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**78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly
Second Committee**

Agenda item 18: Sustainable Development

Statement by the Micronesian delegation

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Chair,

Speaking for the first time in this Committee during this 78th session of the UNGA, I extend to you and the rest of the bureau Micronesia's congratulations on your election and assure you of my delegation's full support as you discharge your duties and lead the work of this important Committee. I also align my statement with those delivered on behalf of G77 and China and on behalf of AOSIS.

My delegation considers the agenda item before this Second Committee of critical importance and will address in this intervention a few of the sub-items under the agenda item on Sustainable Development.

Micronesia's geography and climate detrimentally affect and restrain our meaningful progress towards sustainable development and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Like any other small island developing state, significant challenges include our geographic remoteness; limited economies of scale, narrow resource base; susceptibility to the impacts of climate change, as well as sensitivity to severe disruption from natural disasters which hinder our path towards sustainable development.

On the SAMOA Pathway, my delegation welcomes the report by the Secretary-General. With the Samoa Pathway's 10 year anniversary in 2024, preparatory work is underway for the 4th International Conference for Small Island Developing States in Antigua & Barbuda in 2024.

Before we lose sight of the SAMOA Pathway in the rearview mirror, allow me to briefly address its implementation in my country, and in other Pacific SIDS. Its implementation has shown mixed results. We are reminded by the Secretary-General's report of the alarming capacity building challenges small island developing states face as it relates to the availability of data. In many areas where data is absent or inadequate, assessment of progress is very difficult. The

principal objective of the SAMOA Pathway was the recognition of the need for continued support and investments in SIDS to achieve sustainable development. Micronesia is grateful for the support received from the UN system and the international community, but further assistance is needed to strengthen capacities of our national statistic institution, including assistance towards technical, financial and human resources in other areas. We need to foster enduring partnership and strengthen coordination among all actors to avoid overlapping activities and wasting limited resources.

Chair,

On Disaster Risk Reduction, Micronesia and for that matter the Pacific SIDS, during the span of the SAMOA Pathway have been victimized by a number of significant climatic events and natural disasters. Typhoons or cyclones are now a fact of life for our region and are occurring frequently with much greater intensity. On our low-lying atolls and coastal areas the risk of typhoon surges washing across our islands, destroying everything in their path is a frightening reality. Unlike other regions of the world, there is no higher ground for our people to move to when the high tide surges come. With our atolls barely at a maximum elevation rarely more than two meters above sea level, and many islands as wide as two football fields there is really nowhere to go. We can only ask for continued and sustained efforts at strengthening preparedness systems and our capacity to respond post disasters.

Chair,

I now turn to sub-item (d) – protection of the Global Climate for present and future generations. In just over a month, we will gather for COP28 in the United Arab Emirates. Unfortunately, the existential threat that low-lying atolls like in Micronesia face from the climate crisis is on the rise, threatening to make the Paris Agreement goal of limiting the global average temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius unattainable.

One of our best shot for avoiding the climate reckoning that lies just around the corner is, in the words of my President, H.E. Wesley W. Simina during the general debate, “a fast-acting mandatory approach which should be modeled on the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, the best environmental agreement ratified by every UN member nation. We also should use this work-horse treaty –the little engine that could—as a model for a new agreement to cut methane, the blowtorch pushing the planet from global warming to global boiling.”

By phasing out of harmful refrigerants that are ozone destroyers as well as super pollutants, the Montreal Protocol has put the ozone layer on path to recovery and at same time avoided as much warming as CO2 is causing. By the end of the century the protocol will avoid a temperature increase of 2.5 degrees Celsius.

f – Convention on Biological Diversity

To conclude, Micronesia welcomes the adoption last December of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Its goals, targets, and vision for 2030 and 2050 represent humanity’s

best hope to arrest and reverse alarming biodiversity declines, as well as restore harmony with nature for present and future generations. We particularly welcome the inclusion of Target 3 in the Framework, laying the groundwork for the protection of at least 30 percent of the global Ocean by 2030 along with the BBNJ Agreement, which my country was the first to sign. We also stress the importance of respecting and safeguarding the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in connection with their traditional territories and cultural spaces that could be impacted by the implementation of the Framework, the BBNJ Agreement, and similar instruments.

I thank you.