

A Common Agenda to Advance Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific
78th Session of the
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
May 23-27, 2022

Chair of this Commission Session

Madame Executive Secretary of ESCAP- Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbane

Excellencies

Distinguished Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen

1. It gives me much pleasure today to deliver this brief statement on behalf of the Government and the People of the Federated States of Micronesia.
2. At the outset, I wish to pay my sincere respect and sentiments of goodwill to all who are on this hybrid platform, honoring this occasion of our UN ESCAP.
3. As a member country, I wish to re-affirm that the Federated States of Micronesia remains grateful and appreciative of its robust engagement portfolio with ESCAP- a portfolio carved-out through many years of cooperation and collaboration.
4. Excellencies, it is over two years into the COVID-19 Pandemic. I am sure all would agree that our world has significantly changed over the past years owing to unprecedented health, social and economic challenges and the loss of millions of human lives due to this raging pandemic. These adverse and tragic impacts continue to this very moment, as I speak.
5. Hence, with this opportunity, kindly allow me to convey heartfelt condolences and sympathies to the membership of ESCAP, particularly members who loss precious lives as a consequence of the pandemic. In some ways, perhaps this tragic experience serves as a reminder to all of us of the vulnerabilities of our human family or, simply, of how precious life really is.

6. Excellencies, I fully support such a timely and aptly coined theme of this Commission Session, “A Common Agenda to Advance Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific”, which, in my humble view, summons our accelerated individual and collective efforts to find common solutions to development challenges that rob us, particularly the most vulnerable and less resourceful among us, from achieving the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals. We are at a critical juncture having passed the midway point in our progress, or lack of it, to achieving the seventeen SDGs, and for many countries in the Pacific region such as the Federated States of Micronesia, the blueprint provided by the SDGs to achieve a better and sustainable future for our people, has not been an easy one to follow.
7. The onslaught of the covid19 pandemic has not been helpful. While my country remains one of a fortunate few to be covid19-free, this does not come without tremendous costs as we redirect limited resources to addressing health, economic and social impacts of the pandemic while ensuring that we keep the pandemic away from our widely dispersed islands.
8. If the pandemic has taught us anything, it is the imperative that no Nation, rich or poor, small or big, can fight the pandemic on its own, and that we must unite in a spirit of international cooperation and solidarity to come to each other’s aid without leaving anyone behind.
9. For my country, we simply cannot address the multifaceted and deep-seated impacts of the pandemic without the much needed assistance provided to us from our development partners and friends, and so I want to take this opportunity to thank all our development partners and friends, some of whom are attending our meeting today, for your continued support in mitigating the pervasive impacts of the pandemic to enable achievement of our development aspirations.

10. Given our extreme vulnerabilities and limitations as small island states, we have unfortunately regressed in our efforts to address these challenges and will continue to need help from our development partners and friends. It is in this connection, that we are planning to hold a Roundtable with Development Partners next month to highlight our national priorities and seek continued assistance and support.
11. Indeed, the pandemic has exacerbated the impacts of existing challenges stemming from climate change and non-communicable diseases, which remain at critical crisis point in our Blue Pacific Continent, and constitute a real and formidable threat in our island communities and in the livelihood of our peoples.
12. In simple terms, the Commission's theme generally translates into the notion that we must continue to work together to achieve a more inclusive and sustainable green recovery, to build back together and better.
13. Excellencies, as part and parcel of our national efforts to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Federated States of Micronesia is a proud host of a recently established UN Multi-Country Office, which covers the North Pacific region and houses various UN agencies that play an active role in our development efforts including the achievements of the sustainable development goals. We are grateful that ESCAP has responded very positively to our request made in our country statement during the 77th Commission Session by rendering a decision recently to assign Ms. Wai Mun Hong, to the position of ESCAP Region Adviser for the North Pacific, to be based in the FSM under the newly established UN- Multi-Country Office.
14. We look forward to welcoming Ms. Hong to the Federated States of Micronesia to be part of the UN joint team that are doing important work for

my country including the rest of its northern Pacific clientele. Such closer physical representation of ESCAP will not only strengthen development cooperation for my country, but will also further enhance the portfolio of the newly established UN-Multi-Country Office here in the North Pacific.

15. Excellencies, our collective presence in this Session signifies the paramount importance of international cooperation and partnership to achieve the sustainable development goals. In that spirit, I wish to conclude by thanking ESCAP for this opportunity to say a few words, and to extend all nations in attendance what my country and people seek from each: peace, friendship, cooperation, and love in our common humanity.

16. Thank you.