

Governor Joseph delivers wide-ranging State of the State address to Legislature

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

March 10, 2026

Kolonia, Pohnpei — Pohnpei Governor Stevenson A. Joseph delivered a lengthy and wide-ranging State of the State address Tuesday morning to the 11th Pohnpei State Legislature, outlining the government's priorities and reviewing progress across nearly every sector of state operations.

The address was delivered in the Legislature chamber before lawmakers, members of the Mwoalen Wahu, President Wesley Simina, members of the resident diplomatic corps, state leaders, and many citizens.

Joseph opened his address by saying the report was not only an assessment of

government performance but a statement of direction for the state's future. He said his administration, working with Lieutenant Governor Herolyn S. Movick, has aligned state departments and agencies under six major policy priorities: food security, water security, energy security, health and wellness, education, and climate resilience.

"These priorities guide our planning, budgeting, and performance across every department and agency of our government," Joseph said.

Food production and tourism

Joseph reported that strengthening local food production remains central to the state's strategy to reduce dependence on imports and protect residents from global price fluctuations.



Among the achievements cited were the artificial insemination of 177 sows resulting in 658 piglets, the planting of 141 traditional crop varieties at the state gene

bank, the construction of 16 agricultural greenhouses across several municipalities, and the distribution of more than 2,000

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FSM Supreme Court rules Panuel's oath valid, declares him sitting Pohnpei legislator

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

March 11, 2026

Pohnpei, FSM - The FSM Supreme Court has ruled that Welson Panuel's

oath of office as a member of the Pohnpei Legislature remains valid, declaring that he is a sitting member of the body despite the Legislature's earlier action attempting to invalidate the oath.

In a Memorandum of Decision issued March 10, 2026, Associate Justice Larry L. Wentworth ruled that once the Pohnpei Legislature determined Panuel met the constitutional qualifications to serve, it had no authority to invalidate the oath that allowed him to assume office.

The decision concludes a legal dispute that arose following the October 14, 2025 special election in which Panuel was elected to represent Kitti Municipal Government in the Pohnpei Legislature. He was certified as the winning candidate on October 23, 2025.

After reviewing his qualifications, the Legislature's credentials committee reported that Panuel was duly elected and met all requirements to serve. The full Legislature adopted that report on November 14, 2025, effectively determining that Panuel satisfied the constitutional qualifications for

membership.

Shortly afterward, while many legislators were attending a conference overseas, Panuel took the oath of office on November 19, 2025 before Associate Justice Mayceleen JD Anson of the Pohnpei Supreme Court. The oath was arranged at the request of Acting Speaker McGarry Miguel and followed procedures recommended by the Legislature's legal staff.

However, when the Legislature later convened, it declared by voice vote that the oath administered to Panuel was "invalid."

The Legislature subsequently scheduled a formal oath-taking ceremony for January 21, 2026 and invited Panuel to attend. Panuel did not appear, citing a

[Click here for continuation](#)



Joseph-Movick administration welcomes U.S. Treasury Delegation to Pohnpei



Pohnpei Public Information

March 2, 2026

Peilapalap, Pohnpe — On February 25, 2026 Governor Stevenson A. Joseph received a high-level delegation from the U.S. Department of the Treasury this week, marking the first official visit to Pohnpei by an Official from the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

The meeting at Peilapalap between The Honorable Robert Kaproth, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Asia & Pacific, delegation, and the Joseph-Movick administration, underscored the U.S. Treasury’s expanded role in the economic relationship between the United States and the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), particularly following recent congressional legislation and shifts in USAID’s regional presence.
Strengthening the Financial Sector

A primary focus of the dialogue was the stability of Pohnpei’s commercial banking sector. Governor Joseph expressed confidence in the local banking environment, noting its resilience due to the existing FDIC relationship.

The leaders discussed the global challenge of Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) compliance. DAS Kaproth addressed concerns regarding financial isolation as commercial banks pull out of smaller jurisdictions. To combat this, the delegation highlighted World Bank initiatives designed to help the FSM strengthen regulatory regimes and maintain vital connections to the U.S. dollar system.

The delegation and leadership also reviewed the management of Trust Funds and the critical need for robust regulatory frameworks. Governor Joseph emphasized that proper management and the role of national institutions would be vital for the future of financial management.

Governor Joseph concluded the meeting by welcoming the U.S. Treasury’s technical support, noting that the partnership provides the FSM and Pohnpei State Government with the policy choices necessary for a self-reliant economic future.



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Monday, March 23, 2026

Governor Joseph discusses roads, landfill, and power situation in interview

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

March 11, 2026

Pohnpei — Governor Stevenson A. Joseph said that deteriorating roads, the overcrowded landfill, and continuing power outages remain among the most difficult challenges facing the Pohnpei State government, but he said steps are underway to address each of the issues.

During an interview with The Kaselehlie Press on March 11, Joseph discussed the problems in detail and outlined the government's plans for improvement, while acknowledging that limited funding and equipment shortages continue to slow progress.

Roads and equipment shortages

The condition of Pohnpei's roads has drawn increasing public concern in recent months as potholes and surface damage have become more visible across the island.

Joseph explained that about \$2 million has been appropriated for road construction projects, but work has stalled because the Pohnpei Transportation Authority currently lacks the equipment needed to carry out repairs.

According to the governor, several key pieces of equipment—including excavators, bulldozers, and paving machinery—are either unavailable or broken down. Without those machines, the authority cannot proceed with road repairs even though funding for construction work exists.

The situation has also been complicated

by personnel issues at the Pohnpei Transportation Authority. Joseph said the authority had more than 90 employees on payroll despite having no active projects. The administration had previously instructed the agency to reduce its workforce and rehire workers later on a project-by-project basis once construction work resumed.

However, the governor said that when employee contracts expired at the end of December, some workers were allowed to remain even though their contracts had not been renewed. According to Joseph, employees were told to stay until projects began moving again.

That situation has now created a legal question, as workers are seeking compensation for the period beginning in January until they were later terminated. Joseph said the matter is currently being reviewed by the Attorney General's office.

Joseph said he told PTA to consider outsourcing some work to private contractors with the necessary equipment while the authority focuses on paving operations, which by law remain its primary responsibility.

He also noted that drainage issues have contributed to the rapid deterioration of recently built roads. In several cases, roads resurfaced within the past five or six years have already failed because water infiltration was not properly addressed during construction.

Landfill challenges and waste management plans

The governor also addressed concerns about conditions at the island's landfill, where growing piles of waste have raised questions about how long the site can continue operating.

Responsibility for managing the landfill was transferred to the transportation authority after a contract with a private waste management company was not finalized before the start of the fiscal year.

The legislature subsequently passed a law expanding PTA's responsibilities to include landfill management.

Joseph acknowledged that the authority lacks both the equipment and technical expertise to manage the dump effectively, creating additional challenges.

To address the issue, the governor said the state has begun seeking assistance from Japan. During a recent trip, Pohnpei submitted a letter of expression to Japan's Ministry of Environment requesting support for a project that would redesign the landfill and create additional waste cells.

The immediate goal, Joseph said, is to close the current dumping area and open new cells that will allow continued use of the site while longer-term solutions are developed.

The state is also pursuing a city-to-city partnership with Japan's Oki Islands, where officials recently observed a waste disposal system that may offer a model adaptable to Pohnpei's needs.

Joseph said he hopes the planning work can be completed this year with implementation beginning next year.

Meanwhile, the state is also seeking equipment such as a bulldozer that would help manage waste at the landfill, and officials are exploring possible assistance from the FSM Congress.

Frequent power outages across the island remain another source of frustration for residents.

Joseph said technicians at the Pohnpei Utilities Corporation are working around the clock to keep aging generators operating until new equipment becomes available.

Three new generators funded by the World Bank have already arrived in Pohnpei and have been assembled. Workers are now constructing the building that will house the units.

According to Joseph, the generators are expected to be operational by June 30.

The new units are designed specifically for public utility use and will have a combined capacity of roughly seven and a half megawatts, enough to meet current peak electricity demand. Once they are online, Joseph said they should stabilize power supply for at least the next two years if the equipment performs as expected.

Existing generators—many of which were originally intended only for backup use—will then be maintained as reserve units.

Tensions with the legislature

Joseph also addressed tensions between the executive and legislative branches of the Pohnpei State government, an issue he raised during his State of the State message delivered the previous day in the Pohnpei State Legislature chambers.

During that address, the governor said he again extended what he described as an "olive branch" to lawmakers in an effort to improve cooperation between the two branches.

According to Joseph, the primary disagreement stems from several laws passed by the legislature that he believes are unconstitutional. After vetoing the measures and seeing the vetoes overridden, the governor filed legal challenges in court rather than implement them.

Joseph said some legislators have insisted that he withdraw those lawsuits as a condition for meeting with them. He said he has declined to do so, maintaining that he will not enforce laws he believes violate the constitution.

The governor said he nevertheless renewed his call for dialogue during the State of the State address, urging cooperation for the benefit of the public.

He also acknowledged that political tensions have increased in recent months, including discussion of possible impeachment.

"If they believe they have strong grounds," Joseph said he told the legislators, "then put it in."



Joseph-Movick Administration reaffirms Pohnpei's commitment to National Unity and Strategic Growth at 4th CEC

Pohnpei Public Information

February 25, 2026

Kosrae, FSM — Governor Stevenson A. Joseph has successfully concluded his participation in the 4th Chief Executive Council (CEC), joining President Wesley W. Simina and fellow leaders for three days of high-level deliberations. On behalf of the Joseph-Movick Administration, the Governor signed a joint communique and eight resolutions to move the nation forward.

A Unified Vision for Progress

In his closing remarks, Governor Joseph expressed profound gratitude to Governor Tulensa Palik and the people of Kosrae for their hospitality. He emphasized that under the Joseph-Movick Administration, Pohnpei remains a dedicated partner in national building.

"Pohnpei State stands in full solidarity with the resolutions reached during this summit," Governor Joseph stated. "We are not just signing papers; we are

committing to the future of our people."

Key Policy Endorsements

The Governor highlighted several critical areas where the Joseph-Movick Administration will take an active role:

- **Financial Resilience:** Full endorsement of IDA21 and blended financing to tackle climate change and economic shifts.
- **Youth & Sports:** Pohnpei is proud to host the 2027 FSM Games. The administration views this as a vital investment in our youth, with state-level fundraising already a priority.
- **Education:** Continued support for the IQBE project, integrating its successes into a curriculum that prepares children for a globalized world while keeping them rooted in their heritage.
- **Self-Reliance:** The launch of the FSM Strategic Development Plan (SDP) marks a historic milestone in the administration's roadmap to self-reliance.

Infrastructure and Tax Reform

Addressing infrastructure, Governor Joseph noted that while he has often advocated for the benefits of recentralization, the Joseph-Movick Administration recognizes the spirit of the Council's consensus. He pledged support for any management framework—centralized or decentralized—that delivers fast efficient implementation results, accountability, and quality.

On Tax Reform, the Governor reiterated the administration's stance:

"Meaningful consultation within Pohnpei is paramount. We must ensure that any transition is transparent, fair, and reflects the unique economic landscape of our state."

The Governor concluded by calling for the spirit of cooperation found in Kosrae to guide the leaders back to their respective states, strengthening the bond of the Federated States of Micronesia.



FSMT Cable Corp says East Micronesia Cable now connects Kosrae to Pohnpei

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

March 10, 2026

FSM - The FSM Telecommunications Cable Corporation (FSMT Cable Corp) said the East Micronesia Cable (EMC) system connecting Kosrae to Pohnpei has been completed and is ready for testing with telecommunications operators.

In a press release dated March 6, FSMT Cable Corp Chief Executive Officer Gordon Segal wrote that the new connection means all four states of the Federated States of Micronesia are now linked to high-capacity undersea cable infrastructure.

"With the completion of the EMC cable system, Kosrae is now connected to Pohnpei, and all four FSM states will finally be connected to high-capacity undersea cables," Segal wrote.

FSMT Cable Corp. said the system

was scheduled to begin testing with operators on March 9 and that the cable has an initial installed capacity of 100 gigabits per second. According to FSMT Cable Corp, that represents about 50 times the capacity of the current Starlink gateway in use and more than 130 times the bandwidth typically used in Kosrae during peak periods.

As part of the rollout, FSMT Cable Corp said the town of Tofol in Kosrae is being prepared for connection to a fiber-to-the-home network. Government offices, the College of Micronesia-FSM campus, commercial facilities, and other premises are expected to be among the first sites connected to the fiber network as testing proceeds.

The company also said that existing temporary connections and the Starlink gateway are expected to transition to permanent fiber infrastructure that integrates terrestrial networks, submarine cables, and satellite services.

According to the release, the EMC cable operates under a consortium arrangement similar to the earlier HANTRU cable system, allowing participating partners to share operating costs.

FSMT Cable Corp said the commissioning of the EMC cable also places the HANTRU spur—linking Pohnpei, Chuuk, Kosrae, Kiribati, and Nauru to Guam—under the protection of a regional marine maintenance agreement designed to ensure response in the event of cable damage and to share repair costs among partners.

The company said it does not currently expect to increase prices for telecommunications operators during 2026.

According to the release, cost management, donor support, and the structure of the EMC cable agreement may allow wholesale prices to remain

unchanged until November 30, 2026, even as additional capacity becomes available to Kosrae following the installation of the Starlink gateway earlier this year.

However, FSMT Cable Corp said price increases may occur beginning in 2027 and that further updates are expected next year.

The company said an official commissioning ceremony for the EMC cable system is expected later this year, with invitations to be issued on behalf of the project's three donors—Australia, the United States, and Japan.

FSMT Cable Corp also reported progress on additional telecommunications infrastructure, including ongoing underground fiber construction and planning for a potential future Google cable connection to Chuuk, for which a marine survey has already been completed.

Japan Embassy hosts reception celebrating Emperor Naruhito's birthday

By *Bill Jaynes*
The Kaselehlie Press

February 24, 2026

PALIKIR, Pohnpei — The Embassy of Japan to the Federated States of Micronesia hosted a reception on Tuesday evening, February 24, to celebrate the birthday of His Majesty Emperor Naruhito. The event, held at the ambassador's residence in Palikir, brought together members of the resident diplomatic corps, government dignitaries and other invited guests for an evening reception and dinner program.

