and people-to-people exchanges.

On the morning of March 26, 2025, Vice President Aren B. Palik met with Vice Premier Ding Xuexiang of the People's Republic of China in Boao, Hainan Province, on the margins of the Boao Forum for Asia. The meeting focused on strengthening the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between the two nations and exploring opportunities for further collaboration on climate change, economic development, and cultural exchange.

During the meeting, Vice President Palik highlighted and reaffirmed FSM's steadfast commitment to the one-China policy and reiterated the FSM government's confidence in China in managing its own internal affairs. Capitalizing on the presence and support of Kosrae State Governor Tulensa W.



Palik and Speaker Semeon J. Phillip, Vice President Palik presented and sought support from Vice Premier Ding on three priority projects for Kosrae, namely the renovation of Kosrae State High School, the rehabilitation and improvement of the primary road network, and the construction of a new Joint-Administration Complex. He further expressed the FSM government's appreciation for the Belt and Road Initiative and acknowledged the progress of the feasibility study teams working on road projects for Chuuk and Pohnpei. He further requested support for expedited deployment of feasibility teams to Kosrae and Yap to advance infrastructure planning.

In response, Vice Premier Ding underscored the necessity of supporting each other in safeguarding core interests and major concerns. He reaffirmed China's steadfast commitment to assist the FSM in preserving its sovereignty, independence, national unity, and territorial integrity. He emphasized the importance of the Taiwan Question to China's core interests and expressed appreciation for FSM's continued adherence to the one-China policy.

The two leaders discussed the importance of enhancing cooperation, with Vice Premier Ding emphasizing China's view of the FSM as a key partner in the Belt and Road Initiative. He encouraged leveraging each other's strengths in trade, infrastructure, maritime economy, and agriculture. Vice Premier Ding announced that China will soon hand-over the national convention center to the FSM and highlighted ongoing projects for roads and bridges stemming from President Simina's State Visit in 2024. He

expressed commitment to coordinating the delivery of these projects for the benefit of the FSM's people and mentioned plans to initiate feasibility studies for road projects in Yap and Kosrae, with corresponding Memorandum of Understanding to be signed shortly.

Responding to the three priority projects proposed by Vice President Palik for Kosrae State, Vice Premier Ding encouraged to share the relevant documentation to facilitate directives to the appropriate departments to begin work. He emphasized the importance of maintaining communication to advance these initiatives.

The Vice Premier also recalled First Lady Simina's fondness for Chinese orchids during her visit in 2024, which spurred increased cooperation between FSM and China in the field of orchid cultivation. He highlighted the importance of sustaining exchanges in education, culture, health, scientific research, and youth programs, while reaffirming the significance of maritime research partnership and collaboration between both sides.

In addressing the pressing issue of climate change, Vice Premier Ding expressed solidarity for small island nations and reaffirmed China's unwavering commitment to combating climate change, regardless of the evolving international landscape. He acknowledged FSM's support for the International Zero-Carbon Island Cooperation initiative, which FSM co-sponsors, and encouraged deeper collaboration through the climate centers and green industries observed in Yantai and Liaocheng.

Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to mutual cooperation and expressed optimism for the future of the relationship between the FSM and China. The high-level meeting concluded on a high note with Vice President Palik extending an open invitation to Vice Premier Ding to visit the FSM when his schedule permits.

Continued on next page

...Palik, China

Continued from previous page

As the one of the keynote speakers of the Boao Forum, Vice President Palik was invited to deliver his remarks on climate change after his meeting with Vice Premier Ding. Vice-President Palik highlighted the existential threat of climate change to small island nations like the FSM, stressing minimal emissions (0.12% of world's population contributing 0.03% global CO₂ emission) yet high vulnerability. He outlined national efforts like a National Adaptation Plan, 70% renewable energy by 2030, net-zero by 2050, and partnerships with Chinese cities Yantai and Liaocheng. Vice President Palik stated that the past three COPs yielded minimal results, urges faster fossil fuel phase-out and equitable climate finance delivery, while welcoming COP29's \$300 billion annual commitment by 2035. He emphasized international initiatives like the Methane Pledge, Micronesia Challenge (protecting 50% marine areas), and ICJ/ITLOS advisory opinions. For COP30 in Brazil (2025), he called for high-emission nations to commit to 1.5°C and net-zero, stressing collective action and political will to turn pledges into progress.

After the delivering his remarks, Vice President Palik joined the audience to witness a panel discussion focused on efforts to address climate change challenges, obstacles in implementing solutions, and diverse strategies and perspectives on how climate change could be addressed.

During the subsequent phase of the visit, Vice President Palik and his delegation visited the cities of Fuzhou and Quanzhou in the coastal province of Fujian from March 27-30, 2025. On the first day in Fuzhou, the delegation visited Fujian Agricultural and Forestry University (FAFU). Professor Lai Hairong welcomed the delegation and highlighted FAFU's longstanding partnerships with island countries in the Pacific, and expressed strong interests in expanding collaboration with the FSM. The University has adopted approaches through the framework of the China-Pacific Island Countries Poverty Alleviation and Cooperative Development Center and China-Pacific Island Countries Juncao

