

Trump post incorrectly lists FSM among U.S. territories

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

September 7, 2026

WENO, Chuuk — A social media post by United States President Donald Trump incorrectly identifying the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands as U.S. territories has now been raised directly with a senior U.S. official, with the United States reaffirming its recognition of FSM sovereignty.

Trump posted a graphic to his Truth Social account on August 27 under the heading “U.S. TERRITORIES.” The graphic included the flags and names of the FSM and Marshall Islands alongside Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Wake Island, and Washington, D.C. It also included the Strait of Hormuz, identified as “New.”

The FSM and Marshall Islands are not U.S. territories. Both are sovereign nations in free association with the United States under their respective Compacts of Free Association.

The distinction is more than a matter of terminology.

The FSM has its own Constitution, elected national and state governments, diplomatic relations with other countries, membership in the United Nations, and sovereignty over its territory. Its relationship with the United States under the Compact is close and unique, particularly in defense, migration, and economic assistance, but the Compact does not make the FSM a possession or territory of the United States.

The graphic remained on Trump's Truth Social account as of September 7. An independent archive of Trump's Truth Social posts recorded the August



27 posting and captured it again on September 5.

The apparent error drew some attention in U.S. and international media, although much of the coverage

concentrated on Trump's inclusion of the Strait of Hormuz as a new U.S. territory rather than on the status of the two freely associated Pacific nations.

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Pohnpei administration vetoes \$171,000 appropriation following senator's emergency evacuation

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

POHNPEI, FSM — Acting Governor Herolyn S. Movick has line-item vetoed a \$171,000 appropriation for “Emergency Medical Referrals” following the emergency air evacuation of Pohnpei State Senator Sonster Edgar to the Philippines, saying the appropriation would use public money for a private benefit and bypass established medical referral procedures.

The veto followed several days of public concern over the evacuation and the Legislature's attempt

to appropriate money from the Health Care Premium Fund after arrangements for the evacuation had already been made.

The controversy has also drawn attention to Pohnpei's broader medical referral situation. The Kaselehlie Press has been informed that more than 80 patients are currently awaiting medical referrals to the Philippines. Against that backdrop, the use of a private air ambulance for a sitting senator, and the Legislature's subsequent \$171,000 appropriation, have prompted complaints from members of the public about whether ordinary patients have equal access

to the State's limited health care resources.

The Pohnpei State Government first publicly addressed the matter in an August 28 statement, saying Senator Edgar had been evacuated to St. Luke's Medical Center in the Philippines and that questions had arisen over whether Pohnpei's established medical referral procedures had been followed.

According to the administration, the State has an established process for patients who require treatment at an off-island health care facility. A referring physician presents the

case to the State Medical Referral Committee. If approved, the referral proceeds through the State Hospital Director and undergoes medical, utilization, and financial reviews before final action and selection of an appropriate off-island facility.

The administration said that, based on information available to it, there were questions about whether that process was followed in Edgar's case.

The legislative action began August 19 during the 29th Special Session of the 11th Pohnpei Legislature, when

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President Simina chairs PICL talanoa on margins of PIFLM

FSM Information Services

September 4, 2026

KOROR, Palau — His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), led a Talanoa of the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders (PICL) in his capacity as PICL Chair, on the margins of the 55th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in Palau.

The Talanoa brought PICL leaders together to exchange views on strengthening PICL and determining the way forward for the Conference.

Joining the Talanoa were East-West Center President Celeste Connors and former Governor of Hawai'i John Waihe'e, a member of the East-West Center Board of Governors who also represented Hawai'i Governor Josh Green, together with representatives of the Pacific Islands Development Program (PIDP) Secretariat.

PIDP Interim Director Henry Puna addressed leaders and provided an update on progress toward developing the PICL Governance and Administrative Manual (GAM). Mr. Puna also introduced Ms. Jaimee Neel as the new Deputy Director of PIDP.

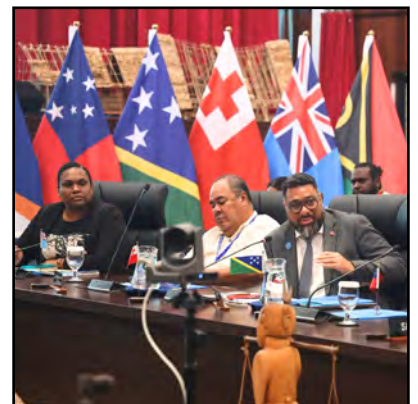
Leaders heard updates from PIDP on the development of the GAM and provided general guidance on the work ahead. The proposed manual is intended to support PICL's governance and future operations.



Leaders tasked the PIDP Secretariat with continuing to develop the GAM through the Standing Committee ahead of its consideration by leaders. Members also agreed to convene a formal PICL meeting in Honolulu, Hawai'i, in December 2026 to review the proposed manual and consider the way forward

for PICL.

"My constructive engagement with the Pacific Islands Development Program at the Pacific Islands Forum underscored our joint commitment to regional cooperation, and I look forward to working closely with PIDP's new leadership to champion and serve the critical priorities of our Pacific home," President Simina said.



The Kaselehlie Press

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Bill Jaynes
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THE NEXT ISSUE OF
THE KASELEHLIE PRESS
WILL BE RELEASED ON:
September 23, 2026

Deadline for submission of articles or
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Monday, September 21, 2026



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Pacific leaders leave Palau with broad agenda for regional action to ensure “Pacific remains the author of its own destiny”



By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

September 4, 2026

KOROR, Palau — Pacific Islands Forum leaders concluded their annual meeting in Palau with agreements spanning regional security, climate change, economic development, oceans and fisheries, health, renewable energy, artificial intelligence, and the future structure of regional cooperation.

The 55th Pacific Islands Forum, held August 31 through September 3, brought together leaders and representatives of the Forum's 18 members. FSM President Wesley Simina attended the meeting.

While considerable attention surrounding the meeting focused on geopolitical competition and China's recent intercontinental ballistic missile test in the Pacific, the 20-page Forum Communiqué adopted at the end of the meeting sets out a much broader regional agenda.

Leaders themselves acknowledged that the Pacific is operating in a period of growing uncertainty involving geopolitical competition, economic volatility, climate threats, and rapid technological change. But they said Pacific priorities must remain at the center of the region's dealings with international partners.

The communiqué reaffirmed the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent as the region's long-term framework and said Pacific regionalism rests on the sovereignty of Forum members and their collective right to determine their own priorities, shape their own agenda, and choose their own

partnerships.

Leaders also moved forward with changes to the regional architecture intended to improve coordination among Pacific institutions and their ability to carry out decisions. The reforms are to be consolidated into a transition and implementation process extending through 2030.

Regional security occupied a substantial part of the communiqué.

Leaders endorsed the Regional Peace and Security Action Plan 2026-2030 and reaffirmed the Boe Declaration on Regional Security and the Blue Pacific Ocean of Peace Declaration as the region's principal security frameworks.

They identified geopolitical tensions, transnational organized crime, climate change, economic disruption, and emerging strategic risks among the security challenges facing Pacific countries.

Leaders also agreed in principle to the Waqa Moana Concept, a proposed regional mechanism to strengthen cooperation against organized crime and illicit drug trafficking through intelligence sharing, coordination, and maritime security cooperation. Further consultations will be conducted within individual countries.

A Solomon Islands proposal for a Blue Pacific Ocean of Peace Regional Security Treaty received no final endorsement. Leaders encouraged further consideration of the proposal and said additional consultations were needed.



All photos courtesy of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

The communiqué also addressed the recent ICBM test that had generated considerable discussion before and during the Forum.

Rather than identifying China in the final document, leaders expressed concern that the recent test had overflowed a number of Forum members without adequate notice.

They called on all states conducting ICBM tests to provide at least 24 hours' advance notification and said such tests should be conducted consistently with the Blue Pacific Ocean of Peace Declaration and Treaty of Rarotonga and with respect for the sovereignty of Forum members.

The Republic of Naoero formally disassociated itself from that paragraph.

The wording followed discussions that had begun before the leaders' meeting over whether the Forum should issue a statement specifically addressing China's missile test or establish a broader position applying to missile testing by any country.

At an August meeting of Forum foreign ministers, Secretary General Baron Waqa said members had differing views over whether a statement should focus on the particular incident or apply generally to tests conducted in the Pacific. The matter was left for

leaders to consider in Palau.

The final communiqué took the broader approach.

Climate change and energy

Climate change remained one of the clearest areas of regional agreement.

Leaders again described climate change as the single greatest threat to the security, livelihoods, and well-being of Pacific peoples and endorsed the BELAU Declaration for Urgent and Inclusive Climate Action to Keep 1.5°C Within Reach.

The declaration calls for accelerated action to move away from fossil fuels toward renewable energy, improved access to climate finance, greater international recognition of the relationship between oceans and climate, and continued efforts to hold global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

Forum members committed themselves to accelerating development of a regional renewable energy transition strategy aimed at progress toward a 100 percent renewable-energy future while recognizing differing national circumstances.

Leaders also approved terms of reference for a Pacific Renewable

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Low turnout but good fish and great prizes at the Annual Matson Shipping fishing tournament

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlle Press

August 29, 2026

Pohnpei – The potential for fantastic cash prizes for heaviest fish overall, heaviest of species, and top fish caught by a lady angler in the Annual Matson Fishing Tournament would usually attract a large number of Pohnpei Fishing Club members. Only 10 boats signed up for this year's tournament. Certainly, the anglers who chose not to participate regret that decision when some good-sized fish were landed.

Taylor Paul landed a yellowfin tuna of 53 pounds earning him \$750 for the heaviest fish caught in the tournament.

By club rules, sailfish have to weigh at least 50 pounds before they qualify for prizes. Kevin Sehpin's 51-pound sailfish just made the cutoff earning

him \$550 for second prize.

The third and fourth prizes were both yellowfin, one caught by Taylor Paul for \$350, and the other caught by the ubiquitous no-longer-a-junior-angler, Marvey Spencer for the fourth prize of \$250.

Onel Optaia won \$200 for the fifth heaviest fish caught, a barracuda.

Unfortunately, other than the weights of the two top heaviest fish, the club didn't report the weight of any other fish caught in the tournament, something they usually do.

Jaegar Frederick caught the first and second prize winning skipjacks for the first-place prize of \$150, as well as the second-place prize of \$100.

Haworth Paddock had the top barracuda

for \$150. His was followed by John Pengelly for \$100.

Haworth Paddock had the \$150 prize for his yellowfin. Mauricio Joseph had the second-place winner for \$100.

The top lady angler was Vandella Warren, \$150 for a barracuda of unspecified size.

The club thanks Matson for once again sponsoring and supporting the tournament, and particularly their representative Stephen for making the trip out to Pohnpei for the event. Sponsorship like this allows us them to continue putting on tournaments and providing worthwhile prizes for our fishing community.

The Club also thanked Mangrove Bay Bar for hosting the club for registration

and weigh-in and providing a great venue for everyone to get together after a day on the water.

The next Pohnpei Fishing Club tournament will be the 19th Annual Dr. Alexander Panuelo Sportfishing Derby on Saturday, September 26. Registration for that tournament is on September 25 beginning at 6:00 at Mangrove Bay Bar.



...PIF

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Energy Commissioner, to be based within the Pacific Community with reporting arrangements involving both the Pacific Community and Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.

The Forum endorsed a Pacific Pact on Gender and Climate Action, which calls for greater participation by Pacific women in climate decision-making, better gender-related climate data, and increased access by women and community organizations to climate financing.

Leaders also continued their push to capitalize the Pacific Resilience Facility, describing it as the region's primary climate-finance investment priority.

The communiqué records that \$162 million had been pledged toward the Facility's initial \$500 million capitalization target before the Palau meeting and welcomed additional pledges from Norway, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the United Kingdom.

Oceans and fisheries

The ocean occupied another large portion of the leaders' decisions.

The Forum endorsed a 2026 Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Ocean Statement and reaffirmed previous regional declarations intended to preserve Pacific maritime zones and sovereign rights despite climate change-related sea-level rise.

Leaders called for outstanding maritime-boundary treaties to be completed, existing agreements to be brought into force, and relevant maritime coordinates and charts to be deposited with the United Nations.

They also endorsed the Vakamanu Regional Pacific Fisheries Strategy 2026-2035 as the region's principal fisheries and aquaculture framework.

The strategy is intended to support sustainable management while protecting members' sovereign rights and increasing the economic and social benefits Pacific countries receive from

their fisheries resources.