The formal program opened with remarks by Masaki Hashimoto, First Secretary of the Embassy of Japan to the FSM, who also served as master of ceremonies for the evening. In his opening comments, he spoke about the philosophical influence of Buddhism in Japanese society, describing the concept of impermanence — the idea that all things in the world eventually change or pass away.

Despite that philosophy, he said, Japan's imperial system stands as a rare historical continuity. According to Japanese tradition, the imperial line dates back more than 2,500 years to Emperor Jinmu and has continued without dynastic interruption. The First Secretary explained that this unbroken imperial line is a source of pride for the Japanese people and one of the reasons Japan celebrates its national day on the birthday of the Emperor.

He noted that Emperor Naruhito, the 126th monarch in Japan's imperial

history, turned 66 on February 23, and said the embassy was pleased to celebrate the occasion with friends and partners in the FSM.

Japan's Ambassador to the FSM, His Excellency Nobuo Kagomiya, then addressed the gathering and spoke about the strengthening ties between Japan and the Federated States of Micronesia.

Kagomiya reflected on recent exchanges between the two countries, including two visits by President Wesley W. Simina to Japan in 2025. During one visit in March, President Simina held a summit meeting with Japan's prime minister and toured the Fukushima nuclear power plant to observe the treatment and discharge of ALPS-treated water. Later in the year, the president returned to Japan to participate in FSM National Day activities at the Osaka-Kansai Expo, where a large delegation from the FSM attended events and cultural performances.

The ambassador also referred to visits by FSM leaders and officials to Japan, including Vice President Aren B. Palik, Speaker of Congress Edmund Moses, and Pohnpei Governor Stevenson Joseph, who recently visited Amacho, an island community in Japan, to explore cooperation in aquaculture and seafood processing.

Kagomiya spoke about a range of development cooperation projects supported by Japan, including the Pohnpei Port Expansion Project, a \$30 million initiative that began construction last year and represents the largest assistance

project Japan has undertaken in the FSM. He also referred to continuing work by the Japan Mine Action Service (JMAS) to remove oil from sunken World War II vessels in Chuuk Lagoon and to respond to recent oil leakage affecting Uman Island.

Other initiatives mentioned included Japan's role in the East Micronesia submarine cable project, carried out in cooperation with the United States and Australia, as well as programs addressing safe water supply, maternal health and cervical cancer prevention implemented in partnership with international organizations.

Ambassador Kagomiya also spoke about Japan's ongoing support for education and community facilities in the FSM, including school buildings, gymnasiums and health facilities, along with training opportunities and volunteer programs organized through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). More than 20 JICA volunteers are currently working in the FSM in fields such as education, health and environmental programs.

Representing President Simina at the reception, Vice President Aren B. Palik offered congratulations to Emperor Naruhito and expressed appreciation for the longstanding friendship between the two countries.

Palik described the relationship between Japan and the FSM as one built on "kizuna," a Japanese term referring to the bonds of friendship, trust and shared history that connect the two nations

across generations.

He said Japan's support has contributed to many aspects of life in the FSM, including infrastructure development, inter-island transportation, telecommunications, climate resilience and disaster response. Among the projects he mentioned were the Pohnpei port project, discussions on passenger and cargo vessels to strengthen connectivity among the islands, and collaboration with Japan, the United States and Australia on fiber-optic communication links.

The Vice President also referred to training programs, scholarship opportunities and technical assistance provided through Japanese programs, as well as support for marine resource management and emergency response activities. He said these contributions have supported education, health services and sustainable economic development in the FSM.

Concluding his remarks, Palik invited guests to join him in a toast honoring Emperor Naruhito, wishing him continued good health and long life, and expressing hope that the friendship between Japan and the Federated States of Micronesia will continue to grow for the benefit of both nations and the wider Pacific community.

A magnificent buffet dinner was served after the ceremonies after which Ambassador Kagomiya introduced the chef whose notable words were that he was very tired after preparing the feast.



Japan provides \$666,000 grant to support Chuuk oil spill preparedness

By *Bill Jaynes*
The Kaselehlie Press

March 6, 2026

PALIKIR, Pohnpei — A grant signing ceremony held Thursday morning, March 5, at the Embassy of Japan to the Federated States of Micronesia marked Japan's continued support for oil spill response and environmental protection efforts in Chuuk State.

During the ceremony, Japan's Ambassador to the FSM, Nabuo Kagomiya, announced a \$666,000 grant under Japan's Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects to strengthen Chuuk's capacity to respond to oil spills and manage environmental risks.

The project will support the construction of a storage warehouse, the procurement of specialized oil spill response equipment, and the installation of an incinerator to process collected oil and contaminated cleanup materials.

"Responding to oil leakage from the sunken ships in Chuuk Lagoon, this project would grant totaling \$666,000," Ambassador Kagomiya said.

He explained that the grant will help address several urgent needs, including the shortage of storage space for oil collected from leaking wrecks. The warehouse will allow the Japan Mine Action Service (JMAS), which has been working on mitigation efforts in Chuuk Lagoon, to safely

store recovered oil.

An incinerator included in the grant will allow collected oil and used cleanup materials to be burned and recycled safely.

Ambassador Kagomiya referred to the oil leak from the vessel Rio de Janeiro in September last year that contaminated the shoreline of Uman in Chuuk.

"After the unfortunate oil leak accident from Rio de Janeiro in September last year, which contaminated the shore of Uman Island in Chuuk, the staff of JMAS has made a significant contribution to prevent further leakage," he said, adding that the leakage has now subsided.

Japan has already provided emergency assistance for the cleanup effort. The Government of Japan and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) supplied oil absorbent booms and other equipment earlier this year and arranged for salvage specialists from Japan to conduct training and demonstrations for Chuuk's emergency task force members.

Chuuk Environmental Protection Agency Executive Director Bradford Mori expressed appreciation for the support, describing the project as critical for protecting the state's marine environment.

"The prevention of oil spills is not merely a state project," Mori said. "It is a serious responsibility that

safeguards our marine ecosystems, protects our habitats, and preserves the integrity of our ocean for future generations."

He said the grant will strengthen Chuuk's ability to prepare for and respond to future environmental threats.

"This grant will significantly strengthen our capacity to improve emergency preparedness, build technical expertise, and implement preventive measures designed to mitigate environmental risks," Mori said.

Mori added that the assistance represents the continuing partnership between Chuuk State and Japan.

"Beyond its tangible impact, this partnership symbolizes the enduring friendship and mutual respect between Chuuk State and the Government of Japan," he said.

Abigail Kim-Lambert, Assistant Secretary of the FSM Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management (DECCEM), also thanked Japan for its continued assistance.

"Today signifies a continued commitment from the Government of Japan in assisting the Federated States of Micronesia, specifically the State of Chuuk, in addressing the oil spill," she said.

Kim-Lambert noted that Japan has

provided a wide range of support, including the Japan Mine Action Service program, equipment handovers, and technical teams that arrived early in the response to the oil spill.

"As President Simina indicated in his statement at the U.N. General Assembly, the scope of this crisis is far more than the FSM can handle," she said.

She said the project represents an opportunity for international cooperation to address environmental risks created by wartime wrecks in Micronesian waters.

"This ceremony reinforces the collaboration to mitigate future oil spills and protect our marine environment," Kim-Lambert said.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, Ambassador Kagomiya and Chuuk EPA Director Mori signed the grant documents formalizing the assistance. The project forms part of Japan's broader effort to support environmental protection and sustainable development in the Federated States of Micronesia.

"Japan and the FSM have cultivated friendly relations based on long historical ties and common values such as democracy, peace, rule of law, and human rights," Ambassador Kagomiya said, adding that Japan will continue to support the country's economic and social development.



...State of the State

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chickens through community poultry programs.

Tourism activity also increased during fiscal year 2025, with leisure visitor numbers rising by 14.2 percent. Popular attractions included Nan Madol, local waterfalls, and seasonal diving and surfing.

The state also hosted a cruise ship visit during the year, bringing 160 passengers ashore for cultural tours and local market activities.

Water access and infrastructure

Access to reliable water remains a major development priority.

Joseph said the water distribution expansion from the College of Micronesia–FSM area to Diadi in Kitti was completed in October 2025, providing potable water service to residents from Paies and Loale through Diadi.

The governor said protecting watersheds and improving water infrastructure remains essential for agriculture, public health, and climate adaptation.

Infrastructure development more broadly continues across several sectors.

Major projects underway or completed include water system upgrades, road improvements, new education facilities, and the installation of 7.5-megawatt diesel power generators to strengthen electricity reliability.

Plans are also moving forward for the development of the Dekehtik Marina project and additional water distribution extensions across the island.

Health system improvements

Joseph devoted a significant portion of his address to health care, noting that non-communicable diseases remain one of the greatest challenges facing Pohnpei.

He said the Department of Health and Social Services has strengthened primary care, expanded screening and outreach programs, and improved maternal and child health services.

Partnerships with organizations such as UNICEF have helped introduce new programs, including a maternal and child health record system, vaccination campaigns, and public health communications reaching thousands of residents.

Despite these efforts, Joseph said challenges remain, including limited intensive care capacity, equipment maintenance issues, and transportation constraints affecting outreach to outer islands.

Education improvements

Education initiatives were also detailed in the report.

Joseph said approximately 600 eighth-grade students advanced to high school during the year while about 380

students graduated from secondary school.

Internet bandwidth in public schools was expanded significantly to improve digital learning, while student transportation services were strengthened through the purchase of new buses and vans.

Teacher development programs are also underway, including graduate-level training through the Pacific Master’s of Education program at the University of Hawai’i.

Climate and environmental pressures

Joseph said climate change continues to pose serious risks for Pohnpei, including sea-level rise, coastal erosion, and changing rainfall patterns.

The state is working within national climate policy frameworks and regional partnerships to strengthen resilience, including coastal planning, water management improvements, and disaster preparedness programs.

He said adaptation projects supported through international climate funding are helping communities improve water systems, sanitation, and coastal protection.

Public safety and justice

The governor also reviewed activities within the Department of Public Safety.

Police recorded more than 1,200 cases during the year, including criminal and traffic violations, while emergency services responded to nearly 2,700 medical emergencies.

Despite these efforts, Joseph said several public

safety divisions face equipment shortages, limited staffing, and infrastructure needs.

The Fire and Emergency Services Division currently operates with only one ambulance and no operational fire truck, creating serious operational constraints.

Fiscal outlook

Joseph reported that state finances remain stable, with average annual revenues of about \$64 million and expenditures of approximately \$57 million during recent fiscal years.

However, he cautioned that revenue derived from fishing license fees can fluctuate due to international conditions.

To reduce risk, Joseph recommended the creation of an emergency stabilization fund to help maintain government services during revenue downturns.

Looking ahead

In closing, Joseph said the administration will continue focusing on increasing local food production, improving water systems, reducing non-communicable diseases, strengthening education, and addressing climate impacts.

He also said the government will work with lawmakers on the upcoming Comprehensive Budget Act of 2027 and the formal adoption of the state’s Strategic Development Plan.

“We face real challenges — economic pressures, infrastructure demands, workforce limitations,” Joseph said. “Yet we possess resilience, unity, and clear priorities.”

For complete English transcript of the State of the State address [Click here](#)

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UN cultural rights expert releases advance report on FSM visit

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

February 28, 2026

FSM - An advance edited version of the report on the visit of United Nations Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights, Alexandra Xanthaki, to the Federated States of Micronesia has been released ahead of its presentation to the UN Human Rights Council.

The report, titled Visit to the Federated States of Micronesia, was issued on February 25, 2026 under the reference A/HRC/61/49/Add.2. It examines how cultural rights are protected and practiced in the country and identifies both strengths and challenges facing the nation as it works to safeguard its cultural heritage and traditions.

Xanthaki conducted her mission to the FSM from June 2–13, 2025 at the invitation of the national government. During the visit she met with national and state officials, traditional leaders, civil society organizations, academics, and community members. She also visited sites in Pohnpei, Chuuk, and Kosrae, including Nan Madol, the Lelu ruins, and historic shipwreck sites in Chuuk Lagoon.

The Special Rapporteur wrote that the purpose of the mission was to understand how the government works to implement cultural rights and to identify good practices as well as obstacles to their promotion and protection. Cultural rights include the ability of people to participate in cultural life, maintain traditions and languages, and take part

in decisions affecting cultural heritage and development.

Strong cultural foundations

The report describes the FSM as a country with powerful cultural ties and strong community values. Across the islands, residents often identify first with their home island, then their state, and finally the nation as a whole. This layered identity reflects the diversity of languages, traditions, and practices that have developed across the country's 607 islands.

Xanthaki wrote that she was impressed by the strong sense of communal responsibility and solidarity she observed during her visit. Cultural practices, family networks, churches, and community groups play a major role in supporting people in times of difficulty.

The report also describes the continuing importance of traditional leadership systems alongside modern government structures. In many communities, chiefs and other traditional authorities remain highly respected and continue to influence community decisions.

Governance challenges

At the same time, the report identifies challenges in coordinating responsibilities among national, state, and traditional authorities.

Because the FSM is a federal system where states have significant autonomy, responsibilities related to culture,

education, and heritage protection are often divided among different levels of government. According to the report, clearer communication and coordination are needed to ensure that international human rights obligations are effectively implemented across all states.

The Special Rapporteur recommended the creation of a federal action plan on cultural rights and stronger reporting mechanisms to ensure that all levels of government work together toward shared goals.

Migration and demographic changes

Migration was another major theme discussed in the report. The Compact of Free Association with the United States has created significant opportunities for Micronesians to live and work abroad, but it has also contributed to population decline and the loss of skilled workers in some sectors.

According to the report, at least 20 percent of Micronesians now live overseas, while about 40 percent of households receive remittances from family members abroad. While these remittances provide economic benefits, migration also risks weakening community ties and interrupting the transmission of cultural knowledge between generations.

Many young people told the Special Rapporteur they hope to return home after studying or working abroad, but often struggle to find employment opportunities in the FSM.

Heritage protection and access

The report places strong emphasis on the need to preserve and document the nation's cultural heritage.

Although the FSM has many historically significant sites and traditions, the report notes that the country lacks a national museum and centralized archives. Many historical documents related to Micronesia are currently housed in Guam rather than in the FSM itself.

Nan Madol, the country's only UNESCO World Heritage site, also faces conservation challenges. These include vegetation growth damaging stone structures, erosion from storm surges, and the need for improved management and infrastructure to allow better access for visitors and researchers.