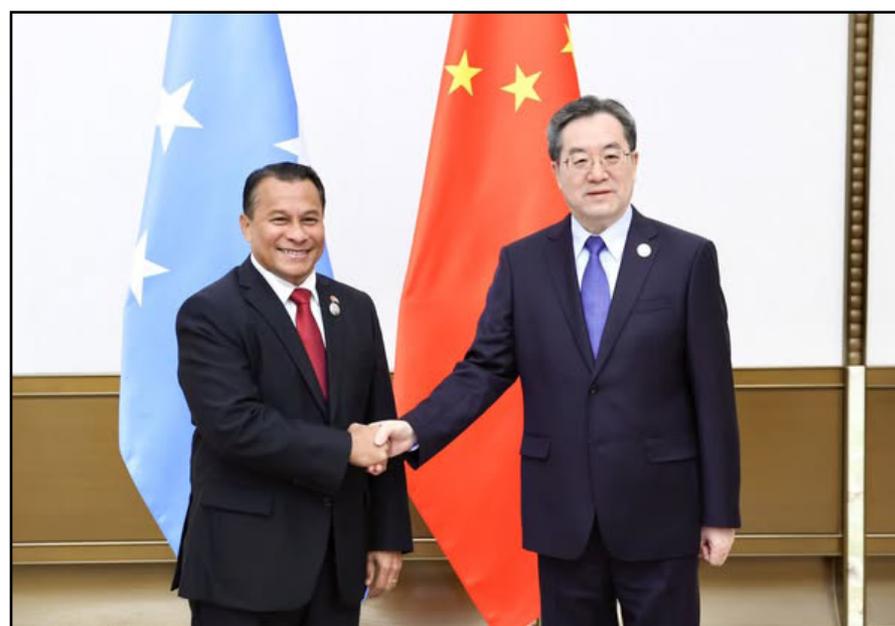
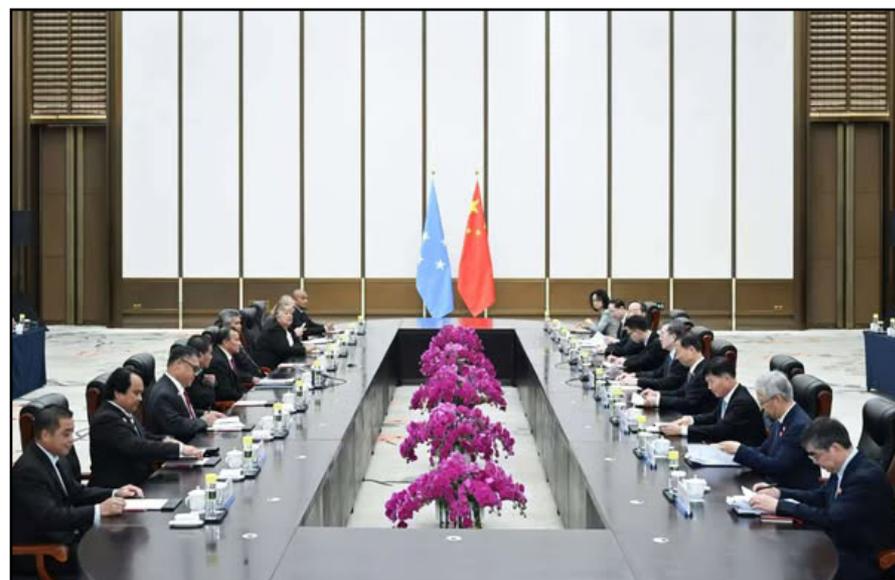
Technology Demonstration Center, to develop cooperation with the FSM. This includes initiatives in technical assistance, training, scientific research, and international student programs across the fields of agricultural technology, food processing and social governance. FAFU also highlighted scholarship opportunities for higher education in Fuzhou, particularly in agriculture, aquafarm, and/or in the field of Juncao Technology. During the visit, both sides witnessed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between China National Engineering Research Center of Juncao Technology at FAFU, China-Pacific Island Countries Juncao Technology Demonstration Center, and Kosrae State.

While in Fuzhou City, the delegation had the opportunity to visit the Lianjiang Guanwu Seafood Development Company and Fujian Mawei Shipbuilding Company to explore potential collaborations. Additionally, the group visited the Austronesian Exhibition Hall at Fujian University of Technology, delving into the historical roots and origin of Austronesian people in Fujian Province.

The delegation's visit in Fujian continued with a visit to Quanzhou City in southern Fujian Province. In Quanzhou, Vice President Palik and his delegation had the opportunity to visit the China Museum for Fujian-Taiwan Kinship, which provided the breakdown of history, culture, and people most especially concerning the people from the provinces of Fujian and Taiwan.

Furthermore, the delegation proceeded to visit Quanzhou Normal University. The delegation toured the university facilities, and witnessed a presentation of additional scholarship opportunities for FSM students to pursue higher education in China, particularly at Quanzhou Normal University. Vice President Palik expressed gratitude to Dr. Tan Siu Lan, FSM Honorary Consul to Hong Kong and sponsor of FSM students who attended the university. He also conveyed interest in fostering collaboration between Quanzhou Normal University and the FSM Fishery and Maritime Institute (FMI) in Yap.

In his meeting with the leadership of Fujian, Vice President Palik commended the province's profound



history, rich cultural heritage, and success in sustainable development. He expressed gratitude for Fujian's support in advancing Juncao Technology cooperation and emphasized his eagerness to deepen collaboration under the Belt and Road Initiative. This includes strengthening partnerships in agriculture, fisheries, and education, fostering people-to-people exchanges, and jointly addressing climate change challenges.

Vice President Palik concluded his visit in Shanghai with a meeting between his delegation and business leaders, including Mr. Henry Tan (CEO of Luen Thai International Group), Mr. He Bo (Chairman of Sinovat Ocean), and Mr. Zhang Huafeng (CEO of ACCLinks). Discussions focused on expanding Luen Thai's existing operations in the FSM, with a proposed joint venture with Sinovat Ocean to develop a shipyard facility in Kosrae and invest in tourism infrastructure and revitalization of operations in Pohnpei. The group also had an

opportunity to meet with Mr. Zhang Huafeng to discuss opportunities for potential partnerships, particularly in communications— Mr Zhang has worked closely and collaborated with FSM Telecom.

The delegation also toured Shanghai's historical landmarks and engaged with FSM student Yolanda Abraham from Pohnpei. Ms. Abraham is pursuing an MBA at Shanghai University of Finance and Economics, and is scheduled to graduate with her master's degree in July 2025.

Vice President Palik and his delegation were accompanied by Ambassador K.S. Vincent Sivas, Deputy Chief of Mission Francis Anefal, and First Secretary Johnston Hentrick of the FSM Embassy in Beijing. The group also included Ambassador Qian Bo, Special Envoy for Pacific Island Countries Affairs of the Chinese Government, and his staff member, Ms. Sun Sizhen, from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Opinion Editorial

Pursuing Partnership and Joining Hands for A Bright Future of China-FSM relations

In late March, Boao in Hainan Province of China sees the sea at the full tide, presenting a scene of abundant greenery. During his participation of Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2025, T.H. Aren B. Palik, Vice President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), and his delegation visited with great interest the Liuke (referred to as “asking the guest to stay” in Chinese) village, witnessed the achievements of rural revitalization, and felt the unique culture of the hometown of the overseas Chinese. During the visit, Ding Xuexiang, member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and Vice Premier of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China, held a meeting with Vice President Palik. In implementing the important common understandings reached by President Xi Jinping and President Simina in last year, the two sides had an extensive and in-depth exchange of views on cooperation in trade and investment, infrastructure, marine economy, climate change and other areas, injecting new impetus to the China-FSM Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

This is Vice President Palik’s first visit to China since he assumed the office, following President Simina’s state visit to China last year and marking another significant high-level exchange between China and the FSM. This also epitomizes the friendly exchanges between China and Pacific Island countries today. Living along the same Ocean, China and the Pacific Island countries, including the FSM, are good neighbors.

“Close neighbors are better than relatives far away.” This is a simple philosophy that the Chinese people recognized long ago. In October 2013, at the first conference on neighborhood diplomacy of the People’s Republic of China, President Xi Jinping put forward the principle of amity, sincerity, mutual benefit and inclusiveness, setting the direction for China’s neighborhood diplomacy in the new era. Over the past ten-plus years, guided by the principle, China has joined hands with its neighboring countries to deepen mutually beneficial cooperation and enhance connectivity. The results have benefited more and more countries and people, and we have blazed a bright path of good-neighborly friendship and win-win cooperation.