On deep-sea minerals, leaders endorsed further work on a member-led regional approach while maintaining that individual countries retain sovereign rights over natural resources within their jurisdictions.

They also renewed calls for a legally binding global agreement addressing plastics throughout their life cycle and for stronger action against illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing.

The communiqué acknowledged the Pacific Blue Shipping Partnership Charter signed in June by Fiji, the Marshall Islands, FSM, Kiribati, Naoero, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu, and subsequently by Tonga. The initiative is intended to coordinate efforts to decarbonize Pacific shipping.

Leaders also recognized traditional navigation and voyaging as an expression of Pacific culture, identity, and traditional knowledge and welcomed a declaration presented by Palau's Great Council of Chiefs and the Micronesian Voyaging Society recognizing traditional navigation as cultural heritage of the Blue Pacific Continent.

Economy and development

On economic development, leaders reaffirmed the Pacific Roadmap for Economic Development and called for deeper regional cooperation, greater economic diversification, improved connectivity, and stronger capacity to withstand external economic shocks.

They endorsed the KAVA Declaration, which seeks to protect kava's Pacific origins, traditional knowledge, and cultural identity while increasing opportunities for Pacific producers in international markets.

Leaders also agreed to establish a regional Labour Ministers Meeting, reflecting concerns over labor mobility, skills development, workforce sustainability, and the economic effects of migration.

People-centered development included commitments involving disability rights, women's political participation, education, and non-communicable diseases.

The Forum endorsed a refreshed Pacific Framework for the Rights of



Persons with Disabilities and urged members to remove structural barriers to participation.

Leaders also expressed concern over the persistently low representation of women in Pacific national parliaments and urged governments to adopt policies and laws intended to increase women's political participation.

Non-communicable diseases were again identified as a major regional development challenge, with leaders calling for faster implementation of the Pacific NCD Roadmap.

AI, connectivity, and aviation

Artificial intelligence also appeared on the Forum agenda for the first time as the subject of a collective regional position.

Leaders endorsed Pacific Digital and Artificial Intelligence Technology Principles, which are intended to guide development of the Pacific's first AI governance framework for consideration in 2027.

The communiqué says AI should remain human-centered, inclusive, and aligned with Pacific values. Leaders called for safeguards for Pacific languages, cultures, and traditional knowledge and said AI governance should include transparency, accountability, safety, and meaningful human oversight.

The Forum also recognized the importance of cybersecurity and digital sovereignty and supported development of a regional approach to online harms, including the effects of social media and technology-facilitated violence on children, young people, women, and other vulnerable

groups.

Leaders welcomed what the communiqué described as the achievement of having all Forum members connected to undersea telecommunications cables for the first time.

They also supported continued implementation of the Pacific Regional Aviation Action Plan and development of a Pacific Regional Aviation Framework, with particular attention to improving connectivity for smaller island states.

Forum meetings through 2031

The communiqué confirmed Forum hosts for the next five years.

New Zealand will host the 56th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in 2027, followed by Naoero in 2028, the Republic of the Marshall Islands in 2029, Vanuatu in 2030, and French Polynesia in 2031.

For Palau President and Forum Chair Surangel Whipps Jr., however, the importance of the meeting would ultimately be measured by what followed it.

At the closing of the Forum, Whipps said the test would be whether regional decisions resulted in tangible improvements for Pacific people.

"Alone, each of us faces immense challenges," Whipps said.

"Together, we can secure our energy future, protect our oceans, build economies that serve our people and ensure that the Pacific remains the author of its own destiny."

Nukuoro Mayor courtesy visit to Acting Governor T.H. Herolyn S. Movick

Pohnpei Public Information

August 30, 2026

Pei Lapalap, Pohnpei: On August 25, Mayor of Nukuoro, Hon. Johnny Rudolph, paid a courtesy visit to Acting Governor T.H. Herolyn S. Movick to discuss urgent transportation and water security challenges affecting the community.

The meeting focused on the immediate issue of stranded students and teachers whose absence has delayed the start of the school term. The Mayor emphasized the need for a state-level meeting with congressional representatives and education officials to regulate maritime schedules in support of academic needs.

Acting Governor Movick reaffirmed

her commitment to coordinate with the Director of Education to identify stranded individuals and explore avenues to facilitate their safe return.

In addition to transportation concerns, the meeting addressed water security challenges during El Niño. The Mayor outlined plans for a communal water system, funded by SPC grants, to replace individual household tanks. This initiative is scheduled for implementation in 2027 and aims to strengthen resilience against climate-related disruptions.

Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to maintaining open communication and collaboration to resolve these critical logistical challenges for the benefit of Nukuoro's residents.



...U.S. territories

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The White House has separately promoted Trump's assertions of U.S. control over the Strait of Hormuz amid the continuing conflict with Iran. Whatever political message was intended concerning the strait, however, placing the FSM and Marshall Islands under the same heading introduced an unrelated factual error into an official presidential communication.

For the FSM, the issue does not appear to have produced alarm that the United States is asserting a territorial claim over the country. There has been no indication from the U.S. government of any change in its recognition of the FSM as a sovereign nation.

But information concerning the political status of the FSM carries particular significance when it comes from the President of the United States.

The United States administered the islands that later became the FSM as part of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands after World War II. The FSM subsequently established constitutional government and entered into the Compact of Free Association with the United States. The relationship created by the Compact is therefore fundamentally different from the relationship between the United States and its territories.

FSM Secretary of Foreign Affairs Ricky Cantero told The Kaselehlie Press last week that the matter had not been raised with U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau during Landau's visit for the Pacific Islands Forum. Cantero said there were more appropriate times and places to address such matters and indicated that an opportunity could arise during Landau's subsequent visit to Chuuk.

That discussion apparently did take place.

According to a September 6 release from FSM Information Services, President Wesley W. Simina met with Landau in Weno, Chuuk, for bilateral discussions covering the Compact relationship, Typhoon Sinlaku recovery, infrastructure, defense projects, and other matters.

The government release did not specifically identify Trump's post. It said only that Simina "addressed concern over recent inaccurate public commentary regarding the FSM's political status."

According to the release, Landau reaffirmed U.S. respect for FSM sovereignty, while Simina emphasized the importance of that sovereignty and expressed appreciation for the continued mutual respect between the two countries.

The restrained exchange appears to put the matter in perspective. Nothing in the FSM government's account suggests that either side treated the Truth Social graphic as an actual assertion of U.S. sovereignty over the FSM.

It does, however, leave the original error uncorrected in the place where it occurred.

As of September 7, Trump's August 27 Truth Social post remained publicly available. The graphic itself contains no qualification explaining that the FSM and Marshall Islands are sovereign countries in free association with the United States.

For two countries whose political relationship with the United States is often poorly understood outside the Pacific, that distinction matters.

The Compacts provide the United States with extensive defense rights and responsibilities and give citizens of the freely associated states important rights in the United States. Those arrangements can make the relationship difficult to describe briefly. They do not, however, make either country a U.S. territory.

The posting therefore presents a problem considerably less dramatic than a threatened American takeover of the FSM, but one that is nonetheless significant: inaccurate information about a sovereign country was distributed to a large international audience by the President of the country with which the FSM has its closest political and strategic relationship.

President Simina has now raised the issue directly with the second-ranking official at the U.S. State Department. Landau's response, according to the FSM government, was unequivocal: the United States respects the sovereignty of the Federated States of Micronesia.

...Veto

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a floor amendment was introduced to appropriate \$171,000 from the Health Care Premium Fund for “Emergency Medical Referrals.” The Legislature adopted L.B. No. 478-26 the following day, and the Governor’s Office received the bill August 21.

According to the August 28 statement, the emergency evacuation occurred before the Governor’s Office had completed its review of the circumstances, consulted appropriate executive agencies, or completed the constitutional process for considering the bill.

The administration emphasized that the bill had not yet become law and that the \$171,000 had not been disbursed. It said no financial commitments should be made based on an appropriation that had not become law.

The Department of Health and Social Services did provide ground support for Edgar’s evacuation, including State ambulance services and personnel to transport Edgar and his attendant to the airport. The administration specifically said, however, that the department did not charter the private air ambulance that arrived from the Philippines.

At that point, the administration said it was reviewing the medical referral, coordination among State officials and legislative leaders, the legislative action, and related financial matters.

The administration took a substantially stronger position several days later.

On September 1, Acting Governor Movick formally notified Speaker Marvin T. Yamaguchi and the 11th Pohnpei Legislature that she had exercised her line-item veto authority under Article 8, Section 13(4) of the Pohnpei Constitution to strike the \$171,000 appropriation from the bill.

According to the administration, the veto was based on legal findings by the Office of the Attorney General.

The first concerned the Pohnpei

Constitution’s requirement that public money be appropriated only for public purposes. The administration said the \$171,000 appropriation was directed toward “a single identifiable person” to pay what it described as a “pre-committed private expense,” supported by an air ambulance quotation for one patient.

The Attorney General’s review concluded that such an appropriation violated the constitutional public-purpose requirement.

The administration also said the appropriation failed to comply with statutory requirements governing medical referrals. It cited Pohnpei law requiring health funds to be administered by the Director of Health and Social Services and medical referrals to undergo committee review and approval.

According to the September 1 statement, legislative records showed no medical committee evaluation and an absence of legislative analysis or deliberation concerning the appropriation. The administration characterized the Legislature’s action as an attempt by the Legislative Branch to perform an administrative function.

Movick also cited the potential effect on the Health Care Premium Fund itself.

The administration said withdrawing \$171,000 for a single event that had already occurred would create fiscal risk for the restricted fund, potentially jeopardizing establishment of the Pohnpei Health Care Plan and reducing reserves available for future emergency medical evacuations.

“Public funds at all times must serve the broader public interest rather than be used to satisfy pre-committed private expenses that bypass established medical referral procedures,” Movick said. “The power of legislative appropriation is intended to advance a public purpose, not to confer a private benefit.”

The sequence of events has become an important part of the public debate.

The Legislature approved the appropriation, but the private medical evacuation took place before the appropriation became law and before the Executive Branch had completed its review. The administration subsequently said the money had not been disbursed and that the Department of Health and Social Services had not chartered the aircraft.

Neither of the administration’s statements identifies who arranged for the private air ambulance, who made any financial commitment for

the aircraft, or who currently bears responsibility for its cost.

Those unanswered questions have contributed to public concern, particularly among families of Pohnpei residents who have been waiting for approval or funding for off-island medical care.

The August 28 statement acknowledged those concerns and said the administration was reviewing the circumstances surrounding the evacuation, including the medical referral, coordination among State officials and legislative leaders, legislative action, and financial matters. It said appropriate legal and administrative action would be taken based on the findings.

The September 1 veto prevents the \$171,000 line item from becoming law unless the Legislature takes further action under the procedures provided by the Pohnpei Constitution.

As of The Kaselehlie Press’s reporting for this article, the Legislature had not taken action to override the line-item veto that the newspaper could confirm.

The Legislature’s response, and answers concerning who authorized or committed to paying for the air ambulance before an appropriation existed, remain outstanding.



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Autism expert from World Bank pays courtesy call on Acting Governor Herolyn S. Movick

Pohnpei Public Information

August 26, 2026

Pei Lapalap, Pohnpei

– An autism specialist, Kristin Bartlett, from the World Bank paid a courtesy call on Acting Governor Herolyn S. Movick to discuss strengthening support systems for children with autism and their families in Pohnpei.



During the meeting, the World Bank expert outlined her ongoing scoping mission in the Federated States of Micronesia, explaining that the visit follows formal requests from both the Marshall Islands and FSM to extend World Bank support to autism and related developmental needs. The mission focuses on listening to families, engaging with education and health sectors, and mapping out how best to coordinate services for children with autism.

Acting Governor Movick underscored that autism has become an increasingly visible and important issue for the State, noting that existing education laws already guarantee every child, including those with special needs, the right to attend school from early childhood through the highest level they can reach. She highlighted that, while some well-known organizations are active, many school-based support groups and early childhood programs remain less visible, even though they serve large numbers of children.

The World Bank expert reported that, during her week-and-a-half in FSM, she has been working closely with the Division of Special Services under the Department of Education, conducting school visits, meeting teachers and parents, and consulting with public health, maternal and child health, psychologists, and pediatricians. A key focus is strengthening clear referral pathways so that when parents first notice developmental differences in their children, they know where to go and how to access screening and educational support.

Because external services such as

occupational and speech therapy are currently limited, the expert emphasized that schools are the primary environment for support. Planned activities include teacher workshops, in-service training, classroom coaching, and tools to help educators develop individualized education programs (IEPs) tailored to each child's strengths, needs, and age.

