



## Permanent Mission of the Federated States of Micronesia to the UN

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**Address by President Peter Christian  
before the United Nations General Assembly at its 73<sup>rd</sup> session  
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**Check against delivery**

Your Majesties, Heads of States and Governments, President of the General Assembly, Secretary-General, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is a pleasure to address this General Assembly under the able leadership of President María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés.

Madame President,

This Organization needs good leadership and I am sure that you will ably take us in the right direction. I offer my congratulations to you and your Government for your election.

New Zealand spoke elegantly about the fate of Pacific Island countries vis-à-vis the imminent threat of climate change.

Madame President,

When the armed conflicts that dominated the world in the first four decades of the last century ended, the world slipped into another war; the Cold War. A period of suspicion and deceit; an era deeply rooted in clandestine engagement, reminding us of a great Englishman's word that the truth is so precious that it must be protected by lies.

The fight continues today, waged between the bigger and the richer with the might of wealth and on the principle and the notion that might is right, with the smaller economies aligned and marginalized, becoming again the spoils of now an economic war; now fostering new economic colonies.

As in all wars many people become innocent victims, and are often filed away simply as collateral damage, as spoils of war, becoming possessions of victors and allies.

Madame President,

We open another General Assembly with our world facing record and serious challenges.

And yet, we dare ask ourselves this question: Is Pluto a planet or not? Is that a relevant question to our current Earth conditions? Perhaps Pluto can wait.

Our aim today must be to improve on the United Nations as forum on which we work to prevent this from continuing, to seek curative measures, to slow and to stop this economic war, and as an end, hopefully to accelerate the effort to close the gap of economic imbalance.

We also must avoid deliberate procrastination motivated by geopolitical greed for dominance and economic imperialism. Such a State only brings pain and misery to those whose only fault is that they are in the way.

We must recommend what the future should hold for us.

We the members of the United Nations must adopt a more progressive attitude toward taking charge of our affairs and make ourselves directly relevant to matters that touch and stain our lives.

Madame President,

The existential threat of climate change is becoming more real with every hurricane, wildfire, heat wave, and centimeter of sea-level rise. These are the realities that many of us are seeing and experiencing. Islands within the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), islands in the Marshall Islands, Tuvalu and Kiribati will be among the first to, literally, disappear.

In 2009 Micronesia proposed a fast action strategy using the Montreal Protocol to explicitly cut climate emissions to avoid warming of 0.5 degrees Celsius by the end of the century. While it may sound like a small amount, it's 50% more than the warming we are experiencing today.

In order to achieve this goal we urge all countries who have not yet done so to ratify the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol - and to accelerate the implementation of this planet-saving strategy.

On our current trajectory, many more islands will be lost, many homes destroyed, many people displaced. But we can still avoid the worst climate impacts if we recognize the need for speed, and take fast action. The Paris Agreement may have shortcomings, but we believe it is the best platform to achieve this goal. And we believe that no matter how difficult and sensitive the issues associated with climate change, we need everyone onboard. We are disappointed that some countries are considering withdrawing from the agreement and we call on them to reconsider.

Madame President,

Micronesia is a large Ocean State blessed with abundant marine resources. A key concern for Micronesia, and all small island developing States, is rightly focused on a healthy, productive and resilient Ocean.

The resources of the Ocean are the bedrock of the Micronesian nations and livelihoods. A sizable percentage of our economy comes from our Ocean based activities – whether it is fisheries, tourism, or maritime transport.

Micronesia is committed to the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' declaration to safeguard the Ocean and its resources. In this, I join my fellow Pacific leaders as we commit to eliminate marine litter and recommend the urgent implementation of the Pacific Marine Litter Action Plan.

For Micronesia, our fisheries is critical to the socio-economic well-being of our people.

Madame President,

While we welcome the recent decision by the International Law Commission to place the topic "Sea-Level Rise in Relation to International Law" on its long-term program of work, we strongly recommend that the subject be placed on the Commission's active program of work because of the direct implications of sea-level rise on maritime baselines and maritime boundaries.

Madame President,

To wish for peace is global. It has no boundaries.

Micronesia is encouraged by the peace reached by Eritrea and Ethiopia, and we wish the people of those countries the very best. We also wish that other countries who are engaged in conflicts that similar resolutions be achieved.

In our region of the world, we have a stake in the ongoing peace negotiations between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea. We recognize and encourage the continuing efforts to bring peace and stability to the Korean Peninsula. A lasting peace on the peninsula translates to a more secure and stable Pacific Region.

Elsewhere in the world, we cannot ignore the pain and suffering of so many people caught in pockets of armed conflicts. As world leaders, we have fallen short of our responsibilities. It is deeply troubling to see those who wield tremendous powers, fail to take bold and decisive actions to end these serious atrocities. And we wonder if for some unknown reason such conflicts might not be good for them politically or even economically.

**And we think "what a shame!"**

Madame President,

The United Nations needs to be relevant and deal with emerging threats. We find it deeply troubling that the threat posed by climate change to our existence has not received the Security Council's serious consideration. The Pacific SIDS have made a proposal for consideration by the Council. While the proposal in itself will not immediately save our islands, it is a step in the right direction.

Micronesia believes that a Security Council conceived in the 20th century needs to be more efficient, more representative, more responsive, and must show greater leadership in its response to today's new challenges.

Madame President,

Micronesia welcomes the Secretary-General's objective of the repositioning of the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda.

The United Nations development system has impact and influence when it is focused. It is of utmost importance that its operational activities for development, take into account the need to build, promote, and strengthen the capacity of small island developing States.

For Micronesia the role of the United Nations development system, in particular UNDP, to support and enhance the capacity of island countries to implement the 2030 Agenda must not be over-looked. But this requires the scaling up of UNDP presence, particularly, in our North Pacific where its presence can make a real difference and a crucial factor in our development efforts.

Madame President,

The United Nations represents the best hope for humanity. And we the members must ensure that it is.

I thank you, Madame President.