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Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4) First Preparatory Committee Meeting

Statement by the Micronesian delegation

New York, 22 January 2024

Co-chairs,

I first want to congratulate you on the assumption of your important offices. I align my statement with those delivered on behalf of the G77 and China, AOSIS, The Pacific Islands Forum and the PSIDS. We will submit the full version of this statement.

For the fourth SIDS Conference to be a success, we will need the support and the commitment of our partners, as well as a strong and ambitious outcome document. We must ensure that the realities of SIDS, which are clearly spelled out in previous SIDS processes, are prominent in our work. We take seriously the commitments given to our countries at previous SIDS conferences, and we will remain vigilant on how these commitments are further delivered, enhanced and achieved under a new and ambitious outcome document.

Three key areas in this respect will be on climate change, the Ocean, and financing.

Sustainable development of SIDS is not possible without strong, drastic, global action on climate change, particularly the drastic reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in this current critical decade, including non-carbon dioxide emissions such as methane, and the accelerated phasing out of fossil fuels and all associated fossil fuel subsidies. We call on the international community to use the outcome of the Global Stocktake adopted in Dubai last month as the bare minimum for global efforts to tackle climate change, with accelerated action in this critical decade, in order to secure the sustainable development aspirations of SIDS.

Pacific SIDS have declared that our statehood and sovereignty and all the rights and entitlements that flow therefrom under international law will continue and be maintained, notwithstanding the impact of climate change-related sea-level rise. Nevertheless, climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security, and wellbeing of our people, as well as to the natural environments and overall sustainable development of the Pacific Islands. As we speak, king tides are inundating our low lying atolls and coastal areas with massive ocean swells taking over our homes and our agricultural lands. We need the help and cooperation of the international community to effectively address these threats. We will develop and finalize the SIDS4 outcome document with this goal in mind.

We emphasize that, as custodians of vast expanses of the Ocean, SIDS should receive fair benefits from the sustainable use of the Ocean's resources, and the burden of conservation and management of the Ocean should not be disproportionately transferred to SIDS.

We continue to stand by our commitment to preserving 30% of the world's Ocean by 2030. With other ongoing efforts, the BBNJ Agreement will further strengthen our capability to achieve our goal. Micronesia is proud to be the first country to sign the BBNJ Agreement in September 2023. The next step is ratification.

Financing is critical to address climate change and to protect our Ocean. Dedicated and stepped-up access to relevant financial instruments by SIDS must be a key focus of the next decade, including simplified access to the Green Climate Fund, the Global Environment Facility, and the new Loss and Damage Fund. This access must not heighten debt burdens and other fiscal challenges for SIDS, particularly as we fight tough battles against the numerous challenges to our sustainable development aspirations. The support of the international community will be key in this effort.

I thank you!