Acting Governor Movick stressed that training for both teachers and parents is critical. She shared personal examples of autistic children within her own family, emphasizing that many children on the spectrum have exceptional talents in specific areas and can become productive members of society if their strengths are recognized and nurtured.

Acting Governor Movick highlighted that families and teachers need support “to recognize what these children are good at and help them develop in those areas so they can grow into independent, working adults.”

Both parties agreed on the importance of shifting language and attitudes around autism, moving away from terms such as “disability” and “treatment,” which imply a disease to be cured. Instead, they affirmed autism as a lifelong condition that requires support, not a cure, and noted that more positive, accurate language can help reduce stigma and encourage families to seek help.

The meeting also referenced a report prepared by Australian volunteers containing recommendations for the

Autism Act. The expert will seek access to this report, currently held by the Director of Health, to help inform ongoing work under the ASPIRE project, which is scheduled to run until June next year.

Before concluding, the World Bank expert committed to preparing a brief aide-mémoire after each mission to update the Pohnpei State leadership

on key activities and findings, and to notify the Acting Governor's Office of future visits. Acting Governor Movick, in turn, expressed appreciation for the World Bank's support and reiterated the State's commitment to ensuring that program benefits reach families and schools at the community level, rather than remaining only at the national level.

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President Simina and Deputy Secretary Landau reaffirm strength of FSM–U.S. partnership

FSM Information Services

September 6, 2026

WENO, Chuuk — His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), held a bilateral meeting with United States Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau, reaffirming the enduring FSM–U.S. partnership and the mutual respect that underpins the two countries' unique relationship under the Compact of Free Association.

The two discussed the United States' announcement of an additional \$96 million for Typhoon Sinlaku recovery and reconstruction, expected to support the rebuilding of approximately 700 homes and repairs to around 1,000 buildings, including schools, hospitals, and other essential facilities. The U.S. delegation noted the unprecedented pace of the response and reconstruction effort.

The President also addressed concern over recent inaccurate public commentary regarding the FSM's

political status. Deputy Secretary Landau reaffirmed the U.S.'s respect for the sovereignty of the FSM, while President Simina underscored the importance of that sovereignty and expressed appreciation for the continued mutual respect shown by both partners.

President Simina raised infrastructure and implementation challenges under the Compact and welcomed progress on the Chuuk State Hospital project.

The two also discussed defense site projects in Yap, with President Simina noting positive discussions with Yap State leadership and its commitment to moving the projects forward.

President Simina thanked the United States Coast Guard for its continued search and rescue support and welcomed further opportunities for assistance in disaster response, including the ongoing Typhoon Sinlaku response and recovery.



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COM-FSM STUDENT COMPLETES APIC PACIFIC ISLANDS AND WEST INDIES 2026 STUDENT-EXCHANGE PROGRAM

The Association for Promotion of International Cooperation (APIC) study abroad program has long supported students across the Pacific region. After a hiatus caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the program successfully resumed in 2023. Recent College of Micronesia-FSM (COM-FSM) representatives include alumnus Mr. Ian Perman (2023), Ms. Brenda Saimon (2024), and Ms. Vemica Paula David (2025). This year, APIC sponsored ten students—five from the universities across the Pacific Islands and five from the University of the West Indies—to attend the summer session at Sophia University in Tokyo.

Ms. Makayle'a Kia'ni Charley, one of the Spring 2026 Valedictorians and graduate of the Health Careers Opportunity Program, was selected to represent the COM-FSM. She stood out among 5 qualified candidates in the college's internal selection process hosted by the Office of the Vice President for Instructional Affairs (VPIA). During her four-week stay in Japan, Ms. Charley completed three courses at Sophia University: The Japanese Economy in a Comparative Perspective, Education in Japan, and Modern History of Japan.

The one-month exchange program deepened Ms. Charley's appreciation of Japanese culture through both daily life in Tokyo and meaningful social interactions at Sophia University. Reflecting on her journey, Ms. Charley shared:

"I was able to learn about Japan outside of the classroom. Through daily observations, I noticed certain patterns and hidden societal rules. One significant aspect of Japan's society is discipline. It can be seen in their sense of promptness, "designated" walking paths, overly formal interactions, cleanliness, and so much more."



"Overall, this experience pushed me out of my comfort zone, taught me independence, and allowed me to connect with incredible people from around the world. The friendships that were formed reflect APIC's goal of fostering international cooperation. The knowledge and personal growth I gained will undoubtedly guide my future endeavors. I'm deeply grateful to APIC, which made this opportunity possible."

We hope this exchange program sets a strong precedent for future collaborations between the COM-FSM and Sophia University. We extend our sincere gratitude to the Association for Promotion of International Cooperation (APIC) for their continued support. The VPIA Office also thanks Dr. Karen Kan-Lun Tu for coordinating the selection process and logistical arrangements for our COM-FSM students. Congratulations to Ms. Makayle'a Kia'ni Charley on proudly representing the college!

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President Simina joins FMI inaugural graduation, meets with Yap State Leadership

FSM Information Services

September 4, 2026

PALIKIR, Pohnpei — On August 28, 2026, His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), delivered the keynote address at the inaugural graduation ceremony for Class IV cadets of the FSM Fisheries and Maritime Institute (FMI) in Yap on August 28, highlighting their role in strengthening the nation's maritime workforce.

Held under the theme "A Historic Voyage: Vision Realized, Legacy Begun," the ceremony marked a milestone for the Institute and its graduates in Navigation and Marine Engineering. President Simina emphasized that their training responds to a critical national need for skilled Micronesians to safely operate, maintain, and manage the vessels connecting the four states of the FSM.

"You are not just nine young cadets receiving your degrees. You are part of the answer to a national challenge," President Simina said.

Reflecting on Typhoon Sinlaku, he highlighted the importance of reliable maritime transportation in delivering food, water, fuel, medicine, and other relief supplies to affected communities.

He encouraged the graduates to consider serving aboard the nation's vessels and to continue learning throughout their careers, emphasizing that their responsibilities would extend beyond technical expertise.

"Technology will change. Ships will change. Our maritime industry will change. But the values of professionalism, safety, teamwork, integrity, and service must remain constant," the President said.

President Simina also congratulated the graduates' families, recognizing their encouragement and sacrifices, and thanked the Institute's instructors, administrators, and supporters for their commitment to developing Micronesian maritime expertise.

While in Yap, the President held courtesy meetings with Acting Governor Bernard Gorong and members of the State Cabinet; the Honorable Nicholas Figirlaarwon, Speaker of the 11th Yap State Legislature, and fellow legislators; and members of the Council of Pilung. Discussions covered State priorities and progress of the ongoing defense site project. He thanked Yap's leaders for their partnership and reiterated that the National Government's unity with Yap State in moving the project forward.



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MUNRO LEYS

President Simina joins North Pacific leaders in restoring Peace Corps Partnership with the United States

FSM Information Services

September 5, 2026

KOROR, Palau — On the margins of the 55th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting, His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia, joined Her Excellency Hilda C. Heine, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands; His Excellency Surangel S. Whipps Jr., President of the Republic of Palau; and United States Deputy Secretary of State and Peace Corps Acting Director Christopher Landau in signing a Letter of Intent supporting the return of the Peace Corps to the North Pacific region.

The signing represents an important and long-awaited step toward restoring the Peace Corps' presence in Micronesia. Before Peace Corps operations ended in 2018, generations of volunteers contributed to education and community development while building lasting relationships between the people of Micronesia and the United States.



The signing carries particular significance for President Simina, who has personally advocated for the return of the Peace Corps since meeting with the former Peace Corps Director in Washington, D.C., in 2024. He has since continued to raise the matter during several bilateral engagements with the United States Government.

President Simina joined President Heine and President Whipps in welcoming the initiative and reflected



on the lasting impact of Peace Corps Volunteers across the region. Recalling his personal connection to the program, the President shared that he was taught by several Peace Corps Volunteers during his early education and considers himself a product of their service.

The President acknowledged the important role Peace Corps Volunteers have played in shaping the lives of generations of Micronesians and

strengthening the enduring friendship between Micronesia and the United States.

President Simina expressed the FSM's sincere appreciation to the United States Government and Deputy Secretary Landau for supporting the initiative, describing the signing as an important development that has long been awaited by communities across the North Pacific.

NOTICE OF LAND SALE BY AUCTION

Pursuant to the order of sale of the FSM Supreme Court entered on July 25, 2023, public notice is hereby given that the parcel described below will be sold by auction to the highest bidder under the following terms:

Parcel no. 041-T-09, Finolof, Tafunsak Municipality, Kosrae State, with area of 3,963 square meters, as shown on the certificate of title issued November 16, 2016, described on cadastral plat no. 041-T-01 filed in the Kosrae State Land Registry, together with all buildings, fixtures and other improvements thereon.

- There is no minimum bid amount.
- Bids shall be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "November 10, 2026 Land Auction" by personal delivery to Arthur R Sighra at the front entrance area of the FSM Supreme Court courthouse in Tofol, Kosrae State on Tuesday, November 10, 2026 between 10 am. and noon 12 pm. The deadline for submitting bids will be noon 12 pm on Tuesday, November 10, 2026.
- All bid submissions must state the full name, mailing address, phone or fax numbers, e-mail address or other valid contact information for the bidder.
- All bid submissions must clearly state the bid amount and must include a deposit of 5 % of the total bid amount by cash or cashier's check. If the bid submission does not include the 5 % deposit, the bid is immediately disqualified.
- The winning bidder shall be notified in writing the next business day after the auction deadline and payment of the remaining balance of the bid must be paid to the FSM Development Bank no later than ten (10) calendar days after notice of award is given, along with proof of the bidder's FSM citizenship. If the winning bidder fails to pay the remaining balance of the bid within the required time, the deposit amount paid by the bidder shall be forfeited to the FSM Development Bank.
- Upon qualification and full payment of the winning bid, the non-winning bidders shall have their 5% deposit returned to them within three (3) business days.
- The winning bidder shall be conveyed title through a duly issued Court order transferring title to the parcel, including all buildings, fixtures and other improvements on the parcel.
- The winning bidder must be eligible to hold title to land in the Federated States of Micronesia and must provide proof of such eligibility.
- If the winning bidder who has been provided notice of award by the Bank fails to remit payment within the required time, his/her deposit is forfeited to the FSM Development Bank and the notice of award will be granted to the next highest bidder, and the same conditions will apply.
- The parcel and any improvements thereon are offered for sale "as-is" with no guarantees or warranties as to their condition whatsoever.

• Requests for more details or questions concerning this auction may be directed to Nora E Sighra, General Counsel, email: noras@fsmdb.fm, FSM Development Bank, PO Box M, Pohnpei, FM 96941, phone no. 691-370-3070, website: www.fsmdb.fm

FSM National Government secures landmark agreement to host ADB North Pacific office in Pohnpei

Pohnpei Public Information

September 1, 2026

Koror, Palau — Governor Stevenson A. Joseph, Chair of the 28th Micronesian Islands Forum (MIF), joined regional heads of state in Koror, Palau, for the historic signing of an agreement establishing Pohnpei as the host location for the new Asian Development Bank (ADB) North Pacific Subregional Office. The landmark agreement was officially signed by the President of the Federated States of Micronesia, H.E. Wesley W. Simina, alongside ADB President Masato Kanda.

The ceremony, held at the Ngarachamayong Cultural Center, highlighted the strength of Micronesian unity and national leadership. The successful hosting arrangement was made possible through the dedicated efforts of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) National Government, alongside the strong backing of the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Palau, whose mutual support reflects a shared commitment to solidarity across the North Pacific.

During the event, FSM President Wesley W. Simina turned to acknowledge Governor Joseph prior to signing the agreement alongside ADB President Masato Kanda. In response, President Kanda stood to greet Governor Joseph, expressing

ADB's gratitude to Pohnpei State for serving as the host site.

While physically located in Pohnpei, the office is established to serve all three North Pacific nations equally, embodying the true spirit of Pacific regionalism and collective progress.

FSM national leadership was fundamental in facilitating this milestone, which further enhances Pohnpei's serving role as a sub-regional administrative location alongside existing regional presences like the One UN Office.

According to official remarks delivered by ADB President Masato Kanda, ADB's active portfolio in the North Pacific has expanded from four operations valued at \$39 million in 2011 to 22 active projects totaling approximately \$320 million today. Establishing a dedicated office in the region aims to assist with local coordination, technical assistance, and crisis response over the long term.