Not long ago, the Central Conference

on Work Related to Neighboring Countries was held in Beijing. In his important speech, General Secretary Xi Jinping systematically summarized the achievements and experience of China’s neighborhood work in the new era, scientifically analyzed the situation, clarified the goals, tasks, ideas and measures for neighborhood work in the coming period. It was pointed out that China will hold high the banner of a community with a shared future for mankind, act on the common vision of a peaceful, safe and secure, prosperous, beautiful and amicable home, foster an amicable, secure and prosperous neighborhood, follow the policy and principle featuring amity, sincerity, mutual benefit and inclusiveness as well as a shared future for humanity, take the Asian values of peace, cooperation, openness and inclusiveness as the fundamental guidance, use high-quality Belt and Road cooperation as the main platform, and pursue the model of security for Asia that features sharing weal and woe, seeking common ground while shelving differences, and prioritizing dialogue and consultation as the strategic support, jointly creating a better future with neighboring countries.

For China, Asia and the wider Asia-Pacific is the shared home of China and neighboring countries. China and the FSM both reside in the Asia-Pacific, where the principles that all countries, regardless of their size, should be treated as equals and the principles of amity, sincerity, mutual benefit, and inclusiveness are reflected in exchanges between China and the FSM. We are pleased to see that recently under the care and personal effort of the leaders of both countries, new progress has been made in mutually beneficial cooperation and connectivity.

The Renovation Project of Pohnpei State Government Building aided by China has been successfully handed over. The project improves the work environment of the Pohnpei State Government and brings new developments to the local area. The Chinese Medical Team has come to the FSM to provide services and donate medications and medical equipment, working with their Pohnpei colleagues to safeguard the health and well-being of the people. Upholding the spirit of “better teach a man how to fish than give him fish,” the experts of the Agricultural Technology Cooperation Project in the FSM, also known as the Pilot Farm, have conducted technical trainings, widely

praised by FSM farmers, teachers and students. The floral cooperation of our two countries has developed from a vision to a reality. Activities including the Chinese Film Festival and the Chinese Cultural Show-A Taste of Southern China have successively set off a tidal wave of enthusiasm for China and have been well received by the people. The China-aid National Conference Center is about to be handed over, and state road and bridge projects aided by China have been launched successively. It is believed that once these projects are put into use, new impetus would be injected into the society and livelihood of the FSM and more people would be benefited.

During his trip in China, Vice President Palik and his delegation also visited Shandong, Fujian and Shanghai. They immersed themselves in the pulse of China’s openness and experienced the local actions achieving Chinese modernization. They expressed a strong desire to deepen cooperation, pushing bilateral cooperation in economy and trade, agriculture, people-to-people exchanges, education, green development, culture and tourism, poverty reduction, and Juncao to new heights. The high-level exchanges over the past two years have forged a stronger bond of cooperation across the blue ocean between China and the FSM, writing a new chapter in China-FSM friendship.

The Chinese nation has always emphasized the harmony with neighbors. We cherish peace and development and value friends and partners as we have always done. We stand firmly on the right side of history. At present, the changes unseen in a century are accelerating, and the force of peaceful development and progress are continuously growing. However, we should also recognize that the world today is far from tranquil. The United States has imposed tariffs on all its trading partners, including China, under various pretexts. This severely infringes upon the legitimate rights and interests of all countries and severely disrupts the global economic order. The majority of medium-sized and small countries are the first to be affected. Such behavior will inevitably be opposed by the international community. China firmly opposes this and has resolutely taken countermeasures to safeguard its own rights and interests. There are no winners in trade and tariff wars. Protectionism leads nowhere, and openness and cooperation are the right course to follow.

On March 28, President Xi Jinping pointed out at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing while meeting with representatives of the international business community that, “Embracing China is embracing

opportunities, believing in China is believing in a better tomorrow, and investing in China is investing in the future.” In the first quarter of this year, China’s GDP grew by 5.4% year-on-year, ranking China among the fastest-growing major economies in the world. According to statistics from the General Administration of Customs of the PRC, in the first quarter of this year, China’s total volume of trade in goods reached RMB 10.3 trillion, an increase of 1.3% year-on-year. Among them, the imports and exports with Belt and Road partner countries amounted to RMB 5.26 trillion, up by 2.2%, which is 0.9 percentage points higher than the overall growth rate and accounted for 51.1% of the total value of imports and exports. Despite the rising uncertainties in the external environment, China’s economy has performed stably with a good momentum, and it has been driven by new quality productive forces, with new growth drivers expanding.



From the balmy coastal charm of Boao, Hainan, to the full house of guests at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China rises to the waves of globalization and continues to write new chapters in its opening up to the world. This spring, the optimism about China has become a view widely shared around the world. President Xi Jinping pointed out that the Chinese economy is not a pond, but an ocean. As the world’s second-largest economy and the second-largest consumer market for goods, no matter how the international landscape may evolve, China will only open its door even wider to the outside world. We will continue to advance high-standard opening up, steadily expand institutional opening up including rules, regulations, management, standards, implement high-standard policies for trade and investment liberalization and facilitation, and create a world-class business environment that is market-oriented, law-based, and internationalized, so that we can share development opportunities with the world and achieve mutual benefit.

Going forward, China is willing to closely align its own development with that of its good neighbors, including the FSM, and jointly meet challenges in a common pursuit of development and a better future, so that everyone can lead a better life.

WU Wei
Ambassador of China to the FSM

Pacific Islands Forum Troika meet on regional priorities and the shifting regional landscape

Pacific Island Forum Secretariat

April 14, 2025

Nadi, Fiji--The Pacific Islands Forum Troika Leaders met in Nadi, Fiji today to discuss the progress on a range of regional priorities amidst a fluid regional and global landscape.

The Forum Troika Leaders in attendance included, the Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum and Prime Minister of Tonga, the Hon. Dr 'Aisake Valu Eke, the incoming Chair and Prime Minister of Solomon Islands, the Hon. Jeremiah Manele, the Prime Minister of the Cook Islands, the Hon. Mark Brown and the President of the Republic of Palau, H.E Surangel Whipps Jr. President Whipps joined the Troika as the Micronesian representative on the discussions relating to the Review of the Regional Architecture. The meeting marked the first in-person engagement of the Forum Troika Leaders in 2025.

“It was good to meet with the Troika Leaders in-person and to discuss a number of time critical issues that the region is grappling with at this time. The global and regional development landscape is evolving very fast, and the only way we can navigate this successfully is if we stay united as a region,” said the Forum Chair and Prime Minister of Tonga, the Hon. Dr 'Aisake Valu Eke.