At the same time, the report recognizes positive efforts to protect cultural traditions, including the preservation of traditional navigation and canoe-building knowledge, which UNESCO has listed as intangible cultural heritage in need of urgent safeguarding.

Education and cultural knowledge

Education was identified as another key area where improvements could strengthen cultural rights.

The report says the current education system still reflects strong historical

[Click here for continuation](#)

...Panuel

[Click here to return](#)

religious objection to swearing the same oath twice.

On the same day, the Legislature adopted a resolution stating that because Panuel failed to take the oath at that ceremony, the seat remained vacant and a special election should be called.

Panuel then filed suit in the FSM Supreme Court seeking a declaratory judgment that he was a member of the Pohnpei Legislature and requesting an injunction preventing the Legislature

from interfering with his legislative duties.

In its decision, the court rejected arguments by the respondents that the matter was a non-justiciable political question beyond the court's authority. The court said the Pohnpei Constitution gives the Legislature the power to judge the qualifications of its members, but that authority is limited to the qualifications listed in the Constitution.

Once the Legislature determined Panuel met those qualifications, the court said the question of whether his oath of office was valid became a legal issue that the court could review.

The court found that Panuel's oath had

been administered by a judicial officer authorized to administer oaths under Pohnpei law, and that it was arranged through procedures recommended by the Legislature's own legal staff.

"Member-elect Panuel then took a valid oath of office, making him a sitting legislator," the court wrote.

The court therefore denied the respondents' motion to dismiss and their request for summary judgment. It instead granted summary judgment in Panuel's favor, issuing a declaratory judgment that his November 19, 2025 oath of office "was valid and remains valid and that therefore he is a sitting member of the Pohnpei Legislature."

While ruling in Panuel's favor, the court declined to issue an injunction against the Legislature. Justice Wentworth said injunctive relief is discretionary and expressed hope that the Speaker and Legislature could resolve the matter without further judicial intervention.

The decision also noted that Panuel's religious objection to taking a second oath raised constitutional concerns regarding freedom of religion, and the court said it would not interfere with his religious conscience.

The ruling directs the court clerk to enter a declaratory judgment formally recognizing Panuel as a sitting member of the Pohnpei Legislature.

...Cultural rights

Click here to return

influence from the United States and often places greater emphasis on American history and culture than on Micronesian history and traditions.

Xanthaki recommends expanding the teaching of local languages, history, and traditional knowledge in schools. Integrating elders and cultural educators into the education system could also help transmit cultural knowledge to younger generations.

Development rooted in culture

The report suggests that cultural knowledge and traditions can play an important role in shaping the country's development path.

Many Micronesians expressed a desire to pursue development that protects community values, environmental sustainability, and food security rather than following models used in larger, more industrialized economies. Traditional knowledge related to fisheries, agriculture, navigation, and environmental management could

provide valuable guidance for climate adaptation and sustainable development strategies.

Recommendations

Among its recommendations, the report calls for the FSM government to ratify additional international human rights treaties, strengthen its national human rights mechanisms, and increase funding for cultural infrastructure such as museums, archives, and cultural centers.

It also encourages greater participation by women, youth, persons with disabilities, and marginalized groups in cultural and political life.

The advance report will soon be available in all UN languages and will be formally presented to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva during its current session.

The Special Rapporteur's presentation and the interactive dialogue with member states are scheduled for early March, with a webcast available through the United Nations web television service.

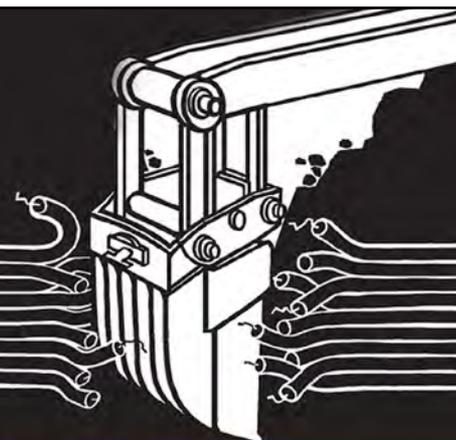
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10th March 2026

Request for Expressions of Interest

for

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Division of Civil Aviation Unit Recruitment
AIP Accountant
NOTICE**

The Department of Transportation, Communications & Infrastructure (DTC&I), National Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, Division of Civil Aviation is hereby issuing this Request for Expressions of Interest Notice to qualified personnel for this project. The Terms of Reference involved are attached and available online at <https://www.tci.gov.fm/>. Clarifications can be sought from the ADB Finance Specialist at email esadolph@tci.gov.fm with the subject heading:

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Carlson D. Apis
Contracting Officer

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Bidding Documents may be downloaded from the designated website. Prospective Bidders are urged to register with the designated website as a plan holder, even if Bidding Documents are obtained from a plan room or source other than the designated website in either electronic or paper format. The designated website will be updated periodically with addenda lists of registered plan holders, reports, and other information relevant to submitting a Bid for the Project. All official notifications, addenda, and other Bidding Documents will be offered only through the designated website. Neither Owner nor Engineer will be responsible for Bidding Documents, including addenda, if any, obtained from sources other than the designated website.

Pre-bid Conference:

Yes, a pre-bid site visit will be conducted on **March 25, 2025, at 11 am** local time in Pohnpei. If bidders wish to see the site, they may contact the Project Manager at the DTCI at:

T.Rahman: Tajmilur Rahman <tajmilur.rahman@tci.gov.fm>

Instructions to Bidders:

For all further requirements regarding bid submittal, qualifications, procedures, and contract award, refer to the Instructions to Bidders that are included in the Bidding Documents.

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Pohnpei Women Council hosts weeklong International Women's Day program



Photo by Bill Jaynes



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Photo by Eugene Augustine

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

March 9, 2026

Pohnpei - The Pohnpei Women Council hosted a week of meetings, presentations, and community activities in celebration of International Women's Day 2026, bringing together government officials, development partners, women's organizations, and community leaders to address issues affecting women and families across the Federated States of Micronesia.

The events were held primarily at the Kamorale Convention Center in Palikir from March 2-6, with a final public celebration scheduled for March 9 at the Kolonia Town Gymnasium. The week's program carried the international theme "Give to Gain for Gender Equality."

Opening activities included welcoming remarks and an overview of the week's program, along with anticipated remarks from FSM President Wesley W. Simina. Early sessions focused on partnerships and health-related issues, including a memorandum of agreement signing with UNICEF's North Pacific Field Office addressing child protection and gender-based violence initiatives.

Health topics featured prominently during the week. Presentations included findings from a hybrid health survey conducted in Pohnpei, reports on non-communicable diseases, and an update on the state's cancer program. Discussions also examined the impact of chronic diseases on families and communities and the importance of early detection and prevention.

Other sessions explored education, empowerment, and economic opportunities for women. Representatives from the Embassy of the People's Republic of China presented information on study opportunities in China, while officials from the FSM Department of Health and other agencies addressed issues such as digital equality, disability inclusion, and women's participation in development programs.

Gender equity initiatives across government sectors were also discussed. Presentations examined gender considerations in tourism planning, food processing and preservation training programs through the College of Micronesia-FSM Center for Entrepreneurship, and other capacity-building initiatives designed to support women's livelihoods.

A number of sessions focused on policy

and legal protections. Officials from Pohnpei State Social Affairs reported on resolutions adopted during the FSM Women's Conference held in Chuuk, while the FSM Judiciary presented information on access to justice, sexual harassment issues, and public perceptions of the court system.

Law enforcement and social services representatives also discussed the implementation of Pohnpei's domestic violence law and emergency response procedures. Non-governmental organizations shared reports highlighting their work in communities and the successes of local women's groups.

Additional presentations during the week addressed broader development issues affecting women and families in the FSM. Topics included human rights, climate change impacts, intellectual property rights, and health challenges facing the nation. Participants also took part in recap and reflection sessions to review key messages and recommendations from the earlier meetings.

The week included community outreach activities as well, including an International Day of Prayer and visits to Pohnpei

State Hospital, Genesis Hospital, and the Pohnpei State Jail.

The celebration concluded on March 9 with a public program at the Kolonia Town Gymnasium featuring cultural presentations and performances by women's organizations from across Pohnpei. Groups representing communities, municipalities, and women's associations participated, alongside a cooking competition organized with support from the College of Micronesia-FSM.

Women's arts and crafts were also displayed during the closing celebration.

Organizers said the annual observance was intended to recognize the contributions of women in Micronesian society while promoting dialogue on health, rights, leadership, and development opportunities.

The event was supported by a range of partners, including traditional leaders of Pohnpei, the Pohnpei State Government, the FSM National Government, UNICEF, the FSM Department of Health and Social Services, the Embassy of the People's Republic of China, the College of Micronesia-FSM, and numerous local women's organizations.



Photos by Eugene Augustine



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Yap Community of Pohnpei celebrates Yap Day with culture and tradition

By *Bill Jaynes*
The Kaselehlie Press

March 7, 2026

Pohnpei — Members of the Yap Community of Pohnpei gathered at the South Park Hotel on Saturday, March 7, to celebrate Yap Day, an annual event honoring the traditions, culture, and identity of the people of Yap.

Organized by the Yap Community of Pohnpei (YCOP), the celebration brought together families, friends, and community members living in Pohnpei to reaffirm their connection to their heritage while sharing aspects of Yapese culture with others.

In a message included in the event program, the YCOP Planning Committee welcomed attendees and expressed appreciation to the leaders and people of Pohnpei for their hospitality. The committee also extended thanks to Yap State leaders for their continued support of Yapese residents living in Pohnpei.

“Yap Day celebration honors the rich cultural heritage and values that

have guided the people of Yap for generations,” the statement said, noting that the event serves as a reminder of the strength of Yapese customs, traditional dances, navigation practices, and the importance of respect, unity, and community.

The day’s activities began at 9:30 a.m. with a voting period for community leadership positions, during which nominations and confirmations were conducted for the offices of president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary.

The official opening ceremony followed at 10:30 a.m., featuring a prayer, the sounding of a conch shell, and a traditional stone money carrying demonstration. Welcoming remarks were delivered by YCOP officers.

Throughout the morning, demonstrations of traditional skills and activities were held, including bamboo raft building and coconut husking.

After a midday lunch, the afternoon program continued with cultural exhibitions such as basket weaving, lavalava making, and the crafting of

leis, showcasing traditional knowledge and skills passed down through generations.

Participants also took part in cultural games and demonstrations, including bottle fishing and friction fire lighting. Activities for children were also included, such as a local dodgeball game.

The celebration concluded at 4 p.m. with a closing ceremony that included the announcement of newly elected community officers, recognition of outgoing officers, and a women’s dance performance.

Organizers said the event provided an opportunity for Yapese living away from their home islands to maintain their language, customs, and traditions while passing them on to younger generations.

“As we celebrate this special day, we join together in pride for the legacy of our ancestors and the future of our people,” the program message said.



As PICL Chair President Simina prioritizes development of Governance and Arrangements Manual in PIDP Strategic Planning Meeting

FSM Information Services

February 28, 2026
Honolulu, Hawai'i

— On February 21, 2026 His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), participated in the Strategic Planning Meeting of the Pacific Islands Development Program (PIDP) held at the Bishop Museum ahead of the Pacific Agenda Summit. President Simina attended the meeting in his capacity as current Chairman of the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders (PICL) and emphasized the pressing need to finalize the Governance and Arrangements Manual to strengthen PICL's institutional effectiveness.

In his remarks, President Simina underscored the continued importance of PICL as a vital platform for engagement between Pacific Island nations and the United States, while acknowledging the longstanding support of the East-West Center and PIDP in facilitating regional cooperation.

"PICL continues to play an important role in facilitating meaningful dialogue between the Pacific region and the United States," President Simina said. "As Chair, I commend the East-West Center and thank PIDP for its past and ongoing efforts in supporting the work of Pacific leaders and advancing our shared priorities."

President Simina underscored that developing a clear Governance and Arrangements Manual remains a pending priority decision of PICL Leaders and is essential to ensuring the effective operation, continuity, and long-term sustainability of the Conference and its Secretariat.

President Simina recalled that at the 2022 PICL convening, Leaders tasked PIDP with reviewing its policies and procedures, identifying gaps, and codifying governance arrangements, including leadership terms, convening schedules, membership matters, and



operational scope. He emphasized that completing this work is a necessary foundation for strengthening PICL's institutional framework and enabling it to respond effectively to emerging regional priorities.

The President welcomed recent steps taken to strengthen PIDP's leadership, including the appointment of Interim Director Henry Puna and Deputy Director Makanani Sala, and expressed confidence that these developments will help advance the completion of the Governance and Arrangements Manual and ensure a fully functional Secretariat for PICL.

Looking ahead, President Simina encouraged PIDP to provide an update to Leaders on progress toward advancing the Governance and Arrangements Manual at the upcoming Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting, to be hosted by Palau later this year.

"As we move forward, it is essential that PIDP is fully functional and equipped with the governance structures, policies, and institutional arrangements necessary to effectively support PICL," President Simina stated. "This includes reviewing and updating policies, strengthening institutional arrangements, and ensuring clarity in leadership roles, meeting structures, and operational procedures."

President Simina reaffirmed FSM's commitment, as PICL Chair, to ensuring that the Conference continues to serve as a strategic forum for advancing economic security, strengthening regional partnerships, and delivering meaningful outcomes for Pacific Island nations.



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Opportunity at the Forum Secretariat

The Pacific Islands Forum

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Applicants should have an advanced University degree (Master's degree or equivalent) in economics, trade, international development, management, or similar fields, with at least ten years practical experience in a senior management position in a regional or international arena.

Applicants should also have demonstrated ability to provide high quality advice at the highest levels with proven experience in leadership experience and decision making in a systematic, rational and consistent way. Excellent interpersonal and communication skills with strong analytical and problem-solving skills are essential.

The Package

The position carries a competitive and attractive remuneration and benefits package including allowances for housing and education; and medical, accident and life insurance coverage. This position is based on Band 15 of the PIFS salary scale. The starting salary for the position is **SDR 72,140** per annum, which is equivalent to **FJD 224,037** based on 1 January 2026 foreign exchange rate.

How to apply

Interested applicants are encouraged to apply through the PIFS website: www.forumsec.org where an information package containing the position description and full remuneration details is available. Candidates must include in either their application or Curriculum Vitae the full contact details of three referees. To be eligible for the position, applicants must be nationals of Forum member countries. The Forum Secretariat is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The deadline for applications is Friday 27 March 2026, 5pm (Fiji Time).