Preparations are underway to make the ADB North Pacific Subregional Office operational in due course, following standard administrative setups.



Pohnpei Chamber of Commerce engages Government on economic and tax matters

Pohnpei Public Information

August 30, 2026

Pei Lapalap, Pohnpei — On August 25, 2026, Acting Governor Herolyn S. Movick recently hosted a courtesy visit from the leadership of the Pohnpei Chamber of Commerce to discuss key economic issues and strengthen dialogue between the state government and the local business community.

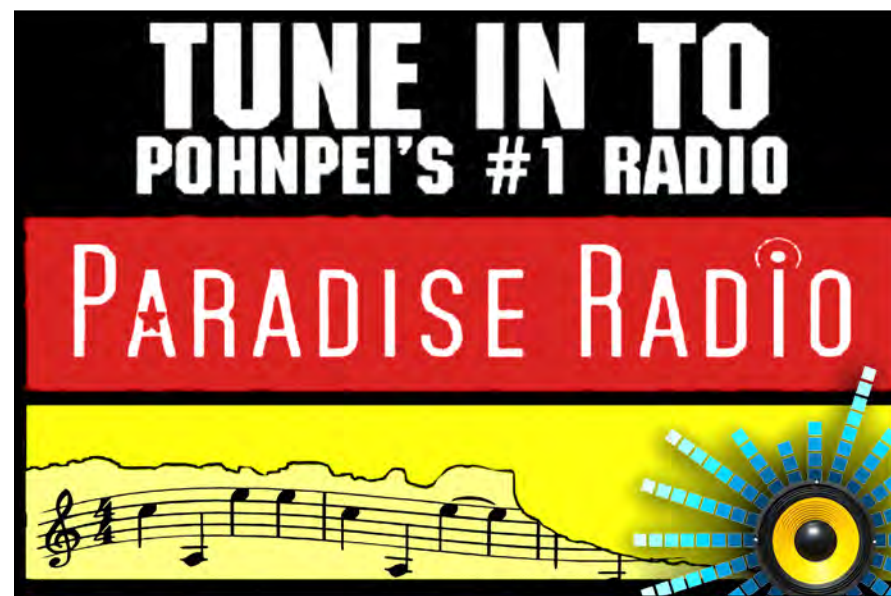
Representing the Chamber were President Richie Adams, alongside members Ron Pangelinan and Herman Semes. The delegation met with Acting Governor Movick to seek state assistance and share perspectives on upcoming policy initiatives affecting the private sector.

During the meeting, Chamber representatives highlighted the need for careful consideration regarding ongoing tax reform efforts, emphasizing that local businesses require adequate time, consultation, and clear guidance to prepare for potential policy changes.

Key points addressed during the visit include:

- **Private Sector Growth:** The Chamber emphasized the importance of ensuring that economic policies and tax frameworks support long-term private sector growth alongside public needs.
- **Business Readiness:** Participants noted that many local operations face practical capacity and operational challenges, making collaborative planning essential before implementing new requirements.
- **Ongoing Partnership:** The Chamber reaffirmed its commitment to working closely with government leadership to foster a practical, growth-oriented environment for Pohnpei's business community.

Acting Governor Movick welcomed the Chamber's visit and reiterated the administration's commitment to open communication and continued partnership with local enterprise leaders.



Governor Stevenson A. Joseph advances Pohnpei and regional priorities in high-level diplomatic engagement ahead of PIF

Pohnpei Public Information

August 30, 2026

Republic of Palau — The Honorable Stevenson A. Joseph, Governor of Pohnpei State, joined His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), in high-level bilateral discussions with His Excellency Surangel S. Whipps Jr., President of the Republic of Palau, in Koror today. The meeting took place ahead of the upcoming Pacific Islands

Forum Leaders Meeting (PIF).

Governor Joseph participated in the summit as a special guest of President Simina and in his capacity as Chair of the 28th Micronesians Islands Forum. His presence underscored Pohnpei's pivotal role in shaping regional diplomatic dialogue and strengthening leadership across the Pacific.

A major milestone of the engagement was the formal handover of the FSM

Government's \$200,000 contribution to the Government of Palau, which serves as the Micronesians Islands Forum (MIF) Secretariat. The contribution was officially presented by the Honorable Ricky Cantero on behalf of the FSM Government. Originally announced during the 28th MIF, these funds will support the recruitment of an MIF Secretary-General to oversee Secretariat operations and streamline coordination among Micronesians governments.

During the sessions, leaders focused on presenting a unified Pacific position to ensure the PIF Leaders Meeting addresses issues that directly impact local communities. The meeting reaffirmed the enduring partnership between the FSM, Pohnpei State, and the Republic of Palau, highlighting a shared commitment to advancing subregional stability and sustainable growth.



President Simina and UN Deputy Secretary-General discuss FSM priorities

FSM Information Services

September 5, 2026

KOROR, Palau — His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia, met with United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed on the margins of the 55th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in Palau.

President Simina expressed appreciation for the United Nations' partnership with the North Pacific, highlighting the UN Multi-Country Office as an important channel for closer regional engagement. He also reaffirmed the FSM's commitment to establishing a permanent "One UN House" in the FSM.

Discussions focused on priorities affecting communities across the FSM, including climate resilience and access to development and climate finance. The two leaders also discussed the selection of the next United Nations Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General Mohammed's planned visit to the FSM later this year. President Simina also called for the designation of a UN Special Representative on Climate Change to strengthen global attention and action on the vulnerabilities facing island nations.





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President Simina and President Whipps discuss regional priorities ahead of Pacific Islands Forum

FSM Information Services

August 30, 2026

KOROR, Palau — His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia, met with His Excellency Surangel S. Whipps Jr., President of the Republic of Palau, ahead of the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting (PIFLM). President Simina was joined by the Honorable Stevenson A. Joseph, Governor of Pohnpei State, in his capacity as Chair of the Micronesian

Islands Forum (MIF).

The leaders emphasized the importance of a strong and unified Pacific voice in ensuring that the PIF Leaders Meeting remains focused on Pacific issues that matter to Pacific peoples. Their discussions centered on advancing shared regional priorities and engaging development partners in ways that respond to the needs and aspirations of Pacific communities.

Discussions also covered preparations for

Pre-COP and the importance of ensuring that this year's PIF Leaders Meeting delivers a strong Climate Declaration ahead of COP31. The leaders exchanged views on ocean management, the ocean-climate nexus, and the need to mobilize climate-resilient investment that delivers practical and lasting benefits to Pacific communities.

During the meeting, the Honorable Ricky Cantero, representing the FSM, formally handed over the FSM Government's \$200,000 contribution to the Government

of Palau as the MIF Secretariat. The contribution, which was announced at the 28th MIF, will support the hiring of an MIF Secretary-General to oversee the work of the Secretariat and strengthen coordination among Micronesian governments.

The meeting reaffirmed the close relationship between the FSM and Palau and their shared commitment to strengthening Micronesian cooperation while advancing the collective interests of the wider Pacific region.



Special Envoy for Pacific Island Countries Affairs of the Chinese Government Qian Bo Meets with Speaker of the Congress of the FSM T.H. Esmond B. Moses

Embassy of the People's Republic of China to the FSM

September 1, 2026

Beijing - On August 25, 2026, Special Envoy for Pacific Island Countries Affairs of the Chinese Government Qian Bo met in Beijing with Speaker of the Congress of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) T.H. Esmond B. Moses, who is leading a delegation to participate in the FSM Legislators Seminar, as well as other participants of the seminar. Qian Bo briefed the guests on China's 15th Five-Year Plan, shared the successful experience of the Communist Party of China in governance, and introduced China's foreign policy towards Pacific Island Countries. The two sides also had in-depth and friendly exchanges on issues of mutual concern.



INVITATION TO BID for Construction of Chuuk State Hospital Weno, Chuuk, Federated States of Micronesia

NOTICE

The Project Management Office (PMO) of the Chuuk State Government is hereby issuing this Bid Invitation Notice to interested contractors for the Construction of a new Hospital on Weno Island, Chuuk State, Federated States of Micronesia.. The new hospital will be adjacent to the existing hospital in an area which is currently utilized for vehicle parking and ancillary services. A Project Narrative has been attached to this 1TB to give prospective bidders a general idea about the Project.

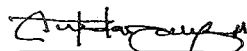
The Pre-Bid Meeting is scheduled for Friday, October 02, 2026 at 10:00 AM at the PMO Offices in the Chuuk State Government Complex, Weno, Chuuk. For out of State contractors who wish to participate, a zoom conference will be arranged, for which they are advised to send their names and email addresses to Sanjata Basu, Project Manager, PMO at <http://www.tci.gov.fm> no later than September 25, 2026. Contractors attending the Pre-Bid meeting in person are encouraged to visit the site. PMO will facilitate such visit.

Further information on this item may be obtained by submitting a written request for details to Chuuk Project Management Office, P.O. Box 1659, Weno, Chuuk, FM 96942 at email address cited above, with the subject heading:

"Construction of a new Hospital on Weno Island, Chuuk State, Federated States of Micronesia"

The bidding documents, which include the instructions to bidders, scope of work, bills of quantities, technical specifications, drawings, and conditions of contract may also be directly obtained from the DTCL's website: <http://www.tci.gov.fm> or collected from the PMO.

The closing date for submission of bids is Monday, November 16, 2026 at 4:00 PM Chuuk time.


Alexander R. Naruhn AIFB
Governor Chuuk State and
Contracting Officer

August 19, 2026
Date

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The State of Chuuk authorized the preparation of Design Bid Build Documents for the New Chuuk State Hospital (CSH) located on the island of Weno, Chuuk. Sherlock, Smith & Adams (SS&A) was selected as the Architect / Engineering (A/E) firm that provided the design for this project. The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Honolulu District and USACE Medical Center of Expertise (MX) served as advisors to the Chuuk State Government and the Chuuk State Project Management Office (PMO) functioned as the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) for all code/criteria judgments.

SS&A was entrusted with the performance of all tasks required to complete 100% Design Documents. The Design Documents consist of a design/bid/build package of construction documents to construct a new Chuuk State Hospital. The construction work for this project includes civil; landscape architecture; architecture; interior design; structural; heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC); plumbing; electrical; telecommunications; fire protection including life safety; physical security; sustainability and energy conservation design.

1.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1.2a Project Scope

The project will provide a New Chuuk State Hospital located on the island of Weno, Chuuk State, Federated States of Micronesia. The existing Chuuk State Hospital is the only hospital in Chuuk State and is operated by the Chuuk Department of Health Services (CDHS), an agency of the Government of the State of Chuuk. The existing hospital will remain in service during the construction of the new hospital. Construction is expected to be done in 3 phases: Phase 1 - construction of new hospital, Phase 2 - relocation and demolition of old hospital building and Phase 3 - construction of new Car park.

The existing hospital was originally constructed in 1971 with 140 beds. The current 4-acre hospital campus consists of a main, single-story building connected to a two-story patient ward, a separate tuberculosis ward and public health building, behavioral health and dispensary administration building, facilities management building, incinerator, and several quarantine/ isolation units. Total existing hospital floor area is approximately 72,000 gross square feet (GSF).

The goals of this project as defined by hospital administration and staff are to build a new hospital which will:

- Decrease the number of hospital-acquired infections.
- Provide space for a family member caretaker who typically stays with the patient during inpatient treatment.
- Provide maintainable state of the art facility characteristics.
- Meet the day to day needs while being able to be configured for a mass casualty event.
- Be able to be modified to accommodate future changes in health care delivery.

1.2b Program Area

The Program for Design (PFD) provided as part of the Scope of Work (SOW) was reviewed, validated and adjusted by SSCA Medical Planners. These adjustments were based on hospital census data, hospital administration and staff interviews and technical expertise / knowledge of the SS&A Medical Planning staff to create the PFD that was the basis of the charrette schemes and has become the basis of design going forward. The current PFD totals 105,134 GSF. The PFD is reflected in the final design of the hospital.

Departments included in the PFD are Common Areas, Logistics, Facilities Management, Information Management, Food Service, Chapel, Emergency Ambulance Services, Surgical Inpatient Ward, Medical Inpatient Ward, Pediatric Inpatient Ward, Tuberculosis Isolation Inpatient Ward, Labor C Delivery / Obstetric Units, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), General Surgery, Sterile Processing, Clinical Laboratory, Morgue, Pharmacy, Radiology, Outpatient Clinic, Physical Therapy, Medical Records / Hospital Registration, and Hospital Administration.