Forum Troika Leaders discussed updates on key regional priorities, including the capitalisation of the Pacific Resilience Facility. Troika Leaders also discussed an update on the

Review of the Regional Architecture, in particular the High-Level Political Talanoa process which will focus on political consultations with Forum Leaders on strengthening Pacific regionalism and a fit-for-purpose regional architecture. Forum Troika Leaders agreed on the composition of the High-Level Persons Group that will lead the political consultations, for consideration by the broader Forum membership.

The Forum Chair added, “The Review of the Regional Architecture comes at a timely juncture and gives us the opportunity to reflect on Pacific Regionalism and what we need to do to strengthen and realise deeper regionalism in the Pacific. This too will shape how we refine our regional architecture to drive the achievement of our 2050 vision.”

The meeting also considered the evolving global landscape and the emerging implications of the recent raft of decisions by the U.S. Government on the Blue Pacific region. Recognising the U.S. as a valued Forum Dialogue Partner since 1989 and a member of regional agencies, the Forum Troika emphasised the importance of continued engagement to shape a future that is sustainable, inclusive and anchored in genuine and enduring partnerships.

The Pacific Islands Forum Troika will meet again in June 2025 to consider an update on the progress of key regional initiatives.



Pacific experts gather to help protect seabirds

The University of Auckland New Zealand

April 16, 2025

New Zealand—The first ever Oceania Seabird Symposium has highlighted the importance of traditional and cultural knowledge to protect seabirds.



Held at the University of Auckland and organised by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, experts gathered from across the wider Pacific region to learn more about protecting Oceania seabirds.

SPREP Deputy Director General Easter Catherine Chu Shing says the decision was made last year to shift the symposium to New Zealand, and it was a great opportunity to hold the event at the University given its research work.

“Not much is known about the great threats to seabirds... the idea was to give it more focus and attention, and bring awareness to it. We wanted to look at what's been done across the region, in other places like Australia and New Zealand, and by different organizations so that we could all share and learn from one another.”

Chu Shing says it was also invaluable to have the opportunity to meet with the University's Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Pacific on 16 April, given the cultural significance of seabirds to Pacific culture.

“A key focus of the symposium this week has been highlighting traditional knowledge and the cultural aspects of seabirds. For example, in many Pacific countries, there's a lot of cultural significance around seabird culture.”

Pro Vice-Chancellor Pacific Professor Jemaima Tiatia-Siau says it was an honour for the University to host the first ever Oceania Seabird symposium, and also introduce the team to the Deputy Director General of SPREP.

“To have an event dedicated to one of the guardians of our oceans – our seabirds, is an important milestone. Across the vast Pacific, seabirds have

long been more than just creatures of the sea and sky. They are carriers of ancestral knowledge, navigators of weather and ocean currents, and messengers that connect our islands to one another and to the wider world.”

Professor Tiatia-Siau says it would come as no surprise to Pacific peoples globally that the University's inaugural Pacific strategy *Ala o le Moana* (pathways through the ocean) employed the frigatebird, or manumanu ne caqi in na vosa vaka Viti as it's known in Fiji, as a metaphor to symbolise the historic document.

“Seabirds are part of our identity as peoples of the Pacific, and with our expertise and connections throughout Pacific communities, we can find solutions to protect seabirds and their habitats,” says Tiatia-Siau.

Chu Shing added the participation of different scientists, practitioners and officials from SPREP's 26 member countries at the symposium helped to foster collaboration.

“It's about the sharing of information, knowledge, and also creating a network of those who are really engaged and passionate about this work, its bringing more emphasis to the link between scientific knowledge and the traditional knowledge; to help better understand the situation of seabirds.

“Seabirds are part of our environment, they are part of nature. They are us as well in many ways. And this week, in terms of that we're doing for SPREP, is so important because we already have a Pacific action plan on seabirds, so this helps to implement that action plan.”

Chu Shing says her organisation would be looking at the outcomes of the discussion from the last few days to see how it would inform the work underway by SPREP, and also the work of its partners.

“This is the first one, and we're looking at how often we will be meeting to help foster more collaboration, sharing of information and knowledge.”

President Heine calls for urgent global climate action at leaders meeting on climate and the just transition

RMI Office of the President

April 24, 2025

Majuro, Marshall Islands—H.E. President Hilda C. Heine participated virtually in the Leaders Meeting on Climate and the Just Transition, co-convened by H.E. Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, President of Brazil, and H.E. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations. The high-level session, held behind closed doors on April 24, 2025, from 12:00am to 2:00am MHT, brought together a select and diverse group of global leaders from both developed and developing nations including China, the European Union, the African Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

The meeting forms part of a joint mobilization strategy by President Lula and Secretary-General Guterres aimed at strengthening global action under the Paris Agreement and generating momentum toward the next round of enhanced national climate plans (NDCs) to be announced in 2025. Secretary-General Guterres emphasized the significance of the gathering, describing it as one of the most diverse assemblies of national leaders focused exclusively on climate action in recent years—sending a powerful and unified message of urgency and resolve.

In her remarks, President Heine delivered a compelling message grounded in urgency, justice, and leadership. Speaking on behalf of small island states and vulnerable frontline communities, she emphasized that “1.5 to stay alive is not a slogan for the Marshall Islands — it is a lifeline.”

President Heine reiterated the commitments made under the Paris Agreement and stressed the need for all countries—especially major emitters—to submit ambitious and economy-wide Nationally Determined Contributions aligned with the 1.5°C temperature limit.

“We said we’d transition away from fossil fuels, deliver on the \$1.3 trillion climate finance commitment, and phase out fossil fuel subsidies. We must do what we agreed,” President Heine stated, adding that the RMI has already submitted a more ambitious NDC on

time—outlining a clear, science-based roadmap to 1.5°C and identifying the extensive support required to implement it.

President Heine concluded by reaffirming the Marshall Islands’ longstanding leadership in global climate diplomacy. She also highlighted the unwavering commitment of Pacific Island nations to put people, planet, and the integrity of promises made at the center of the global climate agenda.

“The actions we take this year will determine if we lead the world out of climate danger—or if we fail,” she warned. “A failure to keep 1.5 within reach this year will have dire consequences for our planet, and for the international cooperation on which the security of every one of us depends. Let us be on the right side of history.”

Statement by H.E. Hilda C. Heine
President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands

Leaders Meeting on Climate and the Just Transition

Wednesday, 23 April 2025

Iokwe Excellencies, and Friends. Secretary General, President Lula, thank you for bringing us together. I join others in offering my prayers for the people of Turkey in the aftermath of today’s earthquake.

Some of you may feel you have time to delay. The Marshall Islands does not. “1.5 to stay alive” is a reality for us. And it is a reminder, to politicians like us, to think beyond the next electoral cycle, to the role we will play in history.

We must do what we agreed.

We said we’d limit warming to 1.5 degrees, submit NDCs aligned to that goal, and implement those plans. We must deliver.

