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**75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly  
High-level thematic debate on the Ocean and Sustainable Development Goal 14: Life Below Water**

**Panel II: Towards a pollution-free, protected and climate stable Ocean**

**Statement by: Ambassador Jane Chigiyal  
Permanent Representative**

**New York, 1 June 2021**

**Check against delivery**

Mr. President,

Thank you for convening this important discussion on ocean. As big ocean states, we attach importance to the ocean as a source of our food security, livelihood, identity, culture....therefore the critical work to ensure a healthy, productive and resilient Ocean.

In 2006, the Micronesian leaders launched the 30, 20 one Micronesia vision for our region. The Micronesian Challenge covers the space/territories of 5 governments. The leaders embarked on a vision and strategy to conserve at least 30% of near-shore marine resources and 20% of terrestrial resources across Micronesia by 2020. The leaders recognized the critical importance of collaboration to protect the natural and cultural wealth of a wide swath of the North Pacific. The aim was to conserve more than 14,000 square kilometers of diverse natural habitats, spread across an area of 6.7 million square kilometers.

Our leaders recognized back then, the value of nature based solutions in an interdependent ecosystem. The conservation and management work has been informed by science and traditional knowledge of its communities. The work has been a challenge, but it pales in comparison to our responsibility as custodians of the resources we inherited and will leave to the future generation.

This year, the Micronesian leaders commemorated 15 years of the Micronesian Challenge, and set for themselves higher targets of 50% near shore marine resources, and 30% of terrestrial resources aligned with the Decade of Action and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

In taking stock of the 15 years of conservation and management work, our leaders recognized that much work remains ahead if we are to make peace with nature -we cannot do it alone – many of the challenges are transboundary, the challenges require scalable funding, innovative and transformative ideas, capacity and institution building and strengthening, technology transfer.

A first gesture of our commitment today, my government has joined the call for an international agreement to combat plastic.

In this decade of ocean science, partnership with more stakeholders that bring solutions to the fight is more critical than ever. But more importantly, the commitment of each us of, to do our part as inhabitants of this planet.