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

FSM and ADB strengthen development partnership in bilateral meeting

FSM Information Services

February 25, 2026

HONOLULU, Hawai'i — His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), held a bilateral meeting with Mr. Scott Moris, Vice President of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Ms. Emma Veve, Director General of Pacific Department, to discuss ongoing areas of cooperation and reaffirm the value of the partnership between the FSM and ADB.



During the meeting, President Simina expressed his sincere appreciation for ADB's continued partnership and support in advancing FSM's national development priorities. He acknowledged ADB's contributions to key sectors, particularly in education and health, as well as its support for ongoing infrastructure and institutional strengthening projects across the nation.



Both sides emphasized the importance of maintaining close collaboration and sustaining momentum in priority sectors. Discussions included a review of challenges related to blended financing arrangements and practical approaches to advancing project funding.

The meeting reaffirmed the shared commitment of FSM and ADB to continued collaboration in advancing sustainable development outcomes for the people of the Federated States of Micronesia.

Japan continues contract with Japan Mine Action Service (JMAS)

Embassy of Japan to the FSM

March 6, 2026

Pohnpei - On February 26, 2026, Ambassador Kagomiya and Mr. Tetsuya Uchiyama, Representative of Japan Mine Action Service (JMAS) Chuuk Office, signed the contract to continue the project to collect oil from Sunken Warships in Chuuk Lagoon. This project aims to survey the status of vessels that sank during WWII and have corroded and deteriorated, to efficiently and safely recover oil from these ships, and to reduce the risk of oil spills that could have adverse effects on the environment.

JMAS, which are also expected by the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, and expressed his hope that JMAS will continue to engage in this extremely difficult work safely.



Prior to the signing, Mr. Uchiyama provided an explanation about the progress of this fiscal year's project, including that the pace of oil collection, which had been temporarily curtailed due to shortage of storage places for the collected oil.



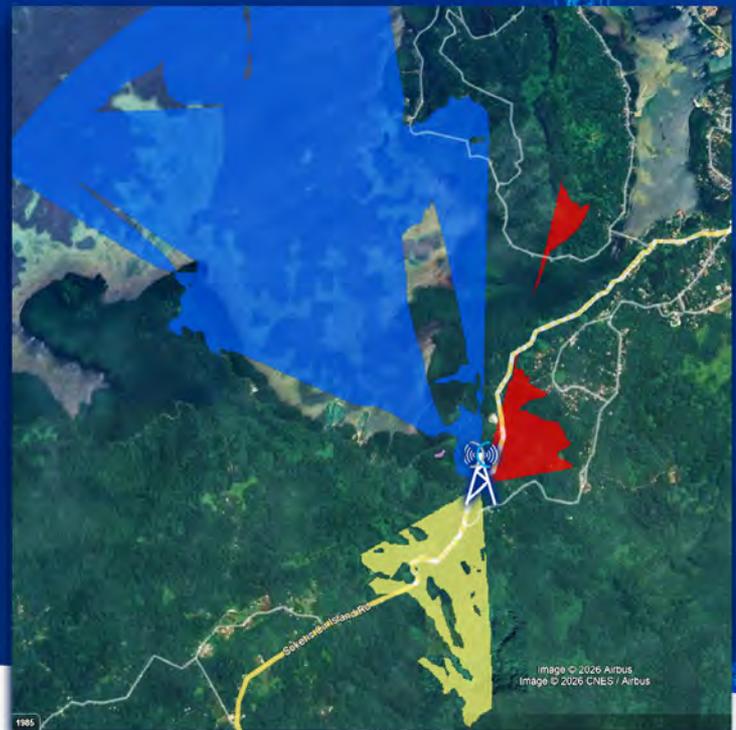
The Ambassador expressed his heartfelt appreciation for the activities of

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First Lady joins Chuuk in celebrating International Women’s Day and organizational milestone

FSM Information Services

March 6, 2026

Weno, Chuuk — The First Lady of the Federated States of Micronesia, Madam Ancelly Simina, joined women leaders and community members in Chuuk State to commemorate International Women’s Day.

This year’s celebration also marked the 16th anniversary of the establishment of the Chuuk Women’s Council, recognizing more than a decade of service dedicated to empowering women, supporting families, and preserving

Chuukese culture and traditions.

In her remarks, the First Lady congratulated the organization on its milestone and commended its members for their continued commitment to uplifting women across Chuuk State. She encouraged the organization to continue the important work it carries out on behalf of communities, noting that women’s groups remain vital pillars of support, advocacy, and cultural stewardship.

Reflecting on the theme highlighted during the International Women’s

Day celebration hosted earlier by the Pohnpei Women’s Council, “Give to Gain”, the First Lady emphasized that the principle resonates strongly within Chuukese customs and traditions. She noted that the act of giving, whether through service, leadership, mentorship, or community support, strengthens families and communities and ultimately contributes to a stronger nation.

The First Lady further underscored that the spirit of “Give to Gain” represents a “whole-of-society effort”, requiring unity

and cooperation among men and women, boys and girls, government leaders, organizations, associations, and faith-based communities. Through collective effort, she noted, communities can continue advancing the well-being and empowerment of women across the Federated States of Micronesia.

The celebration served as an opportunity to recognize the contributions of women in Chuuk while reaffirming the shared commitment to strengthening families, communities, and future generations throughout the nation.



Japan supplies \$3.4 million dollars for strengthening maternal healthcare services in the FSM

Embassy of Japan to the FSM

March 5, 2026

Pohnpei - On February 18, 2026, Ambassador Kagomiya and Ms. Bidisha Pillai, Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Pacific Sub-regional Office, signed the project to strengthen maternal healthcare services in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM).

This project will be implemented with approximately \$3.4 million in support from Japan, and will support the provision of medical equipment to medical institutions in each state,

develop waiting facilities to ensure that pregnant and postpartum women living in remote areas such as outlying islands can secure access to hospitals, and train healthcare workers in each state, with the aim of reducing FSM’s maternal mortality rate, which is higher than the world average.

Ambassador Kagomiya stated that UNFPA, the implementing partner of this project, has extensive experience and expertise in strengthening and promoting access to healthcare services. He expressed his expectation that the project would work closely with Japan’s existing efforts and make a significant

contribution to the further improvement of maternal and child healthcare services in the FSM.

Director Pillai expressed UNFPA’s deep gratitude for the support of the Government of Japan and said the necessity of empowering local communities through investment in maternal healthcare services.

In addition, Mr. Herman Semes Jr., Assistant Secretary of the FSM Department of Foreign Affairs, and Mr. Moses Pretrick, Acting Secretary of the FSM Department of Health and Social

Affairs, also expressed gratitude for Japan’s support and the importance of improving maternal healthcare services.



President Simina and First Lady join Pohnpei Women Council in celebrating International Women’s Day 2026

FSM Information Services

March 2, 2026

Palikir, Pohnpei — His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), joined the Pohnpei Women's Council (PWC) on the opening day of International Women’s Day 2026, marking the fourth anniversary of State Law 101-75-22 declaring March 8 as Pohnpei International Women’s Day.

The event began with welcoming remarks by PWC’s Elysyner S. Ramon. Reflecting on the theme GIVE TO GAIN FOR GENDER EQUALITY she stated, “Each of us has the responsibility to give — anywhere, anytime, anyplace. Our role is to give support side by side.”

In his opening remarks, President Simina commended the PWC for its steadfast leadership and continued service to women across local communities. He highlighted the Council’s work in advancing gender equality, strengthening traditional knowledge, promoting health and food security, and supporting the welfare of women and girls throughout the nation.

Reflecting on this year’s theme, “Give to Gain for Gender Equality,” President Simina emphasized that gender equality is not solely a women’s issue, but a national development priority. He noted that progress in equality directly strengthens families, communities, and the broader Federated States of Micronesia.

In a lighthearted moment, the

President shared that while it is often said that “behind every great man is a great woman,” in his case, she has always been beside him. He then invited the First Lady to deliver the official remarks.

In her address, the First Lady underscored that giving is deeply rooted in Micronesian culture. “In our culture, giving is not a loss,” she stated. “When we give support, mentorship, protection, opportunity, and respect to women and girls, we gain stronger households, stronger communities, and a stronger nation.”

She highlighted the critical role women play as guardians of culture, custodians of lineage and land, and ambassadors of peace within families and communities. Through preserving traditions, encouraging reconciliation,

and fostering unity, women contribute directly to the stability and harmony of the FSM.

While celebrating progress, she acknowledged that more work remains in empowering women across Pohnpei and the broader Federated States of Micronesia. She called upon men and women, leaders and youth alike, to challenge harmful norms, protect the vulnerable, expand educational and economic opportunities, and ensure women’s voices are represented at every level of decision-making.

The week-long celebration continues with various capacity building workshops and networking opportunities. The President and First Lady closed their attendance with a pledge to support the PWC’s important work.



IOM, Japan launch initiative to boost climate-resilient food production in the Marshall Islands

International Organization for Migration

February 24, 2026

Majuro, RMI – The International Organization for Migration (IOM), with support from the Government of Japan and in partnership with the Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), on Tuesday (24 February 2026) launched a two-year project to strengthen local food production and improve nutrition outcomes in the Marshall Islands. The initiative addresses a dual challenge facing RMI: limited access to nutritious, locally grown produce and the growing impact of severe weather patterns on food production.

A 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit report found that processed foods make up more than 80 per cent of RMI’s imports, a trend linked to rising rates of obesity, diabetes, and other non-communicable diseases. The Global Nutrition Report also notes a significant increase in the prevalence of obesity among children and adolescents

over the past two decades. At the same time, frequent and prolonged drought, saltwater intrusion, and land degradation, frequently damage crops and affect the availability of locally grown produce.

In close collaboration with RMI’s Ministry of Natural Resources and Commerce (MNRC), the RMI Public School System and community-led groups, including women and youth, the newly launched project will introduce climate-resilient farming techniques and technologies in target locations of Majuro and Wotje Atolls. It will directly engage youth and communities in gardening and seed saving activities and train them to ensure sustainable crop management and plant care.

IOM will support high school boarding house and community-based gardening initiatives through the provision of seedlings, gardening equipment and installations such as vertical and raised-bed gardens, and fruit and vegetable dehydrators to encourage preservation of locally grown produce,

as well as rainwater catchment systems to help sustain school and community gardens. Emphasis will be placed on planting nutritionally dense, salt- and drought-resistant crops indigenous to the Marshall Islands.

At the launch event, His Excellency Hirohisa Soma, Ambassador of Japan to the RMI, remarked, “this new project represents a significant new chapter in our partnership with IOM,” and added that they are now expanding their support to ensure the long-term health and self-sufficiency of the Marshallese people by committing to providing a more affordable and healthier local food supply system.

Hilary Vanderwey, IOM Head of Sub-office in RMI, expressed gratitude for the continued support of the Japanese Government and the people and Government of RMI. “What makes this effort powerful is that it’s hands-on and community-driven. By building climate-smart food production close to where students live and learn, improving nutrition in boarding houses,

and reducing spoilage through better storage, we can help communities be more resilient to climate shocks that disrupt daily life. Our collective efforts will help address the underlying drivers of migration in the Marshall Islands,” she said.

Enhanced food security will strengthen the capacity of communities to withstand climate shocks, helping to safeguard livelihoods and access to food, and lowering the likelihood of forced or unplanned migration.

“The Public School System and our civil society partners are central to making this happen,” Vanderwey added.

The initiative, aligned with RMI’s National Strategic Plan 2020–2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals, prioritizes food security, calls for reduced import dependency and strengthened local production to enhance economic resilience and public health. SDGs 2, 3, 13



Public Safety Notice: Road conditions in Kinakapw, Madolenihmw

Pohnpei Public Information

February 27, 2026

Pohnpei - State Authorities are currently monitoring a minor slope shift in the Kinakapw area of Madolenihmw. While this situation has been under observation for the past two weeks, recent activity to clear water blockage on the side of the road may have caused a small amount of soil to move onto the roadway.

What you need to know:

- **Precautionary Monitoring:** This is a localized movement, and officials are on-site to manage the situation and further assess.
- **Drive with Care:** If you are traveling through this area, please slow down and remain alert for debris or personnel working near the shoulder.
- **No Immediate Road Closure:** The road remains open, but we ask for your cooperation in maintaining a safe speed.
- **Officers on site:** Please obey instructions if Officers are on site.

We are taking these steps to ensure everyone's safety and to keep traffic moving smoothly. We will provide further updates if conditions change.



Joseph-Movick Administration meets with Cultural Day Committee to elevate "Rahn En Tiahk" celebrations

Pohnpei Public Information

February 27, 2026

Kolonia, Pohnpei— Governor Stevenson A. Joseph met today with the Pohnpei Cultural Day Organizing Committee to discuss preparations for the upcoming Rahn En Tiahk celebration on March 31.

Led by the State Senior Citizen Coordinator, Mr. Joseph Ehram, who is also the Chairman, and comprising the Chiefs of Tourism, Kukulynn Gallen, Commerce & Industry, Michaela

Saimon, and Social Services, PJ Etnol, the Committee presented an overview of the proposed events of this year's cultural day event to showcase Pohnpei's unique cultural heritage. Drawing inspiration from regional successes like Yap Day, the Governor emphasized that Pohnpei must be more intentional in showcasing its heritage to the world.

"We live our culture every day," Governor Joseph stated. "March 31st should be the day we share that pride with others." He shared his vision of

building a brand that makes Pohnpei Cultural Day a permanent fixture on the regional travel calendar.

Proposed Event Highlights:

Parade: Commencing at 10:00 AM from the Governor's Office to the Kolonia Gym.

Festivities: Running until 7:00 PM at the Kolonia Gym, featuring a cultural float, traditional dance, and song contests.

Exhibition: Dedicated cultural display

showcasing local craftsmanship.

Partnership: The Committee is working closely with traditional craftsmen to ensure authentic representation.

The Committee also detailed a \$38,827 budget focused on high-quality prizes and community engagement. By prioritizing tourism and branding, the administration aims to grow the event annually, positioning Pohnpei as a leading destination for cultural excellence in the Pacific.



Joseph-Movick Administration joins President Simina and Diplomatic Partners for FSM Humanitarian Warehouse groundbreaking

Pohnpei Public Information

March 3, 2026

Palikir, Pohnpei— On March 27, Governor Stevenson A. Joseph, representing the Joseph-Movick Administration, delivered welcoming remarks today at the groundbreaking ceremony for the new FSM Humanitarian Warehouse. Located behind the FSM TC&I Annex Building, the facility marks a milestone in regional disaster preparedness.