We said we’d transition away from fossil fuels in line with 1.5, accelerating action this decade. We said that 1.3 trillion dollars in climate finance is needed, and committed at least 300 billion to the frontlines. We said we’d phase out the trillions in fossil fuel subsidies, not pouring more money into the dirty fuels that are choking our planet. We must



deliver.

RMI’s contributions to climate change are tiny, but we are delivering. We submitted a more ambitious NDC on time, setting out our contribution to 1.5 and phasing out fossil fuels, and the resources we need to do so. They are huge. And they will only rise if big emitters fail to act.

The climate process shows that multilateralism can work, against the odds - we have come together to agree how to make our world safer. But trust is suffering as too many nations fail to keep their promises.

My atoll nation’s security depends on strong NDCs from the largest emitters. I urge you - particularly G20 members - to meet your promise. Deliver ambitious, 1.5-aligned, economy-wide NDCs that cover all greenhouse gases. Strengthen your 2030 targets. Show us how you’ll contribute to the energy commitments in the Global Stocktake.

1.5 is slipping out of our hands because we protect the profits of the wealthiest individuals and industries at the expense of the many. We see that today’s security priorities draw resources away from the bigger security challenges to come. As long as we prioritize short-term thinking and greed over our planet’s future, we are doing ourselves, our children, and generations to come, a grave disservice. We cannot allow this. We must prioritize people. Pacific islands are leading this charge, again and again - in the UNFCCC, the IMO, the ICJ, and at home.

Fellow leaders, it is our job to lead. When uncertainty reigns and trust is shaken, we must restore the power that promises can have. This is what the Paris Agreement is: a promise to keep us all safe.

Our actions this year will decide if we lead the world out of climate danger, or if we fail. A failure to keep 1.5 within reach this year will have dire consequences, for our planet, and for the international cooperation on which the security of every one of us depends.

Let us be on the right side of history.

Kommol tata.

Training continues on managing Pacific Island audit offices’ greatest assets – staff

PASAI

April 16, 2025

Auckland, NZ--The Pacific Association of Supreme Audit Institutions (PASAI) is delivering a series of webinars on human resource management (HRM) for its member offices from today.

Twenty-eight staff (19 female and 11 male) from the government audit offices of FSM Kosrae, FSM Yap, Guam, Kiribati, the Northern Mariana Islands, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu have registered to attend the first webinar.

PASAI Program Director, Sinaroseta Palamo-Iosefo, is facilitating the series of monthly webinars, with the inaugural one focused on ‘The employee lifecycle’.

“Establishing robust HRM systems is vital for delivering high-quality audits, ultimately supporting improved public sector accountability.

“This session is designed to equip participants with a good understanding of the key responsibilities of audit offices as outlined in international standards on auditor competence,” she said.

The current webinar series is appropriate for staff who are responsible for managing HR-related matters and will cover concepts ranging from recruitment and performance management to staff wellness and development frameworks.

This training follows PASAI’s delivery, with invaluable assistance from the Swedish National Audit Office, of a comprehensive HR Champions program which created a cohort of Pacific Island-based staff who are now experienced in managing contemporary HR matters.

Ms Palamo-Iosefo explained that throughout the webinar series, staff performing HR duties in the region will share examples of how they implemented HR initiatives in their offices, such as developing an HR strategy or introducing a wellness program.

“These webinars fit into a broader program of strengthening HRM capabilities among member audit offices drawing on the expertise that has been developed in the region,” she said.

PASAI acknowledges the support of the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

“Brown People, Brown Spaces”: Reclaiming Micronesian representation with The Husk

One journalist’s mission to rewrite the narrative for Micronesians at home and across the diaspora

By *Sia Soleil Taisipic*
The Triton’s Call

April 17, 2025

Guam—“Brown people, brown spaces.” 33-year-old Jasmine Stole Weiss left the newsroom to reclaim Micronesian representation through *The Husk*, a newsletter that celebrates Micronesians at home and in the diaspora by telling stories left out of the mainstream media.

Born and raised on the island of Guam, Weiss made it her mission to captivate the stories of the people in her community in a positive light. As a Micronesian herself with roots in Palau and Pohnpei, Weiss’s work highlights the importance of meaningful representation in the media.

Telling a New Story

In 2021, Weiss made a dramatic career shift to launch her very own *The Husk*, an online newsletter that aims to showcase the accolades of the Micronesian community to the world. This new career path became her way of reclaiming the narrative around the Micronesian community, who Weiss felt were often portrayed negatively in local media.

The Husk is Weiss’s love letter to the Micronesian people, both at home and in the diaspora. Her newsletter has become a hub for celebrating Micronesian success, showcasing the diverse accomplishments of her community in a place dedicated to celebrating them.

For Weiss, these stories serve as a counter to the often one-dimensional portrayal of her people in local news.

“I write about their small business and their creative outlets, and things that are really cool. I like the idea of writing about them in spaces where we may not really see them before, especially in our local media” Weiss shared.

The Husk gets its name from the symbolic coconut, a lifeline for many islands. Weiss was drawn to the concept of naming her newsletter

something meaningful both to her and the community she serves.

“The coconut is such an important part of our culture. It’s a nod to something that has sustained us for generations. I also think about the way ‘coconut’ was used as a derogatory term to describe people who weren’t ‘fully’ Micronesian like me, calling someone brown on the outside but white on the inside. I wanted to reclaim that word in a way that celebrates us instead,” she said.

A Journey Through Journalism

Weiss did not always set out to become a voice for the Micronesian community, though. Her passion for storytelling and print media shaped her from a young age.

After earning a B.A. in Communication and Media, Weiss jumped into her career as a reporter for the *Guam Daily Post*, formerly known as *Marianas Variety Guam*. After a few years, she joined the *Pacific Daily News* team as a crime reporter for another five years.

But chasing deadlines and her next scoop for local news outlets like the *Pacific Daily News* and the *Guam Daily Post*, Weiss realized something was missing.

Weiss felt that her work as a crime reporter was no longer aligned with her personal values. Leaving the newsroom behind was a difficult decision, but it felt necessary for her.

“I don’t think I could ever really be so callous to not sympathize with someone going through something really tough. The work I do now is more aligned with my personal constitution and the things I want to exist in the world,” she noted.

Still, Weiss’s work as a reporter for local news outlets was a fruitful experience. She attributes many of her skills as a journalist to her time spent in the newsroom.

Through her service as a reporter,

Weiss realized the many benefits of the work she was doing. She learned important skills like meeting deadlines and gathering information daily while also honing existing skills like writing.

“Being on the job taught me how to tell a story out of something that I might not find interesting but I know is important, and really convey that in the stories I tell,” she expressed.

From covering the legislature to community events to crime, Weiss claims it all played a vital role in where she is now in her career.

“Every day was different. One day, I’d be at a budget hearing, and the next, I might be covering something bizarre, like a dead whale in Agat. You learn so much about the community, and no two days are alike” Stole-Weiss recalled.

