

**Congress of the Federated States of Micronesia
Speaker Wesley Simina's Speech at 137th IPU in St
Petersburg, October 15, 2017**

Madame President of the Assembly, thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak first in today's General Debate, and for the privilege to speak immediately after His Holiness, the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church; IPU President Chowhdury, IPU Secretary General Chungong, fellow Speakers and members of Parliaments, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. I bring warm greetings from the wonderful people of the Federated States of Micronesia, and in our own 4 languages, I greet you, Ran Annim, Kaselelihe, Mogethin, and Lengwo.

Barely a quarter of a century ago, the Cold War ended. The whole world sighed with relief. The prospect of worldwide nuclear annihilation receded. It seemed that a new era of world peace, cooperation, understanding and prosperity was upon us.

We in the Federated States of Micronesia became independent in 1986, were admitted to the United Nations in 1991, and thus our first steps onto the international stage were during that era of optimism.

It was short lived, however. The 21st century rolled around and could be said to start on September 11, 2001. Since then all over the world we see massive population movement, and ethnic violence to a degree unimaginable; and worse of all, the specter of nuclear annihilation has raised its ugly head once again.

Many of you probably do not know where on Earth we are. From a security point of view that's probably good for us. Unfortunately we have been in the news lately, even though we were not mentioned by name. By geography, our country surrounds the island of Guam! As all of you know, Guam or "the sea around Guam" has been threatened by nuclear strikes repeatedly. Well the sea around Guam is us, the Federated States of Micronesia. So the nuclear rhetoric is in fact pointed at us. It does not make for peaceful nights for most of us in Micronesia. Yet we have nothing to do with the dispute that gave rise to these threats. The issue thus should remain an ongoing urgent one for IPU, in spite of last night's votes.

We look around the world and we see the horrors of the treatment of the Rohingya who are persecuted because of their ethnicity and their religion. That is unacceptable in a supposedly modern world - of modern and civilized minds. So I thank IPU for taking concrete actions to address this emergent issue.

And above all that, hangs the threat of climate change. Many hurricanes have devastated parts of the world, including our brothers and sisters in the small islands of the Caribbean. Earthquakes and fires are raging. It is as if Mother Nature herself is angry about what we humans are doing to our planet. Yet there are those who still deny climate change, to the horror of the world.

Climate change imposes on us a need to assist each other. A poor country like the FSM had never thought we would need to assist our sisters and brothers across the oceans but the recent hurricanes and earthquakes led us to reach out as a matter of international solidarity. The FSM Congress has recently appropriated some funds to help with the effects of the

disasters in Cuba, Mexico and our sister small island state of Antigua and Barbuda. We also appropriated funds to help the United States. We hope these funds will find their way to Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands, which we know are part of the US.

At times like these, we in the IPU must rededicate ourselves to the ideals of our founders, those parliamentarians who at the end of the 19th century wanted to create an organization for the promotion of democracy and for the peaceful resolutions of conflicts. We cannot eliminate conflicts but together we can seek solutions and first and foremost preserve peace. Conflicts of policies and ethnic conflicts were and can be resolved. It just takes women and men of good will. Let us all, starting with this IPU session look for peaceful resolution, through proper dialogue as encouraged by our debate theme - without insults, name calling, and most importantly without resorting to oversimplification in social media, such as tweeting .

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, Mr. Chowdhury, outgoing President of the IPU for an amazing three-year term that culminates here in this beautiful city of St. Petersburg. Your energy, drive and dedication were an inspiration to us in the FSM Congress, leading us to strive to become more active in this organization. Further, we welcome Vanuatu, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan into the IPU; and we in the FSM Congress indeed look forward to working with our first female IPU President. Congratulations and God Bless IPU.

Kinnisou chapur; Kalanghan; Kamagaar; Kulo Mulalap; or Thank you.