

FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

ADDRESS

BY

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PRESIDENT

OF THE

FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

BEFORE THE

HIGH-LEVEL PLENARY MEETING OF THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

AT ITS

SIXTIETH SESSION

NEW YORK, 16 SEPTEMBER 2005

Co-Presidents,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Distinguished Heads of States-and Governments,
Ministers,
Ladies and gentlemen,

We gather this year against the backdrop of many recent natural disasters. The despair caused by these natural disasters and their apocalyptic nature has shocked us all. Please allow me to offer, on behalf of my Government and people, our deepest sympathies and sincere condolences to the Government and people of the United States and to other Governments whose people have been devastated by the ravages and furies of these natural calamities.

The recent spate of devastations caused by these natural disasters, bring into sharper focus the extreme vulnerabilities facing low-lying coastal areas and small island developing states. They further highlight the daunting challenges posed by extreme weather events on our abilities to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and to pursue sustainable development.

No amount of engineering advances can fully defend and save our small island developing states and low-lying coastal areas from the perils of the surging waters and rising tides of the sea caused by the adverse impacts of climate change. The stronger and more frequent hurricanes and typhoons in the Caribbean and the Pacific prove, yet again, this fact.

I am convinced, however, that if all nations in this Assembly, developed and developing, approach the critical problem of Climate Change and global warming in a concerted effort, what no engineering feat can arrest, will and can be mitigated by renewed political will and commitment to carry out our obligations pursuant to the Climate Change Conventions, the Kyoto Protocol and other relevant international agreements. We, therefore, appeal to those countries that have not ratified the Kyoto Protocol to do so without delay.

Our global world demands concerted global action to mitigate the adverse impact of climate change. My delegation has strongly supported the call to initiate negotiations to develop a more inclusive international framework for climate change beyond 2012. To be effective and be of any relevance, the framework must include all major emitters, both developed and developing countries. In that vein, let us approach the concept of "common but differentiated responsibilities" not as a license to pollute but as a mandate to preserve our Mother Earth.

After five years since we committed ourselves to the UN Millennium Declaration, the MDGs remain relevant as the basis of our sustainable development. Unfortunately, it is the experience of my country, and our general observation in Micronesia that we face an uphill battle in meeting and implementing the Millennium Development Goals.

It is widely recognized that Oceania remains one of the identified regions of the world that is worst off in meeting its Millennium Development Goals. Even with this recognition, we find more often than not, that the international community has not followed up with fair and proportionate allocation of resources to these more vulnerable small island developing states.

For too long, our islands of the Pacific have been overlooked. We, therefore, appeal to the United Nations and the international donor community to apply a fair and more proportionate allocation of development assistance to our region if we are to achieve these goals.

We find much encouragement over the commitments by many developed members of this Organization to meet the internationally agreed goals of 0.5% of GNP as official development assistance by 2010 and 0.7% by no later than 2015. As a beneficiary of this development assistance, Micronesia remains grateful for the support of our donor partners and the international donor community for the continued assistance extended to us. We support the call made by many in this Assembly for those countries that have not done so to make every effort to achieve the agreed goals of official development assistance.

While grateful for the assistance of the United Nations in our national development efforts, we recognize the need for further strengthening of cooperation and closer linkages between the United Nations and many of its member states in the Pacific, like my country. I refer here to the need to establish a physical presence of the United Nations system within our national borders. The United Nations system must be seen as directly involved in our development process and in our national efforts at achieving the Millennium Development Goals, on a sustained and regular basis. Such presence can only contribute to better coordination, strengthening our capacity, a more effective use of resources and an effective delivery of assistance. It would demonstrate the UN system's commitment to its most vulnerable members.

In this era of information and communication technological advances, my government applauds the United Nations and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) for their commitment to ensuring that information and communication technologies (ICT) are placed in the service of humankind in the ongoing noble task of economic development. For island countries like the Federated States of Micronesia whose population is spread out over a vast area of the Pacific Ocean, access to reliable and affordable ICT is critical in our nation building. It is for this reason that my Government strongly supports the Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action as endorsed by the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and looks forward to the convening of the second phase in Tunisia by the end of this year.

Ever since the earliest days of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, the people of Micronesia have placed our faith in the United Nations Charter. As we leave this critical Summit that faith is refreshed and strengthened. I call upon all member nations to apply the outcomes here to achieve real momentum toward enrichment of the lives of all people, and especially the most needy among us.

Thank you.