Building a Legacy

Though *The Husk* is still young, it is Weiss’s hope that its impact will only grow in time.

“I don’t have any concrete evidence of how it’s resonating yet, but my hope is that someone out there, now or in the future, will see someone who looks like them in a space they didn’t think



they belonged, and they’ll realize that they can do that too,” she said.

For Weiss, the goal is simple: to uplift her community and show that Micronesians are more than the limited portrayals seen in mainstream media and inspire others to do the same.

“My greatest aspiration is that one person, just one, sees what we’re able to do and thinks, ‘I can do that too, or maybe I can do something even better.’ That would be enough for me.”

You can read more about Weiss’s mission and other related works celebrating Micronesia at www.thehusk.substack.com.

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Marshall Islands Police destroy significant cocaine cache discovered on Wotho Atoll

RMI Office of National Security

April 18, 2025

Ebeye, RMI—The Marshall Islands Police Department (MIPD) on Ebeye has confirmed the destruction of approximately 45 pounds of cocaine. The illicit drugs were initially discovered on the oceanside of Kabin Island on Wotho Atoll, in mid-March. The contraband was secured at MIPD prior to its incineration last week.



According to a report compiled by Captain Banner Korwan of the Ebeye Criminal Investigation Unit and addressed to Acting Commissioner Vincent Tani, the discovery was made by local residents engaged in coconut crab hunting. The report detailed that the locals found 18 blocks of wrapped cocaine washed ashore on the oceanside of Kabin Island.

Initially, the recovered contraband remained with the local community. However, recognizing the seriousness of the find, the local council intervened and alerted MIPD headquarters in Majuro.

Following the report, Majuro headquarters delegated the responsibility of retrieving the drugs to the MIPD unit on Ebeye. Authorities successfully secured the approximately 45 pounds of cocaine, which were then incinerated on North Loi Island with assistance from Kwajalein landowner Odrikawa.

The Office of National Security commends the leadership of the Wotho Atoll Local Government and the residents of Wotho Atoll for their responsible action in reporting this discovery. This cooperation highlights the importance of community involvement in maintaining the safety and national security of the Marshall Islands.

ONS wishes to assure the public that the destruction of the illicit drugs was documented for transparency purposes. The officers involved in the destruction of the drugs are: Acting Assistant Commissioner Beejay Jacob, Captain Banner Korwan and Sergeant Carlson Clarence. The Office of National Security will continue working closely with the Marshall Islands Police Department and Marshall Islands Mayor's Association to develop national security strategies for the seizure, control, and destruction of narcotics across the Republic of the Marshall Islands.



U.S. Coast Guard suspends active search for missing boater near Guam

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

April 21, 2025

SANTARITA, Guam — The U.S. Coast Guard suspended the active search for Mr. Jeffery Hattori, a 58-year-old boater missing west of Guam aboard his 14-foot skiff, the Lady G, effective the evening of April 19, 2025, pending new information.

Lt. Chelsea Garcia, search and rescue mission coordinator, expressed the weight of the decision. "Suspending this search is heartbreaking, as we've poured every available resource and ounce of resolve into finding Mr. Hattori for his family and community. The immense ocean and the absence of any sign have tested us. Our partners—

Guam Fire Rescue, the U.S. Navy, and local supporters—remain ready to act on any new lead and are deeply grateful for the community's vigilance and support."

Despite comprehensive efforts covering over 90,800 square nautical miles across 48 search patterns, Mr. Hattori remains missing, and the skiff is unlocated. Hattori departed Hagåtña Boat Basin at 5:30 a.m. local time on April 12 and was expected back by 4 p.m. Guam Fire Rescue initially notified the U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam's Joint Rescue Sub-Center (JRSC) team of the situation. The team then coordinated a multi-day, multi-agency response.

A U.S. Navy P-8 Poseidon aircraft crew from Commander Task Force

72 searched extensively, as did crews aboard U.S. Navy Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25 knighthawks, a U.S. Coast Guard HC-130 Hercules from Air Station Barbers Point, the USCGC Oliver Henry (WPC 1140), Station Apra Harbor's 45-foot Response Boat-Mediums, and Guam Fire Rescue's coastal and offshore teams.

Four self-locating datum marker buoys (SLDMBs) transmitted data to refine Search and Rescue Optimal Planning System (SAROPS) drift predictions, guiding searches across dynamic waters. Shoreside teams scoured marinas and lookouts, while leads from community tips, including sightings on April 12 near Guam's northwest coast, were thoroughly investigated. Despite these efforts, no trace of Lady G or

debris was found, underscoring the challenges of the vast and unpredictable seas.

The search for Mr. Hattori faced conditions including east winds of up to 15 knots, seas of 5 to 7 feet, and midweek deteriorating conditions with seas building to 8 feet at times. No watches or warnings were in effect.



The Foneni Achocho Sensu (FAS) Athletic Organization and the Ayuda Foundation Announce the Donation of Next-Use Books to students in Chuuk State

Foneni Achocho Sensu (FAS) Athletic Organization

April 22, 2025

The Foneni Achocho Sensu (FAS) Athletic Organization, in collaboration with the Ayuda Foundation, under the leadership of Ms. Carlotta Leon Guerrero, is pleased to announce a generous donation of all subject learning next-use books to the students of Chuuk State in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM).

This book donation comprises a wide assortment of books equipping teachers and students in Chuuk with essential learning materials. One hundred and sixteen (116) pallets of surveyed next-use books piled up at the Guam Department of Education Warehouse in Piti, intended to be destroyed. The Ayuda Foundation and FAS met and discussed the value of the next-use books. The Ayuda asked GDOE to donate the books to Chuuk State. FAS reached out to Chuuk State and received a confirmation that Chuuk would be more than grateful to take the books. Ms. Leon Guerrero reached out to the neighboring Islands, but no one raised their hand to take the books. Chuuk did.

Ms. Leon Guerrero stated, "This donation has books for all subjects in grades K-12. There are about one hundred and sixteen pallets of textbooks. Every student will have at least four to five books each."

Guam Department of Education, Dr. Erik Swanson's said, "GDOE is grateful to be able to share instructional materials with our neighbors in Chuuk. The idea of 'next use' is the best way to describe the textbooks we are passing to their new home after Chuuk education leaders have had the opportunity to see what we have available for their young learners."

We extend our appreciation to the Governor of Chuuk State, the Honorable Alexander Narruhn, and the Chuuk Department of Education for accepting the donation of next-use books. These next-use books will significantly impact students' education in Chuuk. They will provide valuable resources to teachers in the classroom and encourage reading and learning.

In response to this generous donation, Governor Narruhn expressed his gratitude to all parties involved in this donation initiative. This book donation

will make a significant difference for our students in Chuuk. "On behalf of the Chuuk Department of Education, especially the children of Chuuk, I convey our appreciation to the Ayuda Foundation and FAS for their kind donation. This contribution will greatly help literacy in Chuuk. I am even thinking of starting a public library, and this effort will be a great asset to our community.