1.2c Project Location

SEE DRAWING NUMBER CV100 – LOCATION AND VICINITY MAP

The new hospital will be adjacent to the existing hospital in an area which is currently utilized for vehicle parking and ancillary services. There is no Contractor Operations and Storage Area (COSA) provided onsite. It will be the Contractor's responsibility to obtain an offsite COSA.

Pacific calls for land degradation neutrality reporting that fits island realities

Secretariat of the Pacific Community

August 28, 2026

Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia - A damaged stretch of coastline, a changing food garden or a patch of recovering forest can disappear inside a single pixel on a global satellite map. For Pacific Island countries, that can mean changes visible on the ground are missing from the data used to assess land degradation.

At a joint plenary session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC) and the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) on Support Hubs for Reporting and Technical Advisors, held during the 17th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP17) in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, the Pacific Community (SPC) highlighted the need for reporting systems that reflect the scale, geography and capacity of Small Island Developing States.

Drawing on SPC's work as a Support Hub for Reporting with 14 Pacific countries, the presentation highlighted the need for data that accurately represents small islands, earlier technical and financial support, realistic reporting timelines and a stronger focus on implementation between reporting cycles to achieve land restoration and resilience.

During the CRIC/CST Joint Plenary Session, the Cook Islands welcomed SPC's contribution as a Support Hub for Reporting, noting that the shared perspectives reflected the realities faced by Pacific Small Island Developing

States.

Ms Sandee Cook, National Environment Service, Cook Islands, said access to higher-resolution data and sustained capacity development were critical for meaningful reporting.

"SPC has captured the realities of the Pacific well. For the Cook Islands, access to higher-resolution data is essential if reporting is to reflect what is happening on the ground, particularly in small island contexts where global datasets do not always tell the full story. Equally important is capacity building that continues beyond the reporting cycle, so countries can strengthen national expertise, ownership and long-term reporting capacity."

For the 2026 UNCCD reporting process, SPC is supporting 14 Pacific countries: Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Naoero, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

Satellite images are made up of pixels, with each pixel representing an area on the ground. Global datasets provide a consistent way to assess land across countries, but their resolution may not capture changes occurring across small islands or narrow land features.

Satellite observations can also indicate that a landscape is changing without explaining why. A change detected from space may be linked to agriculture, clearing, fire, drought, a cyclone or vegetation recovery. The integration of satellite observation, field verification, national scientific and local community

knowledge is critical for understanding how and why our lands are changing.

Through Digital Earth Pacific, SPC hosts shared Earth observation infrastructure for the region, bringing together satellite data, field observations, regional knowledge and country priorities to support products countries can use.

Ms Andiswa Mlisa, Digital Earth Pacific Programme Manager from SPC, said countries need to be able to examine global data within their own national context.

"Global satellite-based data gives countries a consistent starting point, but it does not always capture the scale and complexity of Pacific islands. The data needs to be examined alongside national datasets, field observations and what people know about the land. Bringing these sources together allows countries to identify where change is occurring, verify the evidence and produce an assessment that reflects their national context."

Support includes bilateral country consultations, a regional capacity-building workshop in Rarotonga, a Support Hub helpdesk, recurring peer-learning webinars, and guidance on PRAIS4, the UNCCD's online national reporting platform, QGIS, Trends. Earth and land degradation neutrality indicators. In Solomon Islands, SPC delivered a five-day virtual training programme focused on the geospatial reporting tools and land degradation neutrality indicators.

Speaking during the COP17 Joint

Plenary, Ms Mlisa highlighted the importance of providing countries with funding and technical support earlier in the reporting cycle.

Pacific government teams are often small and manage several environmental commitments. When resources arrive too close to the deadline, countries are forced to rush work that should be careful, consultative and nationally owned. Earlier support gives countries time to analyse data, consult stakeholders and verify results across dispersed islands — essential for credible national assessments.

Linking reporting with practical land cover, land restoration and land degradation neutrality implementation projects also creates evidence countries can use beyond submission. "Better implementation creates better data, and better data creates better reporting," said Ms Mlisa

The message presented at UNCCD COP17 has wider relevance across international environmental and climate reporting: systems work best when their science, resources and timelines reflect island realities.

SPC will continue advancing Pacific-owned science and evidence through the Pre-COP31 Stakeholder Programme in Nadi, Fiji, from 5 to 8 October 2026, the 17th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP17) in Yerevan, Armenia, from 19 to 30 October 2026, and COP31 in Antalya, Türkiye, from 9 to 20 November 2026.



U.S. Mission Kolonia delivers federal medical stations to the FSM

United States Embassy to the FSM

August 27, 2026

Kolonia, Pohnpei - The U.S. Embassy Kolonia congratulates the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) on the receipt of two Federal Medical Stations (FMS) delivered by the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. ASPR transferred the stations to the FSM in Pohnpei last July 2026, fulfilling a request from the FSM National Department of Health and Social Affairs (DHSA) for one 250-bed and one

50-bed station. This transfer reflects the U.S. government's ongoing commitment to strengthening emergency preparedness and health security across the Pacific.

FMS are pre-packaged caches of medical equipment and supplies designed to support temporary health care facilities during emergencies. Each FMS includes beds, IV poles, nursing station supplies, personal protective equipment, and other general and non-acute care items to treat patients for up to three days before resupply is needed.

The SNS has previously deployed these caches to assist communities responding to COVID-19, floods, hurricanes, and earthquakes. ASPR is now making FMS available to any of the states, directly funded cities, federally recognized tribes, territories, and freely associated states supported by the SNS.

The FSM DHSA national team is managing intake and coordinating distribution of supplies across all four FSM states.



Veterans Affairs Under Secretary Samuel B. Brown visits Pohnpei for Micronesian Islands Forum

Embassy of the United States to the FSM

August 26, 2026

Kolonia, Pohnpei — Under Secretary Samuel B. Brown of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs visited Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), from August 18-20 to participate in the Micronesian Islands Forum (MIF).

The MIF serves as a platform for regional leaders from the FSM, Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Naoero, the Republic of Palau, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Territory of Guam to discuss shared interests, including strengthening sub-regional cooperation, advancing sustainable development, protecting marine and terrestrial resources, and expanding opportunities for their communities. Under Secretary Brown's participation underscores the United States' enduring commitment to the Freely Associated States (FAS) and its dedication to advancing shared priorities across the Pacific.

During his visit, Under Secretary Brown met with FSM President Wesley W. Simina to discuss the deep and historic partnership between the United States and the FSM. Their discussion reinforced the strong bilateral relationship both nations enjoy under the Compact of Free Association (COFA).

Under Secretary Brown also met with FSM veterans who served in the U.S. military, honoring their service and sacrifice. U.S. Chargé d'Affaires

Andrew Wylie hosted a private dinner reception for Gold Star families, providing an opportunity for Under Secretary Brown to personally express the nation's gratitude for their profound sacrifice and to hear from them. He then led a wreath-laying ceremony at the Pohnpei International airport's portrait memorial, honoring FSM Citizens who lost their lives while serving in the U.S. Armed Forces.

Under Secretary Brown concluded his visit with a tour of Pohnpei State Hospital, a facility benefiting from Compact health sector funding. This visit highlighted the tangible benefits being delivered to local communities through the U.S.-FSM partnership and demonstrates the United States' ongoing investment in the health and well-being of the Micronesian people.

"As someone who was wounded in combat, I understand in a deeply personal way what it means to serve and sacrifice," said Under Secretary Brown. "Meeting the Veterans and Gold Star families of the FAS and standing with them at the wreath-laying ceremony, reminded me that this bond between our nations is not just policy, it is personal, and one I will always carry with me."

During the visit, Brown announced that the department is in the process of developing a proposal to provide certain VA health care reimbursements, telehealth, mail order pharmaceuticals and beneficiary travel services to eligible service-connected Veterans in the Freely Associated States (FAS) of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands and Palau, as per P.L. 118-42, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2024.

Before providing such services, however, VA, the State Department must engage in negotiations and enter into agreements with FAS governments, navigate any possible needed regulatory changes and plan for necessary logistical and operational requirements.

Given the unique geographic and operational realities of the region, VA is taking a careful, phased approach that prioritizes durable access to care and continuity of services for eligible Veterans in the FAS.



Promoting Pacific Prosperity: U.S. engagement at the Pacific Islands Forum

U.S. Department of State

September 1, 2026

Washington D.C. - The United States is a Pacific nation and has long stood with our Pacific friends and neighbors to advance a free and open Indo-Pacific region. Our commitment to the security and prosperity of the Pacific Islands is steadfast, enduring, and a key pillar of our America First Foreign Policy.

On September 1, at the Pacific Islands Forum Partners Dialogue in Palau, Deputy Secretary Christopher Landau announced over \$150 million in U.S. support for Pacific Islands. He delivered this message directly to our partners, engaging with Pacific Islands leaders and ministers to reinforce the depth and durability of U.S. partnerships in the region and announcing new U.S.-funded projects and investments in the Pacific Islands that aim to deliver economic prosperity and security for Americans and Pacific Islanders.

The United States' continued participation in the Pacific Islands Forum reflects the importance we place on the Pacific Islands as a vital part of the Indo-Pacific region. When the Pacific Islands are stable, secure and prosperous, the United States is too. Under President Trump and Secretary Rubio's leadership, we are prioritizing commercial diplomacy and reorienting our foreign assistance programs in the Pacific around championing U.S. enterprise and investments in enabling infrastructure that supports private sector-led economic growth.

Ensuring Energy Security

- **Regional Energy Security Initiative:** Working with Congress, the Department intends to provide \$60 million to help Pacific Islands countries address the ongoing global energy crisis, including expanding fuel storage capacity and supporting grid stability.
- **Fuel Supply Infrastructure for Tonga:** The U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA), with funding from the U.S. Department of State, will strengthen fuel supply reliability and energy security through a feasibility study to upgrade Tonga's port facilities, fuel storage capacity, pipeline infrastructure and market-oriented regulatory practices.

Building Critical Infrastructure

- **Palau Hospital Relocation:** The United States, Australia, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, along with Taiwan as a key partner of Palau,

will support the development and operation of a new, modern hospital facility, subject to the outcomes of the project feasibility study, ensuring it meets the long-term health and infrastructure needs of the Palauan people. This partnership demonstrates our enduring commitment to Pacific partners and to the shared development principles that underpin a resilient and prosperous region.

- **Upgrading Penrhyn (Omoka) Port:** The U.S. Department of State, working with Congress and in partnership with New Zealand and the Cook Islands, intends to upgrade the Penrhyn atoll's Omoka Port. This project builds on the Critical Minerals Framework the United States and the Cook Islands signed in February 2026 and will deliver safety and security benefits and expand transport links and economic opportunities for the Cook Islands and American people.
- **Strengthening Transportation Linkages in the Marshall Islands:** USTDA has approved funding for technical assistance for the Marshall Islands Ports Authority to help modernize the country's two primary ports: Majuro and Ebeye. The project's goals are to increase freight capacity, improve port efficiency, and strengthen supply chain reliability. USTDA has also approved funding for technical assistance to help modernize the Amata Kabua International Airport, including airfield and terminal facilities. The assistance will address anticipated growth and operational improvements over a 20-year horizon and facilitate aviation partnership opportunities for U.S. industry.

Expanding Commercial Diplomacy

- **Second Pacific Investment Summit:** The inaugural U.S.-Pacific Islands Investment Summit at the East-West Center in Honolulu in February 2026 generated several successful economic opportunities and business deals for U.S. and Pacific Islands businesses across several sectors including infrastructure, critical minerals, supply chains, energy, tourism, food security, financial services, and the digital economy. To continue to foster U.S.-Pacific Islands private sector connections and investments, the United States intends to support a second summit to be held in early 2027.

Promoting Trusted Digital Technology

- **Data Center Infrastructure for Tonga:**

USTDA, with funding from the U.S. Department of State, is supporting a feasibility study to modernize Tonga's national data center and network, enabling secure, resilient hosting for government systems and public services. The study advances a broader U.S. effort to build Tonga's digital infrastructure on trusted American technology, alongside State Department support for secure cloud migration.

