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**Address by Hon. Kandhi Elieisar,
at the United Nations Food Systems Summit**

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Chairperson,

The Federated States of Micronesia commends Secretary-General Guterres for recognizing this central role of Food in the human condition and for calling this Food Systems Summit to bring renewed commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals. We join other world leaders in renewing my government's commitments to implement our national sustainable development goals.

Chairperson,

The process of preparing for the Food Systems Summit has given Micronesia and its communities a momentous opportunity to transform our food systems to more effectively address key social, economic, and environmental challenges, in ways that can truly create a better future for our people. In our national approach we cast our dialogues around a novel community-level behavioral lens focused on discrete food-related issues that have profound existential relevance for our communities.

These issues include improved nutrition and the fight against non-communicable diseases, where we still struggle. Micronesia has the second-highest rate of obesity in the Pacific, and one of the highest rate of NCDs in the World. We do not have generalized hunger in our communities, but rather we have an overconsumption of unhealthy food.

Modern lifestyle career choices and outward migration have reshaped our local production capability, and impacted on our traditional culture and society. In our dialogues, our stakeholders have reaffirmed the importance of expanding healthy local food production and accessibility. In so doing we would also address the need to raise producer incomes and ensure equitable standards of rural livelihood while promoting nature-sensitive production techniques.

For long-term sustainability and resilience, our communities seek to explore improved resilience through community-based resource management and improved governance and decision-making.

We have been overwhelmed by the positive response and explicit acceptance of responsibility by

our communities to address these challenges and to be the change they seek.

It is truly an exciting threshold that we are on. In contrast to other countries, our proposed game-changing pathways submitted to the Food System Summit for support from the broad international coalitions may seem rather basic and unglamorous. However, our realization is that sustained transformation must be built on a solid foundation of good information, good governance, and accountability, as well as appropriate innovation and robust community participation, all under-pinned by a firm commitment to sustain the transformational effort over the long term.

These five cross-cutting systemic elements form the conceptual proposals for which the Federated States of Micronesia is seeking support from the Summit's coalitions, as well as from bilateral and other programs of the assistance in the years ahead.

We do not discount the difficulty of social change. It will take years to rebalance our community health, equity, and well-being. We are not looking for quick, externally conceived, project fixes. Rather, we are looking for serious multi-year programs of support for Micronesia's community-led transformation.

To that end, in my capacity as the Federated States of Micronesia's Secretary of Foreign Affairs, I can assure our friends, and allies, and development partners that we will incorporate consideration of all food systems efforts and assistance in a common community review and coordination framework to better ensure that the desired outcomes are truly community-led, owned, and sustained.

Thank you, Chairperson.