"Thank you, Carlotta, for your genuine assistance to Chuuk and its children," said Governor Narruhn.

This collaborative effort demonstrates good deeds of effective leadership at the highest levels stepping forward to help a great cause. It is a testament to how great leaders can foster goodwill and inspire collective action toward a meaningful greater cause.

It is possible through meaningful collaboration and partnership with organizations and businesses such as the Ayuda Foundation, Guam Department of Education, Matson Navigation Company, Pacific Trucking, Ambros Inc., and Foneni Achocho Sensu Athletic Organization. We have stepped forward together, demonstrating our good deeds and commitment to making a difference in driving positive change.

Additionally, we extend our appreciation to the office of the Governor of Guam, the Honorable Lou Leon Guerrero, for supporting and ensuring the success of the collaborative efforts.

In a virtual meeting, hosted by Matson Navigation, the company connected with the Chuuk Department of Education to ensure there is a plan in place to receive and distribute the books. Ms. Deanna Aizawa, the Chief Planning and Development officer with the Chuuk Department of Education (CDOE), is the point of contact in Chuuk to receive and distribute the books to all the schools in Chuuk. Ms. Aizawa stated, "The Chuuk Department of Education has secured a storage facility to store the books while sorting them before distribution."

CDOE Deputy Director Jason Reiong added, "CDOE will receive the books, sort them out, and distribute to all the schools in the summer."

This collaboration effort is possible due to a generous donation from Matson

Navigation Company. Matson donated six 40-foot containers and their shipping costs to send the books to Chuuk. This huge donation is possible because of Matson's meaningful commitment to serving the community.

Mr. Stephen Gatewood, Sales Manager, Matson Navigation Company, said, "Matson is proud to donate the shipping of the textbooks, which will enable greater access to education in the Federated States of Micronesia. We are honored to work alongside the Ayuda Foundation, the Guam Department of Education (GDOE), and the Chuuk Department of Education to make this project a reality. Matson is committed to serving the communities in which we live and work."

We reached out to Pacific Trucking to help transport the six Matson containers to the warehouse and the port. Thank you, Pacific Trucking, for transporting the six containers to and from the warehouse to the port. "Pacific Trucking is always pleased to help the schools of Micronesia, and we hope this huge book donation will make for happy students and teachers," said Mike Limtiaco, Vice President of Pacific Unlimited Inc.

The FAS contacted Ambros Inc. to help load the 116 pallets of books into the Matson containers. Frank Shimizu Jr., president of Ambros Inc., stated, "We are happy to help; we always help the Micronesian Islands."

Thank you, Matson Navigation Company, Patrick Bulaon, Hans Sholley, Len Isotoff, and Stephen Gatewood, for donating the shipping cost for the 116 pallets of next-use books to Chuuk. Thank you to Ambros Inc. for loading the pallets into the containers.

On behalf of the students in Chuuk, thank you and Kinisou Chapur, to the GDOE for donating the next-use books to Chuuk. We are also grateful to the Ayuda Foundation, who played a significant role in facilitating the logistics needed for the donation to reach Chuuk State.

Foneni Achocho Sensu (FAS) Athletic Organization
Thank you, FAS organization, for advocating for the students

in Chuuk. FAS will continue to work with the Ayuda Foundation, GDOE, and CDOE on initiatives that foster learning and peace in our regions. When our youth are educated, we have a peaceful community.

For more information about the book donation and to learn how you can get involved in supporting education initiatives, please get in touch with FAS Athletic Organization president John Howard at (671) 998-9817 or by email at johnrhoward@gmail.com. You can also contact Carlotta Leon Guerrero at 671-688-4753 or by email at carlottaguam@yahoo.com.



Forum Chair Leads high-level Pacific resilience facility capitalisation advocacy with global partners

Pacific Island Forum Secretariat

April 23, 2025

Washington D.C., United States of America – The Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Tonga and Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, Hon. Dr 'Aisake Valu Eke, together with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretary General, Baron Waqa, is undertaking a high-level advocacy mission to the United States this week as part of regional efforts to secure capitalisation pledges for the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF).

The advocacy mission follows the successful endorsement of the PRF Establishment Agreement (Treaty) by Forum Economic Ministers during their Special Meeting held in Tonga in March of this year.

“Following the endorsement of the Treaty for signing by Forum Leaders,

this advocacy mission is being held to coincide with the global multilateral meetings of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). It is an opportunity to further engage the Pacific Islands Forum’s development partners and multilateral institutions to support the Pacific-owned and Pacific-led regional resilience financing facility for Pacific communities, without incurring a further debt burden for our members”, the Forum Chair, Dr Eke said.

“Our message is simple: the Pacific Islands Forum is serious about the PRF. We are saying to our development partners that the time to act is now, and to support the PRF so that we can demonstrate the transformative power of this grant investment vehicle, to predictably finance our communities’ resilience needs”, the Forum Chair emphasised.

Secretary General Waqa highlighted the strategic importance of the mission in advancing the Forum Leaders’ collective vision under the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, particularly relating to resilient and sustainable development reform.

“This advocacy mission is about unlocking new capital flows and scaling up investments in the PRF from transformative partnerships that deliver for our Pacific people. We have fundraised about US\$150m from COP28 (2023) to COP29 (2024). We are committed to mobilising resources to raise the balance of US\$350m to reach the US\$500m capitalisation target for the PRF by COP31 in 2026. We aim to take a ratified PRF Treaty to COP30. We are engaging with institutions and Governments that can help the PRF as a Pacific-owned priority to assure access

to finance for our communities when we launch our first call for proposals at the 55th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in Palau in 2026,” said SG Waqa.

The PRF Treaty will be presented to Forum Leaders at their meeting in September 2025 in the Solomon Islands for signature, and thereafter, to deposit their instruments of ratification by the end of 2025.

This advocacy mission underscores the Pacific Islands Forum’s commitment to driving international cooperation and to champion innovative financing and investment solutions that respond to the Pacific’s unique vulnerabilities, while upholding regional solidarity and sovereignty.

Fisheries dependent monitoring using Ikasavea application in FSM

FSM R & D

April 15, 2025

FSM—From April 7th to 11th, representatives from all states of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) coastal fisheries divisions received a training on conducting fisheries monitoring using the Pacific Community (SPC) Ikasavea application and associated database tools in Pohnpei, FSM.

What is Ikasavea? It is a mobile application used to collect data at seafood markets or from fishers. The application allows for collection of fish and invertebrate measurements through the use of photos of specimens on a measuring board and scale or on a calibrated mat. The photos are analysed automatically on a server using artificial intelligence (AI). The artificial intelligence reads the weight from the scale, determines the length of the fish and suggests a species

identification (ID).