- **Mobile Network Modernization for the Marshall Islands:** USTDA, with funding from the U.S. Department of State, will provide technical assistance to support the modernization of the nationwide mobile network in the Republic of the Marshall Islands. The assistance will identify optimal technology options, financing pathways and implementation strategies for the Marshall Islands National Telecommunications Authority.
- **Cloud Global Pacific Program:** The U.S. Department of State plans to expand upon successful programming in Tonga and Palau to accelerate additional Pacific Island governments' adoption of resilient cloud-based technologies. Adopting trusted cloud services expands the digital economy, creates opportunities for economic prosperity, strengthens cybersecurity, and increases operational continuity.
- **Secure Telecom Regulation and Digital Transformation Programs in the Pacific Islands:** U.S. Department's Bureau of Cyberspace and Digital Policy (CDP) has funded a series of programs, coordinated by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP), to strengthen ICT regulatory capacity, expand digital infrastructure, and modernize regulatory and licensing models, including a PNG Secure ICT Investment Screening Workshop and Pacific Islands Telecom Regulator Workshop, and Study Tour. Additionally, CDP led the U.S.-Pacific Islands Digital Transformation Accelerator conference, held alongside the Pacific Islands Telecom Regulators' Forum, generating 32 matchmaking sessions between U.S. technology companies and PIC governments, advancing potential leads for U.S. AI exports and digital sector investment.

Advancing Law Enforcement Cooperation and Maritime Security

- **U.S.-Pacific Islands Conference of**

Police Ministers (COPMIN): The United States and Palau will co-chair the inaugural U.S.-Pacific Islands Conference of Police Ministers (COPMIN). COPMIN will focus on maritime security, drug trafficking, and cybercrime, and illicit finance.

- **Pacific Regional IUU Fishing Project:** The U.S. Department of State, working with Congress, plans to provide \$17 million to counter illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing in the Pacific Islands, focused on legal support to update national laws, policies, and regulations to align to regional IUU fishing strategic objectives, develop compliance officer capacity through certified training programs, and deploy new technologies to increase non-human monitoring capacity.

Deepening Scientific and Technical Cooperation

- **Seabed Mapping, Exploration, and Characterization:** The U.S. Department of State, working with Congress, plans to provide support for seabed mapping, exploration, and characterization to inform Pacific Island government decision making on potential seabed minerals development within national jurisdiction and related national regulatory frameworks.
- **Drinking Water Sampling Project:** The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), in partnership with Taiwan, will work with Palau to conduct a comprehensive drinking water sampling project on the island's drinking water sources and wells. The project will also provide training for Palau drinking water operators and environmental lab regulatory staff on proper sampling and logistical techniques.

Expanding People to People Ties

- **Peace Corps Letter of Intent to Return to Compact of Free Association Nations:** The Peace Corps has signed a letter of intent to establish the North Pacific program with the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. This step builds on decades of partnership: more than 4,400 Volunteers served in Micronesia and Palau between 1966 and 2018, and more than 140 served in the Marshall Islands from 1966 to 1996. The agency completed its re-opening of Peace Corps/Palau in July 2026.

Opinion Editorial

Wayfinding: Bringing FSM's culture, language, and traditional knowledge into learning

Canita Rilometo-Nakamura
UNICEF Blog

September 3, 2026

When I think back to my childhood, my first memories are not only of classrooms. They are of schools that felt open to the community, of swimming with friends, eating coconuts during recess, listening to stories, learning weaving, and watching boys learn to make rope from coconut husks and fish traps they later carried to the lagoon.

I was born and raised in Jaluit in the Marshall Islands, attended primary school there and in Pohnpei, and later completed high school in Majuro. At home and in my community, I grew up hearing and speaking Marshallese, English, Pohnpeian and some Kosraean. My childhood was shaped by many islands, languages, and identities with my childhood playground in the Jaluit High School classrooms and school buildings.

Much of my early learning happened through family, elders, neighbors and community life. My grandmother, my mother, and my aunts told stories from

different islands about weaving baskets, preparing food, and passing on everyday knowledge through morning and after-school chores. "When I think about it, it's all connected," I reflected. "Whether it's Marshallese or Pohnpeian or Kosraean... it was all there. I just didn't realize it."

But formal schooling did not always help me make sense of those connections. In high school, one of my biggest frustrations was learning U.S. government and history while not fully knowing my own.

That question stayed with me.

Growing up in a diverse family, I struggled at times with identity. Was I Marshallese, Pohnpeian, Kosraean, Micronesian? Looking back, I now see that these identities did not need to be separated. They were connected. They had always been connected.

A programme like Wayfinding could have helped me understand that earlier.

Today, as the System Transformation Grant (STG) Coordinator for the Pohnpei State Department of Education,

I am part of the Wayfinding work in FSM. Through the Global Partnership for Education (GPE)-funded System Transformation Grant, led by the FSM National Department of Education and State Departments of Education with support from UNICEF Pacific, I am helping bring culture, language and traditional knowledge into everyday learning of children.

Through Wayfinding, we are trying to help children, educators, and community elders "recognize the value" of their cultures, languages and traditional knowledge. We are working to bring indigenous and traditional knowledge and concepts into the content students learn every day in school. I hope children experience learning as something seamless, connected to what they do at home, in their families, in their communities and in the classroom.

For me, this is about helping children grow with a stronger sense of who they are, where they come from, and how their learning connects to their families, communities, country, and the world. Learning is not only found in books. It

is also found in everyday life: starting a fire, understanding the science and mathematics behind it, using the right language, words and gestures, to greet someone, and recognizing social studies in community relationships.

Learning is all around us. I often say. It's everywhere.

I believe wayfinding's approach, which brings together communities and traditional knowledge holders, student engagement, curriculum, resources and teacher support, could also speak to other education systems across the Pacific. Through Wayfinding, FSM's National Department of Education and State Departments of Education, with support from GPE and UNICEF Pacific, are taking forward a simple but powerful idea: children's language, culture and everyday knowledge are not separate from education. They are part of learning itself, and part of helping children and young people grow with pride, confidence, and a stronger sense of belonging.

Heads of the Pacific's government audit offices gather in Naoero for PASAI's 27th Congress

PASAI

September 2, 2026

Aiwo, Naoero: More than 50 people from countries across the Pacific and as far away as Norway attended the 27th Congress of the Pacific Association of Supreme Audit Institutions (PASAI), hosted by the Audit Office of Naoero from 25 to 27 August 2026.

Representatives of 20 PASAI member offices attended the 3-day meeting which had the theme of, "Sustainable audits for sustainable islands."

In her opening address, the Acting President, the Honourable Charmaine Scotty MP, highlighted the importance of government agencies embracing technology in responsible ways and in the interests of the public they serve.

In a keynote address, the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Naoero, the Honourable

Isabela Dageago MP, said that SAIs promote integrity, provide assurance that public resources are managed responsibly and help governments deliver better services.

The Controller and Auditor-General of New Zealand, Grant Taylor, in his capacity as the Secretary-General of PASAI, spoke of the growing expectations that people have of governments and the role of audit offices in functional public financial management systems.

"Citizens want assurance that public resources are used wisely and efficiently. By shining a light on what is working and what is not, audit offices help strengthen public trust in government," Mr Taylor said.

Auditors general, public auditors and others in similar roles from Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Island sub-regions of Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia, as well as PASAI Secretariat staff and other

stakeholders with an interest in national integrity and public financial management systems discussed a range of issues during the gathering.

Through a series of panel discussions, Congress attendees reflected on matters related to using artificial intelligence, engaging with stakeholders such as the Legislature and citizens, auditing government responses to climate change and evaluating government progress on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals established under the 2030 Agenda.

Immediately following Congress on 28

August 2026, PASAI's Governing Board held its 48th meeting in which it considered operational and strategic matters critical to the support by the Secretariat to PASAI's members.

PASAI released a detailed communiqué following the event and looks forward to the next Congress to be hosted by the Office of the Auditor General for Solomon Islands.

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



Micronesian citizen sentenced for illegal reentry in Guam

United States Attorney's Office
District of Guam

September 2, 2026

Hagåtña, Guam – SHAWN N. ANDERSON, United States Attorney for the Districts of Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands, announced that Kopich Chutaro a.k.a. Osama Chutaro, age 23, a citizen of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), was sentenced on August 27, 2026, in the District Court for Guam to serve six months and 21 days followed by transfer to immigration authorities for immediate deportation. Chutaro pled guilty to Attempted Reentry of Removed Alien, in violation of 8 U.S.C. § 1326(a) and (b)(1). The Court also ordered three years supervised release, and \$100 special assessment

fee.

On February 9, 2026, Kopich Chutaro a.k.a. Osama Chutaro, arrived at the Guam International Airport from Chuuk State, FSM. During the immigration inspection, he presented an FSM passport bearing the name “Kempy Akachang” and sought admission into the United States under the Compact of Free Association. U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers determined that Chutaro had a prior deportation for an aggravated felony and referred him to Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) for further review.

HSI agents later confirmed that Chutaro had been deported from the United States on July 22, 2024, following a felony conviction on Guam. According

to court records, he was convicted in December 2022 on two counts of theft by receiving and sentenced to five years of imprisonment, with all but 15 months suspended. An immigration judge later ordered Chutaro removed from the United States based on his aggravated felony conviction.

This case was investigated by Homeland Security Investigations - Guam and prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Rosetta L. San Nicolas in the District of Guam.

This prosecution is part of the Homeland Security Task Force (HSTF) initiative established by Executive Order 14159, Protecting the American People Against Invasion. The HSTF is a whole-of-government partnership dedicated to eliminating criminal cartels, foreign gangs, transnational criminal organizations, and human smuggling and trafficking rings

operating in the United States and abroad. Through historic interagency collaboration, the HSTF directs the full might of United States law enforcement towards identifying, investigating, and prosecuting the full spectrum of crimes committed by these organizations, which have long fueled violence and instability within our borders. In performing this work, the HSTF places special emphasis on investigating and prosecuting those engaged in child trafficking or other crimes involving children. The HSTF further utilizes all available tools to prosecute and remove the most violent criminal aliens from the United States. HSTF Guam comprises agents and officers from ICE-HSI, FBI, ATF, CBP, CGIS, DCIS, DEA, IRS-CI, NCIS, a USMS, USSS, USPIS, USCIS and local law enforcement with prosecution being led by the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands.

Palau Reef Seeding Hub, based at PICRC, will accelerate climate-resilient coral restoration in Palau

PICRC

September 2, 2026

Palau - On Monday, August 31st, at the side event of the 55th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting, “Protecting Climate-Resilient Coral Reefs: A Pacific Leadership Moment”, the Palau International Coral Reef Center (PICRC) was proud to launch the Palau Reef Seeding Hub, a collaborative coral restoration initiative. Supported by international and local partners, the Hub brings together reef restoration science and innovation that has been tested and applied on the Great Barrier Reef with more than two decades of local coral reef science, monitoring and stewardship in Palau.

Honorable Steven Victor, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Environment at Palau National Government, gave the opening remarks at the side event where he emphasized the importance of financing coral reef management. “For Pacific Islands, coral reefs are the foundation of our cultures, livelihoods, and economies,” he stated. “What will it take to ensure that we can protect coral reefs?”

The Palau Reef Seeding Hub aims to accelerate climate-resilient coral restoration in Palau by testing and identifying climate-resilient corals, utilizing new coral seeding and restoration technologies, building local capacity for coral restoration, and empowering communities in reef stewardship. This Hub directly supports Palau's national priorities by accelerating reef

regeneration and scaling up existing climate-resilient coral production and restoration efforts; thereby safeguarding food security from nearshore fisheries, supporting the tourism economy, and enhancing long-term climate resilience for Palau and the wider Pacific.

“The Palau Hub is an exciting initiative that directly supports our priorities for coral reef management in Palau”, stated PICRC's CEO, Roxanne Sual Blesam. “Our approach is grounded in science, local knowledge, long-term monitoring, collaboration and learning. We will establish climate-resilient coral nurseries and restore degraded reefs to strengthen their resilience to future ocean warming. Over the next five years, we will train local practitioners, engage communities, and test what works best for coral restoration under Palau's conditions. The capacity we build here will strengthen coral restoration in Palau and contribute to coral reef conservation efforts across Micronesia and the wider Pacific.”

This Hub is part of the broader Reef Seeding Initiative (RSI) led by the Great Barrier Reef Foundation (GBRF). The RSI is a large-scale region-wide collaborative program aimed at advancing coral reef restoration to improve

reef resilience across the Great Barrier Reef and the Pacific. The initiative seeks to scale up reef restoration actions and make reef restoration tools and technologies more accessible so they can be adapted and used by reef communities around the world.

