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**Statement by the Delegation of the
Federated States of Micronesia**

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Chairperson,

On behalf of the delegation of the Federated States of Micronesia, I would first like to congratulate you and your bureau on the assumption of your posts. My delegation pledges its full cooperation to make the current session a successful one.

I would also like to align myself with the statements delivered by Jamaica on behalf of AOSIS and Papua New Guinea on behalf of the Pacific SIDS.

Chairperson,

First and foremost, we need to protect the physical and environmental integrity and health of our islands and of the ocean, so that they will continue to support sustainable human island habitation. For us, this is the essence of sustainable development. This is our past; this is our present; this is our future.

But, as the health of the air we breathe and the ocean we depend on for livelihood continue to be degraded by the effects of human-induced pollutions of Mother Earth, our past, our present, and our future have never been so threatened. Life on our islands is going to be more of a struggle against, rather than harmony with Mother Nature.

Chairperson,

Agriculture is an important factor for Small Island Developing States such as mine. Subsistence farming and the reliance on collective sharing of agricultural resources and lands are ways in which we sustain our food sources. The importance of agriculture and fisheries can not be overstated. However, in an interdependent world, we also rely on imported food stuffs. The price of these imports has sharply risen in the last few years.

Chairperson,

The global food crisis has left its mark on my country. To make matters worse, climate change is drowning our islands due to sea-level rise which has caused salt-water intrusion, jeopardizing our agricultural lands and has brought new challenges to growing some of our most traditional crops, such as taro. If this was not enough, last December many of our islands were hard hit by surging waves that destroyed up to 80% of our agricultural and traditional food crops, contaminating our ground water and soil on many of the small, low-lying atolls. This prompted our President to issue a Disaster Declaration. We appeal for assistance from the donor community to help the recovery efforts.

The fish stocks on which our traditional livelihoods depend and which provide nutrition to our people are decreasing due to increases in ocean temperatures caused by climate change, the degradation and loss of coral reefs and because of unsustainable fishing methods.

How can we overcome those challenges? The solutions for SIDS such as mine are easy to find:

- We need to protect the welfare of our people, and promote the health of our soil, the integrity of our ground water, and the health of our coastal and pelagic ecosystems;
- We need to encourage the use of locally grown products, including those which are resilient to the adverse impacts of climate change, to reduce reliance on expensive imports;
- We need to stop unsustainable fishing practices, including the commercial catching of untargeted fish, or the so-called bycatch and discards ;
- Finally, we need to guard and restore our forests, mangroves, coral reefs, and protect our pelagic fish resources; and, we need to plant more crops that are more resilient to the effects of climate change and extreme events.

These policy options are important but can not be implemented by my country alone. We certainly need the help of our development partners to achieve observable benefits in local communities through “people-centered and driven” approaches that move beyond policy to activities and actual implementation on the ground. And we need global environmental and climate management regimes that do protect and promote the sustainable development of SIDS.

Thank you.