



Permanent Mission of the Federated States of Micronesia to the UN

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Address by President Peter Christian

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Co-Presidents,
Mr. Secretary-General,
President of the General Assembly,
Distinguished Leaders,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

May I first offer my heartfelt condolences to the peoples and governments of Afghanistan and of the United Kingdom for the recent barbaric attacks against them, and also to peoples around the world who continue to suffer threats and pains from acts of terrorism, including domestic violence.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I start my remarks today with my conclusion. On behalf of the people of Micronesia I ask that we recommit ourselves to do what is right, become more bold and tempered in our resolve to push on to preserve and save the Oceans. Many, if not all, small Pacific Island countries depend on the ocean's rich resources for our sustenance and as a vital source for our nation building.

As such, we must give special consideration to the preservation of the health and quality of the ocean. Obviously, in recognition of this reality, we have come together as leaders to once again demonstrate our strong stance against wanton recklessness toward the wellbeing of oceans. We also know that the health of an island is directly related to the health of the Oceans that surround it. For these reasons, we hold great respect for the ocean.

As islanders, we are concerned that the ocean has not been well cared for; it has been used as a dumping ground for industrial waste, and polluted by human activities on shores, and from ships that plow the seas. It has been used as a weapons' testing ground; and then left to heal itself.

Co-Presidents,

I know we have come together to show our solidarity once again in the preservation of our valuable oceans. But, it is difficult to speak about the ocean and its well being without thinking about Climate

Change and the Paris Agreement.

We are in the age of globalization for business and economic reasons, for welfare and social causes, and for strategic security alliances. Times and circumstances dictate when such happen. The Paris Agreement is testament to one such need to globalize national efforts, and for a noble cause for all nations.

And when I speak about climate change I think of Paris, not so much the glamour of the city but more so about how so many nations joined together for a common good cause. Small or large, everyone's contribution amounted to something more than nothing. The Paris Agreement is still about inclusiveness, collectivity, and tolerance for every and each nation's own ability to design and contribute equitably to the cause. The Paris Agreement is not an end in itself, but a dynamic means to an important end.

While some may continue to deny man's culpability for the damaging effects of climate change on islands and islanders, for polluting our oceans no man, no island, no village and no nation can deny that the trash in our Ocean is of man's own doing. And for this, man must clean up his mess.

This, to me, sums up the purpose of why we have come together. Not so much as to ponder who and why, but more so to re-ignite the spirit of cooperation among nations, and to find what we can do, together, to help heal the wounds inflicted by man on the ocean.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was laid out as a pathway to a good future. As World leaders, we are required to act; and we do so starting with our most human instinct of self-preservation first as individuals and as a nation state, and then from this individuality of person and state we combine our efforts to build an acceptable global platform, taking our strength and hope in that ...the poor and weak, ...standing with the richer and stronger, together, will find good solutions that may help in the effort to find ways for the most vulnerable to weather the vengeance of the effects of climate change and polluted oceans that have come upon us, while we seek more permanent solutions.

Fellow leaders, ladies and gentlemen,

The notion of our-own-people-first is a basic, undeniable element of good leadership. This is not unique to United States Presidents, nor to our American friends. But, taking care of our own first, and working and cooperating with other peoples and nations are quite compatible, and does tend to bring the best out of us.

President Trump leads the world's largest economy. I lead a country whose statistics don't even show up on anyone's economic scale. And, yes, there is a sea of difference between the level of responsibilities for President of the United States and mine, but I dare say that the intensity of our responsibilities toward those who we are first responsible for, are the same. I ask that the United States do what it can afford to do as a nation about climate change and for our Oceans; if not for Micronesians, then for the sake of the United States and Americans.

May God bless us all.

Thank you.