During his address, Governor Joseph explained that the gathering on Pohnpei soil represented more than just a construction project. He noted that by partnering through the Pacific Humanitarian Warehousing Program, the government is ensuring it can move beyond simple reaction to a state of total readiness to respond rapidly in times of disaster. He described the facility as the essential backbone of emergency logistics, made possible through the instrumental support of Australia, the European Union, Japan, and New Zealand.

National and International Unity
President Wesley W. Simina also spoke, highlighting the importance of the warehouse's location to organize and deploy essential supplies. The ceremony featured additional remarks from Australian Ambassador H.E. Jenny Grant and Pacific Community (SPC) Director-General Dr. Paula Vivili.



Other high-level attendees included the Chinese Ambassador and Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, H.E. Wu Wei; the U.S. Ambassador, Jennifer Johnson; the Sokehs Chief Magistrate, Stanley Ernest; and the SPC Regional Director, Willy Kostka.

A Call for Streamlined Action
While pledging Pohnpei State's full support for the initiative, Governor Joseph expressed his hope that these public warehouses would be managed with less red tape and bureaucracy. He emphasized that because these facilities are critical lifelines for immediate relief after a disaster, administrative efficiency is vital for protecting and providing the needs of citizens with speed.

The Governor concluded by saying that the project serves as proof of what can be achieved when traditional leadership, state and national governments, and international partners work together to build a resilient future.

FAS Presidents meet ahead of the Pacific Agenda Summit

FSM Information Services

February 27, 2026

Honolulu, Hawai'i — February 24, 2026 — On February 24, 2026, ahead of the Pacific Agenda Summit, His Excellency, President Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia, met with President Hilda C. Heine of the Republic of the Marshall Islands and President Surangel S. Whipps Jr. of the Republic of Palau

for a friendly dinner gathering.

In a spirit of friendship and unity, the leaders reaffirmed the strong historical ties and family bonds that connect the Freely Associated States. The gathering reflected their shared commitment to stand together as one North Pacific family in advancing peace, prosperity, and regional cooperation.



Pohnpei marks 6th Annual Student Takeover Day

Pohnpei Public Information

February 23, 2026

Peilapalap, Pohnpei — The Pohnpei State Government hosted its sixth annual Student Takeover Day, an initiative designed to provide youth with direct insight into the responsibilities of public office and the private sector.

This year, the top executive roles were filled by two standout students from Madolenihmw High School:

Student Governor: Robinson Silbanuz Jr.
Student Lt. Governor: MaryJane Ludrick

Hands-On Leadership Experience

Student Governor Silbanuz and Student Lt. Governor Ludrick spent the day accompanying their respective leaders to gain a firsthand glimpse of what it takes to lead the Executive branch of the Pohnpei State Government.

Fostering the Next Generation

The program, now in its sixth year, remains a part of Pohnpei's commitment to civic engagement. By shadowing current officials, students observe the decision-making processes and administrative duties required to serve the people of

Pohnpei.

The participation of students like Robinson and MaryJane ensures that the future of the state's leadership remains informed, engaged, and prepared.



President Simina meets with U.S. Deputy Secretary Landau at the Pacific Agenda Summit

FSM Information Services

February 25, 2026

Honolulu, Hawaii – While at the Pacific Agenda: Investment, Security, and Prosperous Summit, His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), engaged in a bilateral meeting with U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau, reaffirming the enduring partnership between the Federated States of Micronesia and the United States.

The meeting reflected the spirit of friendship, partnership, and shared responsibility that continues to define

the relationship between the two nations under the Compact of Free Association. Both leaders exchanged warm sentiments and underscored the importance of sustaining close cooperation grounded in mutual respect and shared strategic interests. President Simina noted that FSM and the United States are “family,” acknowledging that while certain issues remain complex and at times challenging, both sides remain committed to addressing them constructively.

President Simina highlighted the recent official launch of the nation’s Strategic Development Plan (SDP) 2024-2043 and welcomed further FSM-US

cooperation on implementing priority infrastructure projects. Updates were also shared regarding the airport project in Yap, which is currently in the early stages of environmental impact assessment.

President Simina also raised Compact-related matters, including bonding requirements, single-audit interpretations, and issues affecting FSM veterans. Secretary Landau acknowledged these concerns and agreed on the importance of ensuring that veterans receive appropriate benefits, including improved access to medical services. Both sides committed to continued dialogue and appropriate

follow-up.

The leaders also discussed recent changes affecting Commercial Driver’s Licenses and their implications for Micronesian citizens residing in the US. Secretary Landau indicated he would engage relevant U.S. authorities to explore possible resolutions.

On economic development and engagement in the summit, President Simina briefed the Deputy Secretary on FSM’s active participation in discussions on infrastructure, energy security, air transportation and connectivity and critical minerals, among other priority areas. Deputy Secretary Landau welcomed FSM’s engagement in these discussions and noted the importance of responsible development aligned with shared strategic interests.

The bilateral meeting concluded with both leaders reaffirming their shared commitment to advancing the effective implementation of the Compact and further strengthening the long-standing partnership between the Federated States of Micronesia and the United States.



President Simina meets with Australian Assistant Minister Nita Green to advance bilateral cooperation

FSM Information Services

February 25, 2026

Honolulu, Hawaii — On the margins of the Pacific Agenda Summit, His Excellency President Wesley W. Simina held a bilateral meeting with the Hon. Nita Green, Assistant Minister for Northern Australia, Tourism, and Pacific Island Affairs of Australia, to reaffirm and further advance the close partnership between the Federated States of Micronesia and Australia.

President Simina conveyed his appreciation for Australia’s diplomatic presence in the FSM and highlighted the establishment of the FSM Embassy in Australia as a clear demonstration of the mutual commitment and expanding cooperation between the two nations. He expressed gratitude for Australia’s continued support in

development assistance, including technical cooperation, education, maritime initiatives, climate resilience, and infrastructure development aligned with FSM’s national priorities.

Assistant Minister Green noted that she was pleased to see the East Micronesian Cable (EMC) now ready for service, describing it as a strong example of what can be achieved when like-minded partners work together to enhance regional connectivity and resilience.

The meeting also included discussions on aviation cooperation and broader connectivity initiatives, reflecting shared efforts to strengthen links across the North Pacific. Assistant Minister Green further expressed appreciation for FSM’s support and advocacy for Australia in international climate

discussions, underscoring common priorities in climate resilience, climate finance, and resilient infrastructure.

Both leaders also discussed and looked forward to President Simina’s upcoming State Visit to Australia next month, which will mark the first official visit by a President of the Federated States of Micronesia to Australia since the visit of the late President John Haglelgam’s visit in 1988.

Both leaders reaffirmed their shared commitment to advancing practical collaboration that delivers lasting benefits to the peoples of the Federated States of Micronesia and Australia.



National Tourism Division partners with Pacific Trade & Invest Australia(PT&I) to advance Digital Tourism Program

FSM National Tourism Office

March 3, 2026

FSM - The National Tourism Division, in partnership with Pacific Trade & Invest Australia (PT&I Australia), successfully conducted a two-day digital tourism training program last week at the Central Building conference room.

The opening session was attended by Her Excellency Jenny Grant, Australian Ambassador to FSM, who delivered welcome remarks emphasizing the critical role of digital innovation in advancing the tourism sector.

The training gathered a diverse group of participants, including hotel operators,

business owners, tourism officers, and representatives from women's and youth organizations, as well as state officials. The program focuses on increasing the digital capacity of hotel operators, strengthening the digital presence of local tourism operators, and fostering stronger relationships with key tourism stakeholders in both the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and Australia.

The training also included equipping participants with essential digital marketing skills and enhancing the online guest experience to better position tourism businesses to attract international visitors. Participants engaged in interactive sessions, including one-on-one meetings with PT&I Australia partners, Jerry Witkowski of Dive Adventure, and Craig Smith of Counterpoint. Follow-up meetings with hotel operators provided further opportunities for collaboration. Consultants also conducted site visits to properties in Kolonia, fostering direct discussions with operators on developing innovative tour packages and strengthening partnerships within the tourism sector.

National Tourism Division extends its appreciation to the Pacific Trade & Invest Australia and its partners for facilitating the digital program and also expresses gratitude to all participants for attending and actively engaging throughout the 2-day session.



Vice President Palik attends Yap Day Celebration

FSM Information Services

March 2, 2026

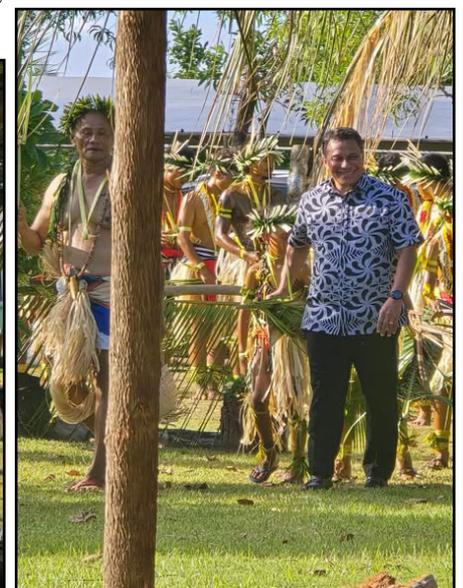
YAP, Federated States Of Micronesia — The Honorable Aren B. Palik, Vice President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), joined the people of Yap in celebrating the annual Yap Day festivities, honoring the rich traditions and cultural heritage of the Yapese people.

Vice President Palik attended the celebration alongside traditional leaders, state officials, and community members. During the event, he expressed his appreciation for the warm hospitality extended to him and shared that he was pleased to participate in the celebration, recognizing the important role Yap Day plays in preserving and promoting Yapese culture and traditions.

For the first time, Vice President Palik was invited to walk out the performers as part of the festivities—an honor that highlighted the close relationship between government and traditional leadership which reflects the spirit of unity between governance and culture that the

Simina-Palik Administration continues to value and support.

The annual celebration brings together communities and visitors to witness traditional dances, cultural demonstrations, and the living traditions that continue to define and strengthen Yapese identity.



Kosrae Conservation & Safety Organization strengthens governance and sets strategic direction with support from the Nature Conservancy

The Nature Conservancy

February 25, 2026

Kosrae - Kosrae Conservation & Safety Organization (KCSO) held a Board Orientation and Development Training followed by a two-day Strategic Action Planning (SAP) workshop from February 3-5 in Kosrae. The sessions brought together KCSO board members and management to strengthen governance and update the organization's Strategic Action Plan for 2026-2028.

The workshops were supported by The Nature Conservancy, Micronesia and Polynesia and skillfully facilitated by staff members Berna Gorong and Shanty Asher. With their expertise, participants were guided through both governance strengthening and strategic planning processes. These workshops form part of TNC's broader commitment to building local capacity and advancing community-driven conservation across

the Micronesian region.

The Board Orientation and Development Training focused on clarifying roles and responsibilities as well as reinforcing good governance practices. Participants reviewed the legal duties of board members and discussed practical approaches to running effective meetings, managing conflicts of interest, and providing purpose-driven leadership.

The SAP built on that foundation: participants revisited KCSO's vision, mission, and values, reviewed feedback from external partners, and conducted a SWOT analysis to assess current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The group also reviewed the previous SAP to identify completed and unfinished actions before defining priorities for the next three years.

Discussions highlighted ongoing environmental and operational challenges,

including weak enforcement of shoreline and mangrove regulations, sedimentation linked to infrastructure development, fisheries decline, gaps in Environmental Impact Assessment monitoring, limited staff capacity, and growing reporting requirements. External partners emphasized that KCSO is a trusted and credible organization and encouraged greater visibility of on-the-ground results, expanding youth engagement, and strengthening collaboration.

Participants described the training as timely and practical. "The training was very useful in helping my performance as a board member," one participant noted. "It was informative, clear, and concise, and I look forward to putting it into practice."

"We are pleased to support our partner,



KCSO, through both board training and the strategic planning workshop," said Dr. Yimnang Golbuu, Conservation Director for TNC Micronesia and Polynesia. "By enhancing governance and charting a clear strategic path, KCSO is well-equipped to tackle pressing environmental challenges and to further establish itself as a trusted leader in conservation in Kosrae."

Emergency Management Trainings expand across Pohnpei Municipalities

International Organization for Migration

The Pohnpei State Disaster Coordinating Office (DCO) and Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management (DECCEM), in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and with support from the United States Government, has launched a series of emergency management trainings in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). The cascade trainings are designed to enhance emergency response capacity and strengthen coordinated response during disasters at the municipal level.

Municipal leaders, public safety personnel, and community focal points are the primary participants, ensuring they are well-versed in existing

emergency response frameworks, institutional roles and responsibilities, and communication protocols for emergencies.

In recent years, FSM and neighboring countries have experienced damages to farmlands, infrastructure, and homes due to natural and human-induced hazards. Notable incidents include Typhoon Wutip in 2019, the 2024 drought that prompted a State of Emergency in Pohnpei, Yap, and Chuuk States, and the recent oil spill near Uman Island in Chuuk lagoon.

The ongoing Disaster Management trainings in Pohnpei equip community members with essential skills and knowledge, enabling them to respond quickly and effectively after disaster events, thereby reducing loss and

damage. Key topics covered include:

- Emergency Evacuation Shelter Management – Ensuring essential amenities and standards are maintained so beneficiaries receive support in a dignified manner during shelter use.
- Initial Damage Assessment – Training responders to gather critical data within the first 24 hours of a disaster using tools like Kobo for accurate, and real-time reporting.
- Essentials of Humanitarian Assistance – Equipping participants to deliver support in a humane, impartial manner, reaching affected communities based on need and without discrimination.
- Accountability to Affected Populations – Introducing systems like complaint and

Division, remarked, "It is encouraging to see disaster management trainings now reaching the community level, especially after the extensive efforts to strengthen readiness at the National and State levels. We remain committed to ongoing collaboration and fostering a spirit of preparedness, ensuring our communities are safe and receive timely support in the event of a disaster."

Ewa Naqvi, IOM North Pacific Chief of Mission, added, "Having systems and institutions prepared to respond effectively during disasters is essential to protecting lives and livelihoods. IOM is dedicated to working closely with the FSM Government at every level, and we are grateful for the United States Government's support in bolstering disaster preparedness across Compact countries in the Pacific."

feedback mechanisms for beneficiaries to provide feedback on the assistance they receive and uphold their dignity, safety, and well-being.