The FSM participants are trained in understanding of how fisheries monitoring data can be used in management. Throughout the week they gained confidence in how to design surveys, learnt how to use the Ikasavea application to collect fisheries data, and used SPC’s coastal fisheries database platform to conduct quality control of incoming data and carry out basic analyses.

The Ikasavea training was made possible by the collaborative

efforts of the FSM Department of Resources and Development-Marine Division, SPC-Fisheries Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems division, Pohnpei State Office of Fisheries and Aquaculture, Blue Prosperity Micronesia, Waitt Institute, and Pacific European Union Marine Partnership Programme. Our field visits would have not been successful without the local fish markets for their patience and time with us, especially, D&C fish market and Saimon market.



Evidence-based decision making made easier in FSM

ASYCUDA

April 23, 2025

FSM—One year ago, the Customs and Tax Administration (CTA) of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) introduced the UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD) backed ASYCUDA system, automating customs processes.

Since its implementation, the trading community has greatly benefited from the system’s ability to streamline and expedite customs clearance.

Additionally, the ASYCUDA Dashboard feature has brought greater transparency

and improved accuracy in data reporting for the CTA management.

Mr. Van David, a Data Analyst in the Federated States of Micronesia, noted that the country was fortunate to implement the Dashboard soon after it introduced ASYCUDA, as it provided significant advantages in reporting.

“The ASYCUDA Dashboard is a tool that ensures transparency for our Administration’s Management, giving them direct access to the data,” Mr. David explained.

Previously, data would be extracted and

manually presented to the management team. However, with the ASYCUDA Dashboard in place, management now has immediate, real-time access to the data.

“Now, when we submit monthly reports, management can directly compare the data and verify its accuracy,” Mr. David said.

“The ability of the Dashboard to drill down into specific data as needed has significantly simplified the reporting process for the ASYCUDA team in FSM, transforming what used to be a cumbersome task into a seamless

operation.”

“Though we are still new to both ASYCUDA, we recognize that there are additional features that could further enhance our operations in the future. The addition of the Dashboard has already been an immense advantage for us in FSM,” Mr. David concluded.

The successful automation of the FSM Customs Administration was made possible through the support of the European Union-funded Improving Pacific Islands Customs and Trade (IMPACT) Project, implemented by the UN Trade and Development.

East Asia and Pacific: Technology, Reforms, and Cooperation Pathways to Future Prosperity

The World Bank

April 24, 2025

Washington DC—In 2024, East Asia and the Pacific (EAP) outpaced most regions in economic growth. To sustain this momentum and generate jobs, EAP countries must navigate global uncertainty and tackle long-term challenges tied to shifting global integration, climate change, and demographic trends.

In its 2025 Regional Economic Update, the World Bank projects that growth in EAP will slow down to 4.0 percent in 2025, compared to 5.0 percent in 2024. Prospects for higher or lower growth depend partly on broader growth prospects, but also on how country policies respond to uncertainty in the global environment. Poverty rates in the region will continue to decline. Around 24 million people in the region are projected to escape poverty between 2024 and 2025, based on the upper-middle-income poverty line.

Growing global uncertainty is having an impact on business and consumer confidence, inhibiting investment and consumption. Trade restrictions are expected to impact EAP’s exports while slower global growth is likely to further reduce external demand.

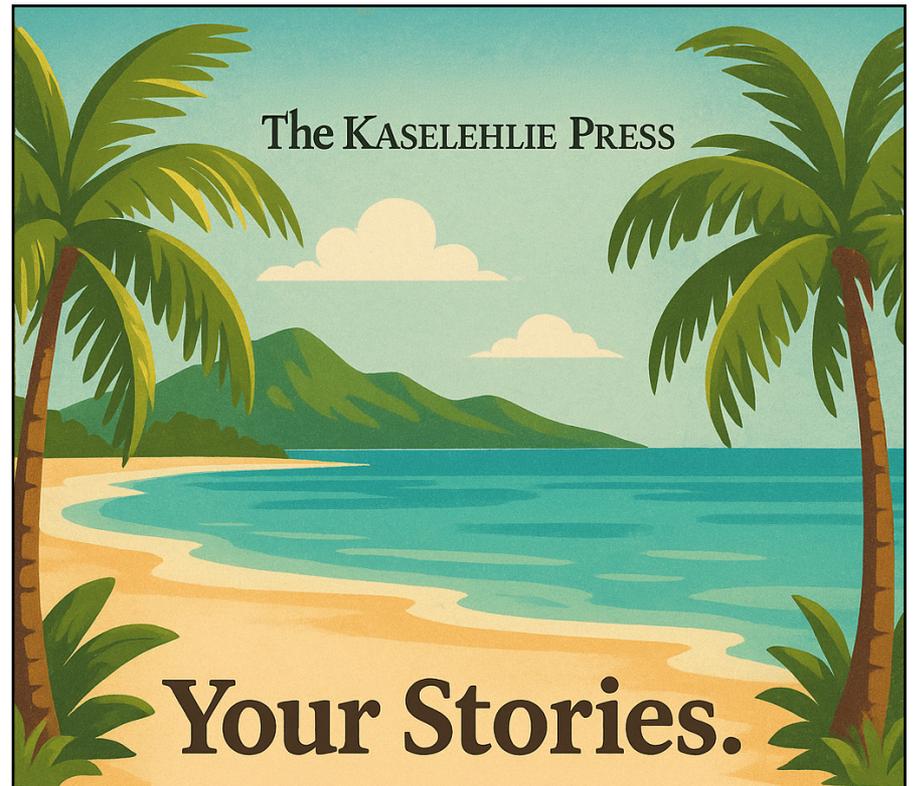
“While navigating global uncertainty, countries across EAP have the opportunity to strengthen their

economic prospects by embracing and investing in new technologies, opening up business opportunities through bolder reforms, and deepening international cooperation,” said Manuela V. Ferro, Vice President of the World Bank for East Asia and Pacific.

Growth prospects for countries in the region in 2025 are as follows: China at 4.0 percent; Cambodia at 4.0 percent; Indonesia at 4.7 percent; Malaysia at 3.9 percent; Mongolia at 6.3 percent; Lao PDR at 3.5 percent; the Philippines at 5.3 percent; Thailand at 1.6 percent; and Viet Nam at 5.8 percent. Growth in the Pacific Island countries is projected at 2.5 percent.

The World Bank suggests a three-pronged policy response. First, harnessing new technologies could boost productivity and as a result could create more jobs, as shown in Malaysia and Thailand. Second, reforms to boost competition, especially in services, could create new economic opportunities, as seen in Viet Nam. Third, greater international cooperation can enhance resilience.

“Combining new technologies with bold reform and innovative cooperation could help countries in the region cope with current environment and longer-term challenges.” said World Bank East Asia and Pacific Chief Economist Aaditya Mattoo. “That is the recipe for higher productivity and better jobs.”



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