“No single organisation or country can secure the future of coral reefs alone,” shared Theresa Fyffe, Executive Director of Impact at the Great Barrier Reef Foundation. “That's why the Reef Seeding Initiative brings together the science and innovation being tested and applied on the Great Barrier Reef with the knowledge, leadership and expertise that already exists in reef communities across the Pacific. The launch of the Palau Reef Seeding Hub is an exciting next step, working together to build the local capability, tools and partnerships needed to help reefs withstand a changing climate. Palau has long been a global leader in ocean stewardship, and we're incredibly proud to be working alongside PICRC and our partners to develop solutions that can benefit reefs across the Pacific and, ultimately, around the world.”

The Palau Hub, along with other initiatives, demonstrates a shared Australia-Palau commitment to climate-smart reef management, long-term ocean stewardship, and the resilience of Pacific communities.

PICRC would like to thank all the global and local partners for making the Palau Reef Seeding Hub possible.

The global partners include GBRF, the Australian Institute of Marine Science, SECORE International, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, the University of Queensland, Newcastle University, and Stanford University. The local partners include the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and the Environment, Palau Governors Association, Palau's Office of Climate Change, the Palau Protected Areas Network, the Coral Reef Research Foundation, Palau Conservation Society, Palau Community College, Ebiil Society, Watson and Sons Aquaculture Palau, and PALARIS.

About the Reef Seeding Initiative

The Palau Reef Seeding Hub, which is the first hub launched in the Pacific, forms part of the global Reef Seeding Initiative, led by the Great Barrier Reef Foundation in partnership with the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS), SECORE International and local partners including the Palau International Coral Reef Center (PICRC).

Building on decades of reef restoration research and innovation on the Great Barrier Reef, the Initiative is bringing together science, technology and local expertise to develop and scale practical reef restoration solutions. Through restoration hubs across the Pacific, these approaches are adapted to local reef systems and needs, building the capability, tools and partnerships needed to help coral reefs withstand a changing climate.

China uses post-Forum messages to outline Pacific cooperation

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlle Press

September 5, 2026

Pohnpei - In a series of messages following the 55th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting, China's Embassy in the Federated States of Micronesia emphasized Beijing's development activities across the Pacific and outlined plans for expanded cooperation in renewable energy, ocean resources, trade, and investment.

The Embassy's September 2 posts drew from remarks delivered by Qian Bo, Special Envoy of the Chinese Government for Pacific Island Countries Affairs, during the Forum's Leaders Dialogue with Dialogue Partners.

Qian described China as a "sincere friend and reliable partner" of Pacific Island countries and pointed to infrastructure, climate, health, and economic programs already underway across the region.

Among 10 infrastructure projects he said had been completed, Qian specifically cited the National Convention Center in the FSM, along with the National Referral Hospital Comprehensive Medical Centre in Solomon Islands and a power grid project in Papua New Guinea. He also listed projects underway in Naoero, Fiji, Kiribati, and Vanuatu.

Qian said China has signed Framework Agreements on Enhanced Economic Partnership with eight Pacific Island countries, including the FSM, and said the agreements are intended to facilitate trade with China and support industrial and agricultural development.

On climate change, he said China pledged \$2 million last year for 100 community-centered projects across the Pacific. He cited renewable energy and climate-related projects in Tonga, Naoero, Vanuatu, and Papua New Guinea.

China's health and education activities were also part of the post-Forum message. Qian said seven Chinese medical teams had been deployed in Pacific Island countries since last year,



while the Chinese hospital ship Ark Silk Road provided medical services to more than 16,000 patients in Fiji, Tonga, Papua New Guinea, and Naoero.

Looking ahead, Qian said China intends to increase its engagement in the region, including support for renewable energy development and energy infrastructure.

He also proposed building what he called a China-Pacific Islands "Blue Partnership," encompassing the blue economy, marine conservation, aquaculture, marine renewable energy, and other ocean-related industries. China will continue to provide \$200,000 this year to the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, he said.

Trade and investment were another part of the proposed expanded relationship. Qian said China would seek to provide greater access to its domestic market for Pacific exports and encourage Chinese private-sector investment in Pacific Island countries.

The remarks also addressed the one-China issue that became a point of contention surrounding this year's Forum. Qian said China's position is that participation by Taiwan in international organizations must be handled in accordance with the one-China principle. He thanked what he described as the "vast majority" of PIF members for their commitment to that principle, calling it the "political bedrock and fundamental prerequisite" for closer cooperation between China and the Forum.

The Embassy separately repeated that portion of Qian's remarks in one of its September 2 social media posts.

Qian concluded by saying China was prepared to continue working with Pacific Island countries and described the Pacific as a "shared home" of China and the region's island nations.

Chairman of the China International Development Cooperation Agency Chen Xiaodong Meets with Speaker of the Congress of the FSM T.H. Esmond B. Moses

Embassy of the People's Republic of China to the FSM

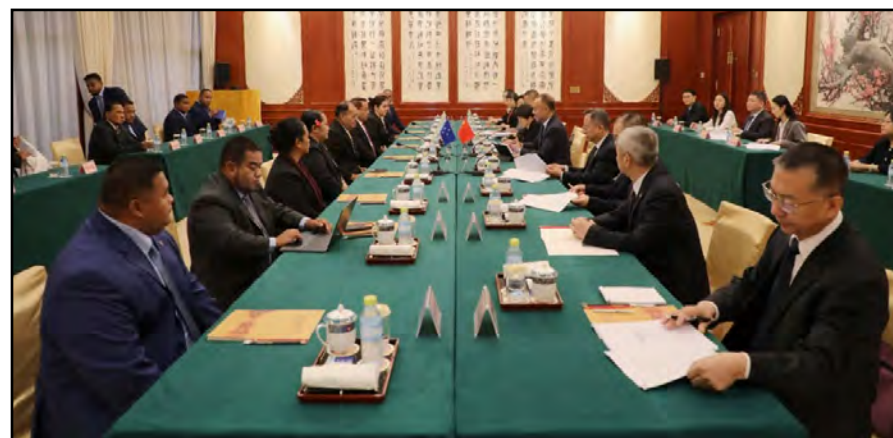
September 1, 2026

Beijing - On August 28, 2026, Chen Xiaodong, Chairman of the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA), met in Beijing with a delegation led by T.H. Esmond B. Moses, Speaker of the Congress of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), who is in China attending the Workshop on Friendly Exchanges for Members of the FSM Congress and State Legislature.

Chen said that China regards the FSM as a good friend, good partner, and good brother. China supports the FSM in safeguarding its national sovereignty, security, and development interests, and supports the FSM in pursuing a development path suited to its national conditions. In recent years, under the strategic guidance of the leaders of both countries, the China-FSM Comprehensive Strategic

Partnership has maintained a sound and steady momentum of development. CIDCA stands ready to work with the FSM to continue deepening practical cooperation on development, promote the in-depth implementation of the Global Development Initiative in the FSM, and deliver greater benefits to the people of both countries.

Moses spoke highly of the remarkable progress in bilateral relations since the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries, and expressed appreciation for the strong support and assistance China has provided for FSM's economic and social development and the improvement of people's livelihoods. He expressed readiness to work with China to implement the important consensus reached by the heads of state of both countries, continue deepening practical cooperation in areas such as infrastructure, climate change, and green energy, and advance the FSM-China relations.



President Simina and U.S. Deputy Secretary of State announce major commitment to Typhoon Sinlaku recovery

FSM Information Services

September 5, 2026

WENO, Chuuk — His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), joined United States Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau at the Chuuk State Auditorium to announce a major commitment by the United States toward Typhoon Sinlaku relief and reconstruction efforts.

During the ceremony, Deputy Secretary Landau announced an additional aid package of \$96 million to support the reconstruction of public infrastructure and homes, agricultural recovery, and the rebuilding of lives and livelihoods in affected communities.

The ceremony also featured a display highlighting the response and recovery efforts undertaken following the typhoon and the progress made to date in supporting affected communities.

The announcement marks an important step toward recovery, with reconstruction activities expected to proceed following the completion of the necessary assessments, planning, and implementation arrangements.

President Simina expressed the nation's appreciation for the assistance and the continued partnership of the United States.

"We knew that recovery would require partnership," President Simina said. "We are deeply grateful to the United States for standing with the people of the FSM during this difficult time."

The ceremony was attended by the Most Reverend Julio Angkel, Bishop of the Caroline Islands; the Honorable Alexander R. Narruhn, Governor of Chuuk State; the Honorable Lester Danny Mersai, Speaker of the Chuuk State House of Representatives; national and state government officials; representatives of the United States Government and the International Organization for Migration; and members of the community.

The FSM Government extends its appreciation to the United States, the Chuuk State Government, the International Organization for Migration, local communities, and all partners supporting the response, recovery, and reconstruction efforts.



Japan Mine Action Service (JMAS) visits Ambassador Kagomiya

Embassy of Japan to the FSM

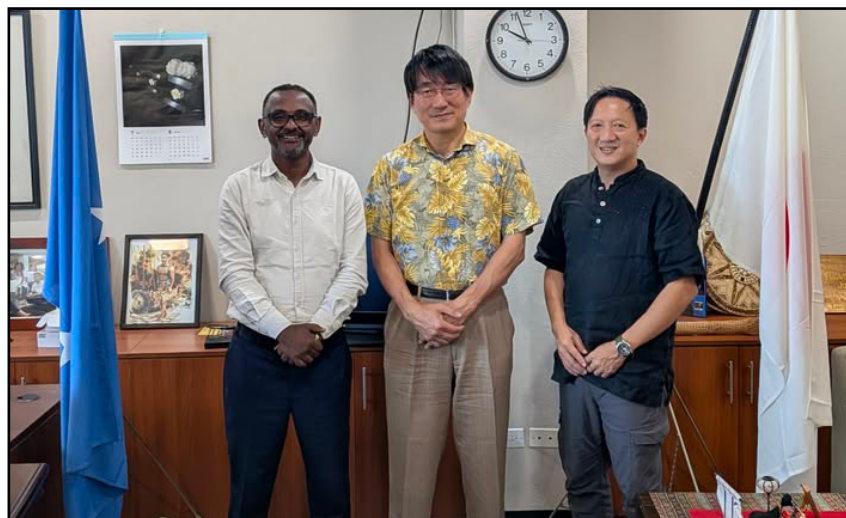
September 1, 2026

Pohnpei - On August 27, Ambassador Kagomiya received a courtesy call from Mr. Uchiyama, the representative of the Japan Mine Action Service (JMAS) Chuuk office. JMAS is implementing the Oil Leak Countermeasures Project for Sunken Warships in Chuuk State. This project aims to mitigate the risk of oil leakage by thoroughly assessing the current conditions of Japanese warships sunken during the WWII that have corroded and deteriorated, efficiently and safely recover the oil, and prevent adverse environmental impacts within Chuuk Lagoon.

Ambassador Kagomiya received an explanation on the progress of the project as an interim report for this fiscal year's activities and exchanged information on future plans of JMAS' activities and the current status of the "Rio de Janeiro," which had an oil leak last year.



New Chief of the UNICEF North Pacific Field Office visits Ambassador Kagomiya



Embassy of Japan to the FSM

August 26, 2026

Pohnpei - On August 26, Ambassador Kagomiya received a courtesy call from Mr. Seifu Ali, Chief of the UNICEF North Pacific Field Office.

Ambassador Kagomiya and Mr. Ali exchanged views on the progress of the Climate Resilient Community Water Services in the North Pacific Project, funded by the Government of Japan, and implemented by UNICEF and International Organization for Migration (IOM), and on the anticipated impacts of El Niño in the FSM.

Ambassador Kagomiya and Mr. Ali also reaffirmed their commitment for Japan and UNICEF to continue providing assistance to the FSM.

Science-informed management is key to healthy tuna stocks: Cook Islands flags priorities for WCPFC 23

Pacific News Leaders

August 31, 2026

Apia, Samoa – An MMR team has returned from the annual Scientific Committee meeting of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), supporting the Cook Islands' ongoing agenda for sustainable tuna fisheries in the Pacific towards the WCPFC 23 Annual Commission session in Vanuatu, in December.

MMR's Offshore Fisheries Director, Lualua Tua-Trood and Data Manager Tiare-Renee Nicholas returned this week from the 22nd Session of the WCPFC Scientific Committee (SC22), held in Apia, Samoa from 11–19 August 2026. The Scientific Committee meeting is one of several preparatory events ahead of the regular annual WCPFC session.

The Cook Islands delegation joined fisheries scientists and representatives from across the Pacific and beyond to consider the latest scientific information on the region's major tuna fisheries and provide advice that will support future management decisions at the December meeting.