Abigail Kim-Lambert, Assistant Secretary at DECCEM and Head of the Emergency Management

Trainings have already taken place in Sokehs, Nett, and Madolenihmw between February 20 and March 6 and will extend to Pohnpei's outer islands in the coming months, with sessions scheduled for the South Eastern Islands, Mokil, and Pingelap in March, and for the Southwestern islands, including Kapingamarangi and Nukuoro, in April this year.



Joseph-Movick Administration, Japan Government, the National Government, and Traditional Leaders celebrate handover of new Saladak Multipurpose Gymnasium

Pohnpei Public Information

February 24, 2026

Saladak, U, Pohnpei – Governor Stevenson A. Joseph officially marked the completion and handover of the Saladak Multipurpose Gymnasium, hailing the facility as a landmark of international partnership and fiscal responsibility.

The ceremony was a distinguished gathering of traditional and government leaders, graced by the presence of Wasalapalap Sanghoro, Nahnmwarki of U, along with the IsoNahnken of U, Likend U, and Nahnkeniei U. Joining the state leadership were Speaker of the 24th FSM Congress, Hon. Esmond B. Moses, H.E. Nobuo Kagomiya,

Ambassador of Japan to the FSM, and Deputy Secretary of FSM Foreign Affairs and OIC, Ricky Cantero. Also in attendance were the Vice Speaker of 11th Pohnpei Legislature, Hudson Abraham, Senator Aurelio Joab, U Chief Minister, Hon. Rofino Primo, the U Speaker of Legislative Council, Hon. Mason Albert, Saladak Section Chiefs, and residents.

A Model of Fiscal Discipline and Partnership

The project reached final acceptance on February 19, 2026, delivered for a total of \$370,638.00, finishing nearly \$10,000 under the original government estimate of \$380,058.00. This achievement was made possible

through a strategic funding model:

- Government of Japan: A \$252,000 Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security for the core structure and masonry.
- FSM Congress: \$100,000 for finishing works, electrical systems, and equipment.
- Pohnpei State: \$18,638 in vital matching support.

"This project stands as a model of fiscal discipline," Governor Joseph stated. "While supply chain hurdles and material shortages tested our patience, our commitment never wavered. This gym is more than just concrete and steel; it is a dedicated space for our youth and a symbol of community

unity."

Vision for Community Health

In the ceremony's final remarks, IsoNahnken of U, Hon. Ihlen Joseph, expressed profound gratitude to the Government of Japan, Governor Joseph, the Pohnpei State Government, and the FSM National Government for their contributions. He emphasized that the facility's value extends beyond sports for the youth, noting that the gym provides a vital space for older residents to stay active, exercise, and maintain their health.

Project Execution Highlights

Constructed by J&P Construction (the lowest bidder at \$370,637.87), the project broke ground on January 31, 2024. Despite logistical challenges involving off-island steel and local sand supplies, the Joseph-Movick Administration successfully brought the project to final acceptance this month.

"May this facility serve the people of Saladak and U Municipality for generations to come," Governor Joseph concluded. "Kalahngan, and may God bless our partners and our continued progress."



Joseph-Movick Administration meets with reactivated Pohnpei Youth Council Leadership

Pohnpei Public Information

February 25, 2026

Peilapalap, Pohnpei — Governor Stevenson A. Joseph met yesterday with the newly reorganized Pohnpei Youth Council (PYC) to discuss their role as the primary umbrella organization for youth groups across the state.

After 14 years of inactivity, the PYC officially reformed in August 2025. The meeting focused on aligning the council's mission with state objectives and ensuring the government provides the necessary support through the Social Services Division of the Department of Health Services.

Organizational Progress

- Leadership: President Vandela Warren and Vice President Don David met with the Governor and key staff to share their updates and seek support.
- Broad Representation: The council has already integrated 28 different youth groups, signaling a strong start

for inclusive state coordination.

- Administrative Support: Youth Coordinator Ryan Yamada will serve as the lead liaison between the council and the government's social services department.

Joseph-Movick Administration Guidance

Governor Joseph noted that a unified youth voice is long overdue and essential for the state's progress. He advised the leadership to maintain momentum by setting specific, reachable goals and maintaining a high level of organization. He emphasized that the council should serve as the central point for all youth affairs, working in close partnership with the Department of Health Services.

Strategic Priorities

The discussion addressed two major upcoming initiatives:

- International Youth Day: The council plans to host events during the school year to ensure maximum participation from students.
- Micronesian Island Forum (MIF): The Governor requested a significant youth presence at the MIF, tasking the council with organizing a major contribution to the forum.

Governor Joseph concluded by stressing the importance of a shared vision between the state's young people and the government to ensure effective coordination moving forward.



President Simina welcomes SPC Director-General to the FSM

FSM Information Services

February 27, 2026

Palikir, Pohnpei – His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia, warmly welcomed Dr. Paula Vivili, newly selected Director-General of the Pacific Community (SPC), and his delegation to the Office of the President during a courtesy visit marking his first official visit to the FSM. President Simina extended his congratulations to Dr. Vivili on his appointment and conveyed appreciation for SPC's longstanding partnership with the nation.

President Simina recognized SPC as one of the oldest and most established regional institutions operating in FSM, noting its steady growth as a testament to its impactful work across the Pacific. He expressed appreciation for SPC's integrated programs in fisheries, agriculture, and climate resilience, reaffirming FSM's commitment

to strengthening cooperation and continuing to host SPC in the country.

Director-General Vivili expressed appreciation for FSM's active engagement with SPC and highlighted the strong partnership reflected through various grant mechanisms and programs aligned with national priorities.

Discussions also highlighted the humanitarian warehouse groundbreaking, scheduled later in the day, as a positive example of effective collaboration among national and implementing partners.

Regional engagement was further discussed, including FSM's interest in hosting the 15th Conference of the Pacific Community and the 57th Meeting of the Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (CRGA) in 2027. While this year's conference will be held in New Caledonia, ongoing discussions

and preparations are underway in anticipation of FSM's future hosting.

Program updates included cooperation in oceanic fisheries in coordination with NORMA, agriculture initiatives, and ongoing research collaboration.

The Director-General shared organizational updates, including efforts to strengthen SPC's Pohnpei office, which currently employs 20 staff members. Both sides also discussed revisiting the Host Country Agreement and strengthening workforce localization, with SPC expressing interest in hiring more Micronesians.

The SPC delegation conveyed appreciation for FSM's continued



support, including the addition of renovated office space, and congratulated FSM on the launch of its Strategic Development Plan (SDP). The meeting concluded with an exchange of gifts, reaffirming the strong and enduring partnership between the Federated States of Micronesia and the Pacific Community.

FSM advances disaster readiness with its first sovereign humanitarian warehouse in Palikir

FSM Information Services

Secretariat of the Pacific Community

February 27, 2026

Pohnpei – Leaders gathered in Palikir for the groundbreaking of the Federated States of Micronesia's (FSM) first sovereign humanitarian warehouse, a facility designed to strengthen the country's ability to organize, manage and move relief supplies in anticipation of and during the early stages of disaster response.

His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the FSM, the Honorable Stevenson A. Joseph, Governor of Pohnpei and leaders of FSM, joined by Dr. Paula Vivili, Director-General of the Pacific-Community-SPC, and Her Excellency Jenny Grant, Australian Ambassador to FSM, took part in the ceremonial digging

and consecration of the land.

The warehouse will be constructed on government allocated land, aptly located behind the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management (DECCEM) office in Palikir. The proximity of the warehouse to the country's central emergency coordination hub at DECCEM, will allow for activation, decision making and dispatch to occur from one locality. This integrated set up is intended to shorten the time required to organize and move items to communities across all four of the States.

President Simina said "Our responsibility is to protect lives and support communities when hardship strikes. This warehouse will help us organize and deploy essential supplies more efficiently across our states. By placing this capability beside DECCEM, we are strengthening a national system that serves every community, including those most distant and most affected."

SPC Director-General, Dr Paula Vivili said "SPC acknowledges the Government's strong commitment to national

readiness through the allocation of land and the leadership of His Excellency President Wesley W. Simina to proactively strengthen approach to disaster preparedness.

He added, "Through the work with DECCEM and our humanitarian partners, we are supporting a system that prepositions supplies and logistics where activation and decision making occur, so that communities receive help more quickly and in a more coordinated manner."

Australian Ambassador to FSM, Her Excellency Jenny Grant, said "Today's groundbreaking is not simply about concrete and steel. It is about a shared commitment to a resilient Blue Pacific."

This new humanitarian warehouse will complement existing humanitarian warehousing capability operated by humanitarian partners in the FSM and will be fully owned and managed by the Government.

As a result, over the past year, a program to enhance DECCEM's operational response capability

has been rolled out with PHWP partners. This has included warehouse operations training by the Pacific Community and the World Food Programme covering stock management, safety procedures, and coordinated dispatch.

The warehouse will be delivered through the Pacific Humanitarian Warehousing Program (PHWP), which works with 15 governments and humanitarian partners to strengthen national disaster preparedness and response systems in the region. The program's support in FSM is enabled through collaboration with humanitarian partners and the investments by the Governments of Australia, France, Germany, Japan, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.



Opinion Editorial

Resilient by Design: Pacific Solutions for an Integrated Climate Future



By Munkhtuya Altangerel and Krishnan Narasimhan

Climate change is the single greatest threat to the health, jobs and security of Pacific Island peoples. Yet living on the frontline of climate impacts has also made the Pacific pioneers of climate solutions.

The Pacific is not waiting. It is not simply a bystander; it is setting the agenda and leading from the frontlines.

Despite contributing less than 0.03 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, Pacific nations comprise one-sixth of the world's most climate-vulnerable countries according to the Notre-Dame Global Adaptation Initiative index.

In Vanuatu, tropical cyclones repeatedly destroy homes, schools and healthcare facilities. In 2023, two high-intensity cyclones hit the country within 48 hours, affecting around 80 percent of the population (equating to 250,000 people) and costing around 20 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) – a financial burden not uncommon for the Pacific.

At the same time, rising seas threaten to engulf entire Pacific nations. Five years ago, the then Foreign Minister of Tuvalu, Simon Kofe, delivered a global climate summit media address while standing knee-deep in the ocean. Why? To make the point that Tuvalu is a sinking paradise – the harsh reality for a country whose highest point is only two metres above sea level.

Pacific nations are clearly vulnerable to climate change. Yet vulnerability is only part of the story. Pacific Island peoples are also driving ambitious and pragmatic climate solutions.

Adaptation in action: Rewriting the climate playbook

Tuvalu is confronting the cascading climate risks head-on.

One recent success is the construction of 16.8 hectares of new land – achieved in partnership with UN Development Programme (UNDP)

and with funding from the Green Climate Fund and the Governments of Australia, New Zealand, the United States, and Tuvalu. The elevated land safeguards 60 percent of Tuvalu's population (equating to 6,000 people) and is now ready for houses, schools and health centres, enabling Tuvaluans to continue living in their ancestral homelands.

Another example is Tuvalu's recently launched high-tide parametric insurance scheme, which was developed through a partnership between the Government of Tuvalu, the Tuvalu Development Bank, the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), UNDP and reinsurance partners.

Under the scheme, households are automatically paid when pre-defined sea-level thresholds are reached, such as during unusually high tides and coastal flooding, without needing time-consuming damage assessments. It is designed to deliver rapid cash payouts to help families cope with climate-driven coastal hazards, boosting resilience and recovery for over 400 households initially covered in vulnerable areas.

In a global first model, the risk is underwritten directly by Papua New Guinea-based regional reinsurer, Pacific Reinsurance, due to the absence of an insurance company in the country.

High tide parametric insurance responds to a financing gap identified by community and governments for fast, predictable and pre-arranged recovery funding that supports immediate needs such as home repair and essential consumption.

The scheme is set to be a gamechanger in Tuvalu given the entire population of 11,000 people live within one kilometre of the coastline and is therefore at risk of high-tide induced coastal flooding.

But the opportunity extends far beyond Tuvalu. High-tide parametric insurance – or related schemes – could be replicated across other Pacific small islands developing states, particularly atoll nations, to strengthen resilience and recovery.

Layering risk and opportunity: A portfolio approach to climate resilience

Coastal protection, land reclamation and parametric insurance are not stand-alone initiatives. They are components of a broader resilience framework designed to respond to the complexities of climate-risk across Pacific Island Countries (PICs).

If we return to the figure noted above, stating that one-fifth of an already financially constrained small island nation's GDP could be wiped out through a single climactic event, resilience cannot be advanced through silos. It must be designed systematically. Different hazards and different scales of impact require different but coordinated tools. Physical adaptation reduces exposure. Financial protection instruments absorb shock. Digital delivery systems ensure rapid and transparent support to affected populations. Together, they form an integrated portfolio capable of managing risk across multiple time horizons.

This layered approach recognises that resilience operates at multiple levels. Coastal land reclamation reduces physical vulnerability, parametric insurance addresses financing gaps and provides immediate liquidity through pre-arranged, rules-based payouts triggered by objective thresholds. Delays, at a time when cash in hand is critical, are avoided. When linked with other solutions, such as digital social protection payments, these instruments form a coherent architecture of preparedness and adaptation that strengthen national capacity to respond quickly, and transparently.

Importantly, this is not only about managing disasters. It is about strengthening national systems. It is also about fiscal stability. In economies where a single climate event can erase one-fifth of GDP, pre-arranged and layered financial instruments reduce budget volatility, limit post-disaster borrowing, and protect long-term investments in health, education and livelihoods from being derailed by sudden shocks.

UNDP's role in this architecture is to integrate adaptation infrastructure, institutional capacity and policy frameworks into a coherent systems approach. UNCDF complements this by designing and structuring innovative financial instruments that expand access to risk financing in frontier markets. Working alongside Pacific governments and private sector partners, this collaboration demonstrates how climate resilience can be embedded within national systems rather than delivered through fragmented, stand-alone projects.

The result is a shift from reactive disaster response toward anticipatory and structured preparedness. For PICs facing existential climate threats, such integrated resilience systems are not optional. It is foundational to long-term development stability.

From pledges to protection: COP31 and beyond

As attention turns toward COP31, climate finance discussions will rightly focus on scale. Yet for PICs and other small islands states, structure matters just as much as volume.

