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Third high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases

**Statement by Ms. Magdalena Walter
Secretary (Minister) of Health and Social Affairs**

New York, 27 September 2018

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Mr. President, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, I bring greetings from the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM).

I want to applaud you and your esteemed team for having this pressing topic of non communicable diseases on the program at this UN General Assembly this year. Globally, NCDs kill 15 million people between the ages of 30 and 69 each year. Low- and lower-middle income countries are particularly affected by NCDs with almost 50% of premature deaths from NCDs according to WHO's Independent NCDs Commission launched last year.

The commission also notes that by 2030 as countries strive to meet the global agenda or the sustainable development goals, more adults will die during what should be their productive years if nothing is done now. For FSM and the Small Island Developing States in the Pacific region, non communicable diseases are the leading causes of death. This was acknowledged at the Forty-Ninth Pacific Leaders' Summit earlier this year.

FSM had declared NCD a public health emergency in its four states. The devastation of NCDs is affecting one in three adults of the FSM's population. 70% of our meager health budget is spent to treat NCD and its unfortunate complications. This creates an overwhelming burden on an already overstretched health budgets and the economy. NCDs are the top five causes of mortality in the FSM and contribute to an unprecedented increase in premature deaths. Our people should not be dying from these unnecessary deaths but they are.

Mr. President,

The FSM is taking critical steps in the prevention and control of NCDs through a multi sectoral approach, legislation, innovative community approach. All of these are meant to transform the way we have been doing business to respond to the NCD emergency declaration but this fight is far from over.

As we strive to meet the global agenda of 2030, with a clear call for collaboration and networking and to accelerate our progress, we need to work together to combat this NCD epidemic. As leaders of great nations, I urge us to demonstrate our commitment through concrete actions to combat this high rise of NCD. We need to encourage the food industry and manufacturing companies contributing to the NCDs risk factors to come up with healthier alternatives to the products they offer to our populations.

I thank you all for your kind attention.