Tua-Trood said the increasingly sophisticated scientific work undertaken through WCPFC is essential to ensuring the Pacific uses the best available scientific information,

maintains robust peer review processes, integrates the use of emerging technologies, and continuously improves stock assessments and research methods.

"For the Cook Islands, the value of this work ultimately lies in turning robust science into effective management decisions. Tuna fisheries are fundamental to our economy and communities, and we need management systems that are precautionary, responsive to changing stock conditions, and capable of dealing appropriately with scientific uncertainty."

He outlined key outcomes from the SC 22:

- Updates on important new scientific analysis and advice on the Pacific's major tuna stocks (skipjack, yellowfin, albacore and bigeye) and continued work to strengthen long-term harvest strategies. New 2026 assessments found that yellowfin tuna remains in a relatively strong position and is neither overfished nor experiencing overfishing. The Cook Islands supported using the latest assessments as the best available scientific information while recognising the need to continue addressing identified scientific uncertainties.



- Progress towards a management procedure for bigeye tuna, with the Cook Islands supporting a precautionary approach that is tested against a broad range of possible stock conditions.

- For South Pacific albacore, the management procedure was run for the first time in 2026, producing an annual catch level of 56,096 tonnes for 2027–2029 for the fisheries covered by the management procedure.

- Skipjack tuna indicators show that the stock remains close to its management target and is performing broadly within the range anticipated when its management procedure was developed. Scientists are continuing to improve the information used to monitor the stock and to examine how future climate-driven changes may affect the fishery.

He said, for the Cook Islands, "a central

message emerging from SC22 is that the region's major tuna stocks remain healthy and capable of supporting important fisheries, but maintaining that position requires continued investment in science and a willingness to translate that science into timely management action."

Post-meeting, the Ministry of Marine Resources will continue participating

actively in the WCPFC harvest strategy process and advocating for management arrangements that are precautionary, scientifically robust and responsive to the particular circumstances and aspirations of Pacific Small Island Developing States.

MMR acknowledged and thanked the Government and people of Samoa for hosting SC22 and the WCPFC Secretariat for the meeting arrangements. The considerable amount of work by the Pacific Community (SPC) as the WCPFC Scientific Services Provider was also recognised, alongside national scientists and other researchers who contributed to the stock assessments and technical analyses considered during the meeting. The next annual SC meeting will be hosted in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, in 2027.

PICRC joins more than 40 other Global Organizations in support of Commitment to protect Climate-Resilient Coral Reefs

PICRC

September 4, 2026

Palau - The Palau International Coral Reef Center (PICRC) is proud to announce that they've joined more than 40 other global organizations and more than 20 governments in support of the world's first global pledge to protect climate-resilient coral reefs. Officially called "Protecting Climate-Resilient Coral Reefs: A High-Level Global Commitment," this pledge was launched by the Wildlife Conservation Society, The Nature Conservancy, and WWF's Coral Reef Rescue Initiative at the 3rd UN Ocean Conference in Nice, France in June 2025.

Coral reefs cover less than 1% of the ocean yet support a quarter of all marine life and nearly one billion people worldwide. They generate US\$375 billion annually in food, tourism, coastal protection, and biodiversity, while protecting coastlines and reducing wave energy by up to 97%.

In Palau, coral reefs provide food and livelihoods, and support tourism and local economies. They also protect coastlines and provide habitat for an extraordinary diversity of marine life. And they are deeply connected to Palau's cultures, traditions, identity, and way of life.

But with over 70% of reefs around the world threatened by climate change and experiencing severe coral bleaching worldwide, protecting reefs most likely to endure is critical for nature, people, and climate adaptation.

This Commitment, which the Palau government has also joined, is a non-binding, voluntary initiative. In practice, supporting means contributing where it aligns with expertise — whether that's providing scientific input, collaborating with signatory governments on implementation, or helping amplify key moments. Among the key partners in the Coral Commitment are The



Nature Conservancy, the Great Barrier Reef Foundation, Conservation International, GEF, and Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. PICRC has already positioned itself as a regional leader when it comes to climate-smart coral restoration. Signing this Commitment, showcases PICRC and Palau's dedication to continue to protect reefs using the best available science, to support community outreach and local capacity building in reef restoration, and to strengthen partnerships with world-leading institutions.

"For PICRC, this is more than simply signing a commitment," stated PICRC's CEO, Roxanne Sual Blesam. "It is an opportunity to strengthen the work we are already doing and to continue looking for ways that we can contribute to meaningful, science-based action for coral reef management in Palau."

PICRC looks forward to continuing to work closely with the other organizations who have signed on to this Commitment to share knowledge and support on protecting climate-resilient coral reefs.

Young Island Readers mails 30,000th book to a child in Yap Yap milestone carries forward Dolly Parton's worldwide literacy legacy

Habele Young Island Readers

September 3, 2026

Yap, FSM - Habele's Young Island Readers has sent its 30,000th book directly to a child in Yap State, marking a major milestone for the early-literacy program operated in partnership with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.

Through Young Island Readers, children across Yap State can receive a new, age-appropriate book every month, free to their families, from birth until their fifth birthday. Each package is addressed to the child. Over five years, the monthly deliveries can become a personal home library of 60 books before the child begins kindergarten.

cousin, grandparent or older sibling to read with them. That is how books and reading become part of family life."

Young Island Readers began on Yap Proper in 2020 following encouragement from Yap early-childhood educator and mother Stella H. Talgumai to put books directly into young children's homes. The program expanded to Yap's Outer Islands in 2022.

Today, the books reach families in ways suited to each island. Deliveries go to family post office boxes on Yap Proper, by plane to Ulithi, Fais and Woleai, and through ship mailbags to other Outer Islands. The program's growth has depended on Yap families,

educators, students, health workers and delivery partners, along with the individual donors who fund the books.

The milestone comes as readers around the world mourn Dolly Parton, who died August 25 at age 80. Parton founded the Imagination Library in 1995, inspired by her father, who never had the opportunity to learn to read and write. Her simple idea—that young children should have books of their own—grew from one county in Tennessee into an international literacy program that has gifted more than 300 million books and now mails more than three million each month.

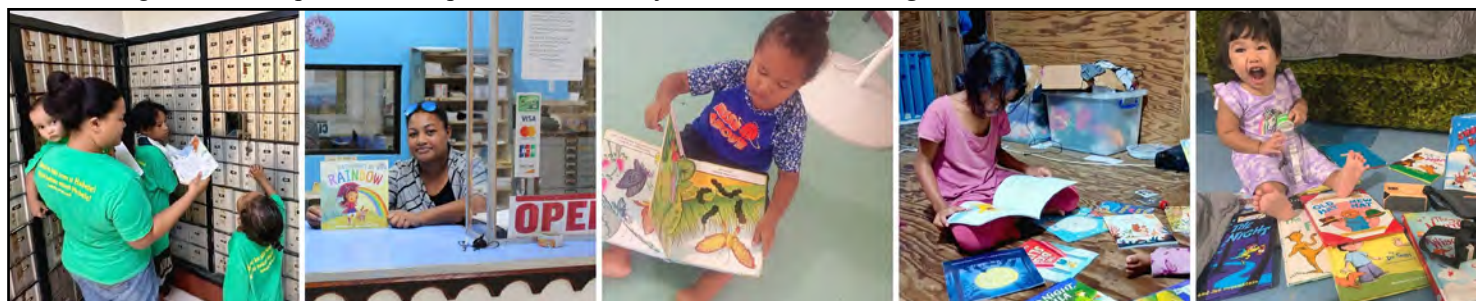
In announcing her death, Parton's family invited those wishing to honor

her to support the Imagination Library.

"Dolly Parton understood that literacy begins long before the first day of school, and that putting a book into a child's hands can open a lifetime of possibility," Mellen said. "We are proud to carry her vision forward across Yap State. The 30,000th book is both a celebration of what Yap's families have accomplished and a promise to keep turning pages together."

Parents and guardians of children under five in Yap State can enroll at www.habele.org/read. To learn more about Young Island Readers—or help make the next 30,000 books possible—visit www.habele.org/YIR.

"Thirty thousand is an exciting number, but each one of those books is personal," said Neil Mellen, Habele's founder. "It arrives bearing a child's own name and creates another opportunity for a parent, aunt, uncle,



USP opens landmark Sustainable Energy Training Centre for the region

University of the South Pacific

August 27, 2026

Suva, Fiji - The University of the South Pacific (USP) has marked a significant milestone in renewable energy education and workforce development with the official opening of its new Sustainable Energy Training Centre.

A purpose-built facility that will support the development of industry-ready skills and strengthen the Pacific region's transition towards sustainable energy systems.

The Centre was officially opened by Fiji's Minister for Public Works, Meteorological Services and Transport, Honourable Ro Filipe Tuisawau, during a ceremony attended by government representatives, industry leaders, development partners, academic staff, students and regional stakeholders.

USP Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council, the Right Honourable Siosua Utoikamanu, described the Centre as a major investment in the future of renewable energy skills development in Fiji and across the Pacific.

He acknowledged the support of the Government of Fiji, industry partners and The Philanthropic Foundation from the United States whose significant contribution made the project possible.

"This is a significant investment, not simply in a building, but in the people and skills that will support the sustainable energy future of Fiji and the Pacific," he said.

Pro-Chancellor said the Centre demonstrates what can be achieved when government, education, industry and development partners work together towards a common purpose.

"Across the Pacific, our countries are seeking to strengthen energy security, expand the use of renewable energy and build the technical capacity needed to support more sustainable energy systems. Through Pacific TAFE, USP remains committed to providing practical and accessible training that responds to the needs of industry and communities while creating opportunities for people to acquire skills that contribute to sustainable



development."

Developed through a collaborative partnership involving USP Pacific Technical and Further Education (Pacific TAFE), the Sustainable Energy Industry Association of the Pacific Islands (SEIAPI), industry stakeholders and international supporters, the Centre is expected to play a critical role in equipping current and future generations with the practical skills needed to support renewable energy transitions across the region.

Delivering the keynote address, Honourable Ro Filipe Tuisawau reflected on his personal connection to USP as both a former student and lecturer.

"Energy is the heart of development. It powers our homes, schools, hospitals, industries and transport systems. Yet as we look to the future, we must find ways to meet our growing energy needs while protecting our environment and strengthening our resilience to climate change."

The Minister noted that sustainability is about more than protecting the environment.

"For Pacific nations on the front line of climate change, sustainability is not simply an environmental issue. It is an issue of livelihoods, economic security, food security and the future of our people."

He said the Centre would help develop the skilled workforce needed to accelerate the region's renewable energy ambitions.

"The Centre will help train technicians, engineers, entrepreneurs, students and community leaders in areas such as renewable energy, energy efficiency, solar technology, energy management and emerging clean-energy solutions. We need skilled people who can install, operate, maintain and innovate these technologies."

The Minister also encouraged young people to embrace opportunities within the renewable energy sector.

"We need young people who see renewable energy not only as a career opportunity but as a meaningful way to contribute to the future of our Pacific countries."

Representing the Philanthropic Foundation that supported the project, Geoff Stapleton said the Centre was the result of years of planning, collaboration and commitment by industry and education partners.

Speaking on behalf of the foundation, he shared a message from the organization, "The funding organisation is proud of all the work undertaken by SEIAPI, USP Pacific TAFE, USP's Infrastructure Section and the construction team to support the renewable energy industry in Fiji and across the Pacific. We also thank the industry partners who donated equipment to support this Centre."

Stapleton said the facility fulfils a long-held vision for the renewable energy industry in the Pacific.

"This Centre helps fulfil one of the industry's long-term objectives, creating a place in the Pacific that can



deliver the specialised training needed to support the growing renewable energy sector."

He also paid tribute to renewable energy pioneer Dr Herb Wade, whose early work helped shape the vision for a regional training centre.

"Back in 2005, Dr Wade and I co-authored a renewable energy training initiative that envisioned a centre in Fiji capable of supporting sustainable energy development throughout the Pacific. Today's opening represents the realisation of that vision."

The Sustainable Energy Training Centre will provide industry-responsive training in areas including solar photovoltaic systems, energy efficiency, battery storage technologies, electrical transport systems, inspection and quality assurance, rural electrification and emerging clean-energy technologies.

By combining practical learning facilities with strong industry partnerships, the Centre will create pathways for students, technicians, tradespeople and communities to gain specialised expertise needed for a rapidly evolving energy sector.

The opening of the Centre reinforces USP's commitment to supporting sustainable development, climate resilience and workforce readiness across the Pacific, while strengthening its role as the region's premier institution for higher education and skills development.