In October, Pacific leaders will gather with the global community in Fiji for a pre-COP meeting, with a dedicated leaders component slated to take place in Tuvalu itself. The symbolism is powerful. Global climate diplomacy is not placed in abstraction, but in lived reality.

From the frontlines of climate change, the Pacific is advancing a clear message: climate finance must move beyond pledges toward protection.

For PICs and other small island states, finance must be pre-arranged, predictable and embedded within national systems. Reactive, post-disaster funding – while essential – is insufficient on its own and often arrives too late. Countries need financial architecture that activates before, during and immediately after shocks.

A portfolio approach provides that architecture. It enables governments to align grant finance, concessional capital, insurance instruments and domestic resources within a coordinated national strategy, rather than through isolated interventions. It also creates clearer pathways for replication across other atoll nations facing similar risk profiles.

For small island states, this integrated model represents a shift from fragmented interventions toward systemic resilience – linking adaptation, finance and institutional capacity.

Tuvalu has shown what is possible when systems thinking combines with fair investment, strong partnerships and a clear vision. As a Tuvaluan Minister once asserted: "Climate change is forcing the question of survival, but our answer is clear: Tuvalu will not disappear."

As leaders convene ahead of COP31, the opportunity is clear: to elevate and scale models that embed climate resilience within national systems rather than perpetuate fragmented interventions. The Pacific is not asking only for more finance. It is demonstrating how finance can be structured to deliver lasting protection.

If COP31 is to mark progress on adaptation and loss and damage, it must support and replicate the systemic solutions already emerging from frontline states. The Pacific shows that resilience can be designed, and that with the right partnerships, it can be scaled.

Munkhtuya Altangerel is the UNDP Resident Representative for the Pacific. Krishnan Narasimhan is the Lead Specialist and Programme Manager, Climate Disaster Risk Financing and Insurance · United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)

Australia supports INTERPOL training in FSM to combat transnational crime

Embassy of Australia to the FSM

March 5, 2026

FSM - Australia was pleased to partner with the FSM Department of Justice and the National Police to support the recent INTERPOL training of the National Central Bureau.

National Central Bureaus in the

Pacific are the primary point of contact for international investigations, connecting national police with INTERPOL's 196 member countries.

INTERPOL's Project Blue Pacific is a three-year capacity-building initiative aimed at enhancing Pacific capability to combat transnational organised crime.

It focuses on strengthening the Pacific Transnational Crime Network and improving the use of INTERPOL's policing resources for better information sharing.

The New Zealand and UK governments are also supporting this training.



Opinion Editorial

“Stand Up and Be Counted”

It is said frequently about Chuukese that we represent a high number of criminals incarcerated at the Department of Corrections. Also, that we are uneducated and have many high school dropouts. People point out that Chuukese youth represent 80% of juveniles at the Department of Youth Affairs. Our infant mortality rates are higher than other groups, homelessness is growing in our community, and we have a high rate of substance abuse. Clearly, it is time for us to contribute positive solutions and ideas for addressing these issues. It is time for us to stand up and be counted.

This was our intention when the Fonei Achocho Senu (FAS) organization called a meeting on February 28th for the Chuukese Faith Group Leadership to discuss what can we do to make progress in addressing these issues. Sadly, not many Church Leaders showed up. Fortunately, though, some key people did. Among them were Fr. Francis Hezel, Professor Iotaka Choram, Tina Takeshy, Hentrick Eveluck, T’Nelta Mori, Wonporun John Louis, Eddie Kanemoto, John Patis, Blacky Komis, Ronimay Nefotikos, brother Victor and me. We shared ideas and learned from each other. We were hoping that more Church Leaders would be part of the discussion. Perhaps next time they will. We need their guidance and support in our efforts to stand and be counted.



Leadership requires character and a strategic mindset to address the concerns of our community. The intention of the meeting was to gather our Catholic and Protestant church leaders to guide us to an agreement on how to create a mutual support system. We need our Catholic and Protestant leaders to formalize a community outreach program that targets intervention, education, and prevention. We were fortunate to have advocates who shared their knowledge and support.

Fr. Hezel wisely shared that a support system is necessary and important to expanding the reach of church leaders in our community. He also pointed out the need for a One-Stop Shop Office to connect our community to services. He referred to the Chuukese Catholic Women, called the Mwichen Maria, whose roles include visiting the sick at home and in hospital, praying, and offering small gifts to the sick person. The Mwichen Maria is an example of how a support group can expand their reach to the homeless and to those families experiencing substance abuse, etc. in our community. Fr. Hezel also expressed his gratefulness to the Chuukese people for adopting

him since 1963. He has published numerous books and articles on the history of Micronesia.

Hentrick Eveluck, president of the Chuukese Association of Guam, shared that his number one goal is to identify funding sources to build the Chuukese Community Centre. It will be on a half-acre lot near Simon Sanchez High School in Yigo. The property is under the Chuuk Association of Guam.

Professor Choram emphasized the importance of a certificate program, translated into Chuukese and taught at Pacific Island University for anyone interested in learning about the Bible and ministry. The goal of the program is to have more people graduate and become ordained as pastors, then use their knowledge and spiritual resources to serve the community. Church leaders, pastors, Wonporun, soukoa, ministers, deacons, and priests have demonstrated that they have a strong influence among Chuukese.

Tina Takeshy, President of a non-profit organisation shared valuable information about the Compact of Free Association Community Empowerment Navigation Organization’s (COFACENO)

objectives. Their main goal is serving the COFA community. Some of the programs they offer include language literacy, financial literacy, coordination of educational and vocational training, law and order, public safety education and awareness, jobs, housing, etc. Her insights were in line with our goals.

T’Nelta Mori, who currently works with the office of Congressman Moylan, will assist in reaching out to Congressman Moylan’s office, especially regarding our number one issue: funding sources.

Overall, the meeting was informal but very productive. We concluded with a consensus to move forward and formalise the Support Group, composed of both Catholic and Protestant Church Leaders. The Support Group will assist with outreach, intervention, education, and prevention in our community. The Support Group will be a helpful platform to work with individuals to identify their challenges and assist them with sustainable solutions and empower them to rise above their challenges. FAS is also reaching out to Boys & Girls Club of Hawaii inquiring about their programs and how they can be a good resource to our youth in Guam.



We express our sincere gratitude to those who attended the meeting and thank you brother Victor for always documenting our events. UOn another important note to FSM US citizens, please register to vote. Exercise your civic duty to participate in the election.

*Kinisou Chapur
John Howard*

Micronesian conservation organizations strengthen financial capacity through MFAN Meeting

The Nature Conservancy

March 5, 2026

Majuro, RMI - Finance, administration, and operations professionals from conservation organizations across Micronesia gathered from 24-26 February in Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands, for the third in-person meeting of the Micronesia Finance Administration-Operation Network (MFAN). The meeting was organized by Mingrang Kloulechad, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Micronesia and Polynesia Director of Finance and Operations, who also serves as an advisor to the group.

MFAN is a regional peer-learning network that connects finance and administration staff of conservation NGOs and community-based organizations. The network was established to strengthen financial management and operational systems, recognizing that effective conservation depends on sound grant management and clear policies and procedures that provide direction and oversight.

During the three-day meeting, members reviewed and updated the network's three-year strategy, as 2026 marks the final year of the current strategic cycle. Participants identified priority capacity needs, mapped individual skills and expertise across the network, and drafted a 2026 work plan to guide coordinated action. Technical training sessions focused on auditing practices, financial analysis and storytelling, and practical tools for financial reporting. These sessions were designed to strengthen grants management, improve reporting processes, and enhance organizational accountability across participating entities.

Participating organizations included TNC Micronesia and Polynesia, Marshall Islands Conservation Society, Palau Conservation Society, Palau International Coral Reef Center, Protected Areas Network Fund, Mariana Islands Nature Alliance, Jo-Jikum, Island Resource Conservancy of Wa'ab, University of Guam Sea Grant, and Kosrae Conservation and Safety Organization.



"I am grateful for the opportunity to join MFAN, especially as a member of an NGO here in the Republic of the Marshall Islands," said Danica Muller, Finance Officer at Jo-Jikum. "It allows me to support its vision of strengthening financial and administrative procedures in conservation and related work while deepening connections with our sister organizations across the Micronesian

region."

Moving forward, the MFAN Steering Committee will lead implementation of the 2026 workplan, address identified capacity needs, convene quarterly virtual meetings, and support the establishment of local network chapters within individual jurisdictions.

Kosrae leaders strengthen climate planning through VLEAP training

The Nature Conservancy

March 3, 2026

Kosrae - On February 9-10, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Micronesia and Polynesia hosted the Kosrae Video Local Early Action Planning (VLEAP) Toolkit Training, bringing together government agencies, municipal governments, youth groups, and community organizations across Kosrae. The two-day workshop focused on strengthening local capacity to plan and respond to climate-related challenges. The training, led by TNC staff Berna Gorong and Shanty Asher, was made possible through funding and technical support from TNC's Micronesia and Polynesia Program.

The workshop introduced participants to the VLEAP Toolkit, a practical resource designed to help communities plan early actions for climate adaptation. Through video modules and step-by-step facilitation guidance, participants practiced leading inclusive discussions and developing realistic, locally driven strategies to address

climate risks.

Participants described the toolkit as user-friendly and relevant to their daily work. Many valued the collaborative setting and the clear approach, noting that the content strengthened their confidence to support planning efforts within their own communities. Survey feedback confirmed that the workshop met participants' expectations and the information provided was directly applicable to their roles.

"We hosted this workshop to support stronger management, enhance community engagement, and increase preparedness for addressing climate-related challenges such as sea-level rise and shoreline impacts," said Dr. Yimnang Golbuu, Conservation Director at TNC Micronesia and Polynesia. "Our commitment is to continue working closely with partners and communities in Kosrae, providing technical support and expanding capacity-building efforts to ensure lasting resilience."



Pacific Agenda Summit advances U.S.-Pacific Investment and Cooperation: Ambassador Johnson highlights FSM Engagement

Embassy of the United States to the FSM

March 3, 2026

Honolulu - The Pacific Agenda: Investment, Security, and Shared Prosperity Summit, held in Honolulu from February 22–24, convened nearly 300 participants, including U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau, Admiral Samuel Paparo, other senior U.S. government and military leaders, Pacific Island partners including H.E. President Wesley Simina and his esteemed FSM delegation, private sector executives, and representatives from leading American companies. Co-hosted by the East-West Center, the U.S. Department of State, and U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, the summit demonstrated the United States' unwavering commitment to advancing private sector-led economic growth, strengthening U.S.-Pacific partnerships, and promoting regional security.

Key discussions centered on identifying commercially viable projects in critical sectors such as energy, infrastructure, and the digital economy. Deputy

Secretary of State Landau underscored the United States' strategy of driving prosperity through partnership and investment, rather than traditional aid. Admiral Paparo emphasized the importance of sovereignty, open sea lanes, and secure digital infrastructure for Pacific Island nations.

A major outcome of the summit was the U.S. Trade and Development Agency's announcement of funding for a feasibility study to build a modern hospital in Palau, addressing a top infrastructure priority for the country. The summit also highlighted the pivotal roles of the Millennium Challenge Corporation and the International Development Finance Corporation in supporting regional development.

U.S. Ambassador to the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) Jennifer Johnson actively participated in the summit, engaging with Pacific leaders and U.S. officials to advance investment opportunities and deepen cooperation between the United States and the FSM. Her participation reaffirmed the United States' steadfast commitment to



supporting the FSM's economic growth and regional stability through practical, private sector-driven initiatives.

"There was a strong recognition that economic engagement in the Pacific must be deliberate, disciplined, and responsive to partner priorities. Mobilizing capital at scale requires policy clarity, risk mitigation tools, and sustained public-private collaboration," said Ambassador Johnson. "I am grateful to our outstanding hosts and to the leaders who engaged with candor

and purpose. The work ahead now turns to follow-through and delivery."

Pacific leaders echoed the need for the summit to deliver actionable outcomes, measurable reforms, and enduring collaboration to ensure long-term benefits for the region. For more information, please see the official State Department release:

<https://www.state.gov/releases/office-of-the-spokesperson/2026/02/honolulu-investment-summit-connects-u-s-businesses-and-pacific-island-countries/>

Pacific-led initiatives set to eliminate cervical cancer across the Pacific

University of Auckland

May 8, 2026

Pacific - Te Poutoko Ora a Kiwa – Centre for Pacific and Global Health at Waipapa Taumata Rau, University of Auckland, and its Pacific partners, are supporting the rollout of safe initiatives across the Pacific that are proven to prevent cervical cancer and save lives.

Cervical cancer is a largely preventable disease but remains a leading cause of cancer death among Pacific women. In parts of the Pacific, incidence rates are up to nine times higher than in Australasia.

The Matariki Fund, administered by Rt Hon Dame Jacinda Ardern, is supporting the programme by expanding access to new and existing locally led cancer prevention initiatives for more people across the Pacific.



This new partnership enables a new Pacific-led and coordinated programme of work that:

- Increases HPV vaccination coverage to reach at least 90% of girls.
- Expands access to cervical self-testing to achieve at least 70% of eligible women
- Facilitates timely diagnostics to enable treatment for pre-cancerous lesions and invasive cancer
- Establishes a coalition of Pacific women leaders to lead workforce and capability development, including digital



and health system infrastructure.

The programme made possible through a NZ\$5.1 million granted by the Matariki Fund, and active work of other partners in the region, will begin with a focus on the Cook Islands and Niue before being scaled up across the region.

Cervical cancer can be prevented through HPV vaccination, regular screening and timely diagnosis and treatment. Yet access to these services remains uneven across the Pacific. This new investment

provides a critical opportunity to align national programmes, regional partners, and women leaders around a common goal towards elimination.

The initiative will work alongside successful existing regional programmes, including the EPICC programme (funded by the Australian Government and the Minderoo Foundation) and the Polynesian Health Corridors (PHC) (managed by the New Zealand Ministry of Health and funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade).

Together, these partnerships will help scale effective interventions, reduce duplication, and strengthen regional

Click here for continuation

Pacific to host key lead-up events to COP31

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

26 February 2026

Suva, Fiji - The Pacific region will host several major climate-related meetings ahead of the 31st United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP31), according to Pacific Islands Forum Chair and Solomon Islands Prime Minister Jeremiah Manele.

Manele announced that the COP31 Pre-COP meeting will take place in Fiji in October 2026. The gathering will include a special leaders' component hosted by Tuvalu. The events will follow a climate-focused gathering scheduled during the 55th Pacific

Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in Palau in early September.

