



Permanent Mission of the Federated States of Micronesia to the UN

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SIDS4 – Side event: Precautionary Pause on the Push to Mine the Deep Sea

**Remarks by H.E. Jeem S. Lippwe
Permanent Representative of the
Federated States of Micronesia to the UN
St. John’s, 29 May 2024**

Moderator,

I appreciate the opportunity to deliver some brief remarks at this side event to highlight the views of the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia.

SIDS4 is an opportunity for the international community to understand the sustainable development aspirations of SIDS and support us in achieving them. For the FSM, the conservation and sustainable use of the Ocean’s resources is central to our sustainable development. This is why the FSM has participated actively in multiple intergovernmental processes relating to the proper management, preservation, and protection of the Ocean, including those for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the BBNJ Agreement, the plastic pollution treaty, and the exploitation regulations for the Mining Code of the International Seabed Authority (“ISA”).

One of our guiding principles in these processes is that addressing the needs of the present generation must not be at the cost of the needs of future generations. This was the charge of our ancestors, who bequeathed our rich natural resources to us for our stewardship. In this connection, the FSM has taken a very careful and cautious approach in the development of the exploitation regulations of the Mining Code of the ISA. We acknowledge the need for the world to transition urgently away from fossil fuels, particularly in this current critical decade for climate action. However, replacing one form of harm to the marine environment — such as greenhouse gas emissions — with a different but also potent form of harm — such as poorly regulated exploitation of the international seabed Area — does not strike us as a responsible approach to Ocean management, or to overall sustainable development, especially for SIDS.

Consequently, the FSM joins numerous other countries in stressing the need for fuller knowledge, data, and science about the marine environment in the Area before exploitation proceeds there. We also underscore the importance of finalizing all relevant exploitation regulations as well as associated standards and guidelines before any such exploitation occurs. And, it is important for the FSM that all relevant actors are consulted and their views are fully taken into account before such exploitation occurs, including those of adjacent coastal States, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities in the Pacific.

In the meantime, we encourage the international community to explore sustainable and environmentally responsible alternatives to deep seabed mining in the Area, including reforming land-based mining practices to make them safer and more humane, improving the reusability of existing critical minerals, and developing new forms of renewable and zero-emission energy sources that are less reliant on critical minerals. The outcome document for SIDS4 encourages the international community to pursue these efforts, including by providing necessary means of implementation to SIDS to take full advantage of them. The Ocean is under significant stress from human activities. We have a solemn obligation to minimize — if not reverse — those stressors, while ensuring the overall sustainable development of SIDS. Let's get to work.

I thank you!