The meetings form part of a coordinated regional effort leading up to COP31, which will culminate with the World Leaders' Summit in November 2026 in Antalya, Türkiye.

According to Manele, the Pacific hosting the Pre-COP meeting reflects an agreement reached last year between Australia and Türkiye that the region would play a central role in the preparatory process ahead of COP31.

Pre-COP gatherings traditionally provide an opportunity for governments to discuss priorities and seek common

ground before the formal negotiations begin at the annual climate conference.

Manele said the meeting would also offer Pacific Island countries a platform to demonstrate leadership on climate issues, despite being among the nations most vulnerable to climate change.

The Forum Chair described the upcoming Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in Palau as a key moment for the region to consolidate its positions and align expectations with international partners. From there, Pacific advocacy will continue through engagements at the United Nations General Assembly and the

Pre-COP meeting before reaching COP31.

He thanked the Government of Australia for supporting the regional process and said the Pacific Islands Forum "family" stands ready to assist Palau, Fiji, and Tuvalu as they prepare to host the series of events.

Manele also pointed to the region's experience with international climate negotiations and its record of organizing major global gatherings.

The series of meetings is expected to strengthen the Pacific's collective voice on climate action as world leaders prepare to meet later in the year to address the escalating impacts of climate change.

The European Union renews major ocean partnership with the Pacific – PEUMP phase 2 agreement brings revitalized investment and cooperation with SPC, FFA, OPOC and USP

Secretariat of the Pacific Community

February 27, 2026

Suva, Fiji – The European Union (EU) renews its partnership with the Pacific Community (SPC), the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) and the University of the South Pacific (USP) to advance their shared ambition of healthy oceans, thriving fisheries, and resilient communities. Implementation will begin this year, with activities rolled out across the Pacific until 2030.

This renewed commitment is a continuation of the Pacific – EU Marine Partnership (PEUMP) programme implemented with key regional partners since 2018.

With a total budget of EUR 20 Million [approx. 52 Million FJD], the second phase of PEUMP will support Pacific Island countries and Timor-Leste to address critical ocean-related challenges through education, research and training, evidence-based policymaking and technical assistance.

Key areas of work include strengthening ocean governance, sustainably managing oceanic and coastal fisheries, enhancing value chains and market access for equitable benefits while combating Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing in the Pacific.

The programme builds on the many

successes of phase I and was co-designed to align with national and regional priorities on ocean governance, namely the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, the EU Ambassador to the Pacific, Barbara Plinkert said, "This agreement between our two regions – which collectively represents almost 40 countries is a powerful reflection of our shared, long-term commitment to the ocean – a clear sign that, despite our different geographies, we are united by a common purpose and a shared responsibility to protect and sustainably manage our oceans"

SPC, FFA and USP will coordinate their efforts and work in partnership with the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner (OPOC), national governments, civil society, and local communities to deliver on the programme's objectives.

Reflecting on the significance of this renewed investment, the FFA Director General, Noan David Pakop said, "Phase 2 turns our vision of a sustainably managed and economically strong Pacific tuna fishery into tangible outcomes for our members - strengthening value chains, investing in national industries and advancing innovative monitoring and compliance".



With its 12 campuses in the region, USP is a key partner to advance ocean learning and capacity building through education, research and training.

USP's Pro-Chancellor, Right Honourable Siosua Tuita'lukea Tupou Utoikamanu, said: "Through the Centre for Sustainable Futures, USP warmly welcomes PEUMP 2 as a strategic investment in our region's sustainable future. By strengthening regional capacity

in ocean science, climate adaptation and biodiversity, and improving laboratory and market-readiness for our fisheries, we will equip Pacific leaders and communities with the tools they need to prosper.

The Pro-Chancellor emphasised "Crucially, our approach will weave indigenous knowledge and wisdom with modern science — recognising that healthy oceans are not only central to biodiversity and climate resilience, but are the bedrock of livelihoods, identity and food security across the region."

This regional programme forms part of the EU's broader engagement in the Pacific and aligns with international commitments under the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and global ocean and biodiversity frameworks.

He added that, "This strategic partnership will help maximise sustainable returns while building climate resilience, ensuring the benefits of our ocean are shared across Pacific communities now and for generations to come."

SPC Deputy Director for the Educational Quality and Assessment Programme, Seci Waqabaca highlighted the importance of strengthening regional capacity to meet the evolving demands of ocean governance: "Building sustainable fisheries and ocean governance across our vast region is not without its challenges. Capacity gaps, evolving science, climate pressures, and governance complexities are our reefs. Yet it is precisely at these points of testing that we grow stronger."

Pacific Islands Forum statement for the Seventieth Session of the Commission on the Status of Women

Pacific Islands Forum

Madam Chair,
Excellencies,

Halo olgeta and warm Pacific greetings.

1. It is my great honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum members based in New York.

2. The CSW70 theme is integral to realizing gender equality and social inclusion, a commitment our Forum Leaders continue to reaffirm as central to the region's collective progress in pursuing a resilient, inclusive and peaceful Pacific. At their 54th Meeting in 2025, Forum Leaders endorsed the mainstreaming of gender equality and social inclusion in all key regional policy priorities across all areas.

3. This is underpinned by the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, the Revitalised Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration and the Pacific Platform for Action on Gender Equality and Women's Human Rights.

4. Access to justice for women and girls is fundamental to gender equality and empowerment.

5. Across the Pacific Islands region, governments have taken important steps to strengthen legal protections for women and girls and improve access to justice, through participatory legislative, policy and practice reforms. Many Forum member countries have enacted family protection and domestic violence

legislation.

6. For us, access to justice is determined by unique structural realities, including geographic isolation, dispersed populations, limited legal services, linguistic and cultural diversity, and the interaction between formal and customary justice systems further necessitate approaches that are context specific, culturally grounded and respectful of customs.

7. This is why gender transformative and socially inclusive approaches are essential especially for women and girls in rural, remote and maritime areas.

8. It is within this context that my country Solomon Islands is embarking on piloting Gender Responsive Budgeting as a transformative approach and strategy to analyzing and reorienting budgetary allocations and policies that is responsive to the needs of our people particularly of those most vulnerable.

Madam Chair,

9. Gender Based Violence prevalence rate remains high in our region. We are determined to change this status quo.

10. We recognize the rights-based response, includes support to victims. As a region we continue to strengthen survivor-centered services, drawing on lessons learned from experiences of response and referral systems such as in the Solomon Islands and Kiribati. As well as establishing specialized police and judicial units to address gender-based

violence and expanded legal aid and community-based paralegal initiatives.

11. As a region, we are committed to taking a whole-of-life approach to preventing gender-based violence including investment in early childhood development, actively engaging men and boys as partners and agents of meaningful change and recognizing the vital role of families and communities.

Madam Chair

12. Pacific Islands Forum Members recognize the threats of adverse impacts of Climate change as the defining issue that imperils the lives, livelihoods and wellbeing of our people and communities. This reality is further compounded by multiple and intersecting social and health issues including gender-based violence, and social impacts of the illicit drug trade.

13. The Pacific also places importance on the critical role of women and girls in all their diversity in peacebuilding, resilience, and creating safe communities. Because of this, women's leadership in peacebuilding, mediation, and conflict prevention is increasingly embedded in Pacific peace and security processes.

14. We underscore the need for adequate financing to address these multifaceted issues.

15. The Pacific Resilience Facility is our home-grown initiative, to ensure equitable access to climate finance for Pacific people, including women,

children, persons with disabilities and youth.

Madam Chair,

16. In 2025, the Pacific convened the first ever Pacific Technical Cooperation Session of the CEDAW Committee, and prior to that, the only region to host the human rights treaty body reporting session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child outside of Geneva. This marked a significant milestone in strengthening regional engagement with international human rights mechanisms.

17. Building on this, the region is taking concrete measures to increase Pacific representation across UN entities and UN Committees, including treaty bodies. Currently, amongst the 172 treaty body experts, there are no Pacific Islanders.

18. Despite the complex and multidimensional challenges, we are confronted with, the Pacific continues to draw on our collective strength, solidarity, and shared values. We remain steadfast in advancing coordinated rights-based approaches that safeguard our people.

19. For 70 years this platform has fostered dialogue, partnership and advanced commitments, however, more remains to be done. We must shift from dialogue to action – action that is inclusive and responsive to the needs of women and girls in all their diversity.

Tagio Tumas. I thank you

The World Bank Group advances jobs agenda in Pacific visit

The World Bank

March 9, 2026

Port Moresby — The World Bank Group is deepening its commitment to Pacific Island countries to strengthen their economies, accelerate job creation, and unlock private investment. A delegation of World Bank Group senior officials - World Bank Vice President for East Asia and the Pacific Felipe Jaramillo, IFC's Regional Vice President for Asia and the Pacific Sarvesh Suri, and World Bank Vice President for Operations Policy and Country Services Gallina Vincelette - visited Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Australia, and New Zealand to launch new strategic initiatives and engage with government and private sector partners.

In Goroka, the delegation joined Prime Minister Hon. James Marape to mark Papua New Guinea's National Agriculture Sector Plan 2024–2033, which aims to commercialize the sector and create one million jobs by 2033 as part of the World Bank Group's global AgriConnect initiative.

In Fiji, the delegation introduced the World Bank Group's new Small States Strategy, which addresses the structural vulnerabilities of small island economies through job creation, resilience, and private sector-led growth. It also announced an IFC partnership with Fiji's BRED Bank to help small and medium enterprises access finance and signed a Grant Facility for Project Preparation agreement to support the country's energy transformation.

In Vanua Levu, the delegation saw how the World Bank Group is strengthening tourism as a driver of jobs and growth, including upgrading the airports at Savusavu and Labasa.

In New Zealand and Australia, the delegation engaged business leaders and government counterparts on new procurement reforms that open opportunities for domestic and international firms to compete for World Bank-financed projects while enhancing local labor participation.

The World Bank Group's engagement in the Pacific reflects its overarching strategy of helping countries build economies that convert economic growth into local jobs—not by shifting

work from developed countries, but by unlocking opportunity where people already live.

Jobs provide income, hope, and dignity, boosting global prosperity and stability. Over the next 10 to 15 years, 1.2 million young people in developing countries will reach working age, but only about 400 million jobs are expected to be created. To accelerate job creation at scale, the World Bank Group invests in the foundational physical and human infrastructure for jobs, supports a business-friendly environment, and mobilizes private capital. It focuses on five sectors with the greatest potential to create jobs: infrastructure and energy, agribusiness, primary healthcare, tourism, and value-added manufacturing.

...Cervical Cancer

supporting women leaders — to achieve elimination.”

Click here to return

health systems.

Aligning with the WHO Global Strategy to Eliminate Cervical Cancer the initiative aims to support countries to achieve the “90–70–90” targets by 2030 — a threshold at which elimination becomes possible. In practice, this means aiming to achieving 90% of girls aged 15 years receiving the HPV vaccine, 70% of women screened by age 35 years, and again at 45 years; and 90% of women with pre-cancer and invasive cancers treated.

Professor Sir Collin Tukuitonga, Co-Director of Te Poutoko Ora a Kiwa, says the funding is a gamechanger for regional collaboration.

“Cervical cancer is preventable, yet too many Pacific women continue to die from it. This investment allows Pacific countries to work together — sharing expertise, strengthening systems, and

Pacific women will be at the forefront of the initiative, working in partnership with Te Marae Ora (Cook Islands), the Niue Department of Health, and regional organisations.

Professor Judith McCool, Head of the School of Population Health and Co-Director of Te Poutoko Ora a Kiwa, says the funding enables sustainable, system-level change.

“This grant allows us to move beyond isolated interventions to a truly collaborative, Pacific-led approach. By strengthening leadership, governance, and regional partnerships, we are building the foundations for long-term health equity.”

Rt. Hon. Dame Jacinda Ardern says, “Pacific women are disproportionately affected by a disease that can be eliminated. There is such excellent leadership within the region - this funding is simply about supporting them to save lives with solutions that should be available to everyone.”

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Regional growth in focus as 2026 Export Survey engages Pacific businesses

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

rare and credible source of regionally generated evidence.

March 2, 2026

Suva, Fiji - As global trade conditions are increasingly shaped by evolving tariff settings, geopolitical competition, freight volatility, labour constraints and climate related pressures, it is critical that Pacific businesses ensure its voices are reflected in the evidence shaping regional economic priorities.

The Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum, Baron Divavesi Waqa, said the survey aligns with the region’s long-term vision under the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.

“Our 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent calls for a resilient, inclusive and sustainable regional economy shaped by Pacific priorities and Pacific voices. The survey provides an important avenue for exporters and tourism operators to contribute directly to this shared endeavour, strengthening the evidence that supports regional cooperation and coordinated economic action.”

Recognising tourism as a core services export, the survey explicitly includes businesses that sell to international visitors. Strong participation from tourism operators will strengthen the overall dataset and ensure service exports are fully represented alongside goods exports in regional reporting.

The survey will take approximately

To support this, Pacific Trade Invest (PTI), the trade and investment promotion network of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat has today launched the 2026 Pacific Islands Export Survey, inviting exporters - including tourism operators - across 16 Forum Island Countries to participate in the region’s only longitudinal study of exporter sentiment, which will inform regional trade and economic policy settings.

Conducted every two years since 2014, the survey has built more than a decade of primary research tracking exporter performance, confidence, barriers and emerging opportunities. In a region where comprehensive private sector statistics remain limited, it remains a

Pacific Trade Invest

PACIFIC ISLANDS EXPORT SURVEY 2026

INSIGHTS INTO EXPORT DYNAMICS IN THE PACIFIC

10 minutes to complete and is mobile friendly. Goods and services exporters, tourism businesses, chambers of commerce and industry associations are encouraged to participate and share the survey through their networks, helping ensure its voices are reflected in regional trade policy.

PTI Network General Manager, Caleb Jarvis, said strong participation would be critical to ensuring business perspectives are reflected in regional trade and economic discussions.

“In 2024, participating businesses

identified freight costs, market access constraints and labour shortages among the most significant barriers to growth. Strong participation in 2026 - across all operators, big and small - will ensure the evidence reflects the breadth of business conditions across our region and strengthens the case for practical, targeted support.”

Founded in 1979, Pacific Trade Invest facilitates trade and investment in the Pacific and works to strengthen export capability and international market access for businesses across the region.