



Nauru Bulletin

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Nauru ends MPS chairmanship, endorsed as next Forum SG

Nauru ended its chairmanship of the Micronesian Presidents' Summit (MPS) and prepares to take the helm of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) as its secretary general in 2024.

This will be the first time that Nauru will head the region's premier political and economic policy organisation.

The Federated States of Micronesia assumed the MPS chair at the 21st MPS held in Pohnpei, FSM on 13 February.

President Kun attended the 21st MPS and on invitation to the 25th Micronesian Islands Forum (MIF).

Speaking on behalf of the government, President Kun said it was an honour and privilege to serve as chair of the MPS reflecting on that period as being "quite remarkable to think of all that has transpired" describing Nauru's terms as having started at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Travel restrictions were in full force, and there was genuine concern about our ability to get enough medicines, food and fuel into our countries.



President Kun accepts gift from FSM President Panuelo at the formal transitioning of the MPS chairmanship

"Some critical economic sectors were in free fall. Our countries were also taking decisive moves to exit the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF)."

President Kun highlighted the achievements of the MPS notably the candidature for PIFS secretary general and the set-up of offices in the Micronesian countries.

But warns the most difficult part of the journey lies ahead.

"We must translate these institutional

victories into material improvements in the lives of our people. This demands accountability – accountability of these regional institutions to deliver on the development priorities of MPS members.

"But also accountability of our own governments to utilise these institutions to their fullest."

President Kun says despite the chaos and crisis of the recent past, the MPS has emerged stronger through a renewed sense of solidarity, standing side-by-side through a period of sensitive negotiations.

"From crisis, the MPS has emerged stronger than ever, but many storms still lie ahead. Economic volatility, climate change, and a very precarious geopolitical situation will test the resilience of all nations, notably and as is so often the case, the Pacific will likely feel the greatest impacts.

"Therefore, the MPS must continue to stand together, despite the political forces that inevitably conspire to divide us," President Kun said.

"It is my honour to entrust the chair of the

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Ambassador Debye addresses UN security council

Nauru's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Ambassador Margo Debye addressed the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Ministerial Open Debate on threats to International Peace and Security under the theme Sea-level rise – Implications for international peace and security, 14 February.

Ambassador Debye is the co-chair of the Group of Friends on climate and security which consists of over 60 States from all regions of the world. She delivered her statement before the UNSC in New York.

"Sea-level rise, fueled by climate change, poses a substantial threat to island nations and coastal communities around the world. An average sea level rise of between 25cm to 58cm, is predicted already by the middle of this century along the coastlines of island states," Ambassador Debye said.



Ambassador Debye delivers statement on behalf of the Group of Friends

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MPS during this next critical term to your [FSM] capable hands. The FSM has a long and celebrated record of leadership on some of the most pressing issues facing the Northern Pacific, particularly climate change and protection of the marine environment.”

The MPS’ membership consists of the presidents of FSM, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, and the Marshall Islands.

The primary purpose for the MPS meeting is to discuss the implementation of the Suva Agreement, such as the location of subregional offices and appointments

In the spirit of solidarity, the presidents endorsed Kiribati as the location of the PIF sub-regional office for the North Pacific; and Palau to be the location of the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner.

The presidents expressed their support for the candidacy of the Marshall Islands for the post of Pacific Ocean Commissioner, and Nauru for the next secretary general of the PIF.

The FSM will host the permanent MPS Secretariat and will be accorded an elevated status and headed at the level of a secretary general, inclusive of membership fees.

MPS PALIKIR COMMUNIQUE – PADDLING TOGETHER FOR A STRONGER MICRONESIA

FSM President David Panuelo expressed his personal gratitude to President Russ Kun as outgoing chair of the Micronesian Presidents’ Summit (MPS) and acknowledged the key role of Nauru as chair of the 20th meeting.

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The joint statement, the Palikir Communique, was signed on 13 February, at the conclusion of the one-day summit themed ‘Paddling together for a stronger Micronesia’.

The presidents welcomed the decision by Kiribati to return to the PIF and Kiribati reaffirmed that their brotherhood and sisterhood with the MPS was never fractured.

The leaders acknowledged with appreciation Fiji’s Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka for making his first international trip to Kiribati and making regional unity a top priority of his PIF chairmanship.

The presidents also conveyed appreciation for PM Rabuka’s acceptance of the invitation to address the 21st MPS and Rear Admiral



President Kun signs the Palikir Communique

Benjamin Nicholson for his in-depth briefing on security matters impacting the Pacific including climate change, Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing activities and search and rescue.

The UN Multi-country office (MCO) based in Pohnpei to be staffed mostly from the Micronesian sub-region.

Presidents expressed satisfaction on the progress achieved on the operationalisation of the One UN Micronesia House with 19 international agencies that will eventually be based in Pohnpei and over 100 staff joining in the future.

A view was expressed regarding the establishment of more regional offices serving country members, especially for the Micronesia region.

Saudi Arabia made a presentation of its interest to host the World Expo 2030 and the majority of the MPS leaders expressed their support.

Presidents condemned the illegal, brutal, and unjustified invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, and agree that the rule of law, the international rules-based order, and respect of sovereignty and human rights must prevail. Presidents call upon the international community to help towards reinstating peace and stability in that region.

Presidents reaffirmed the importance of a timely execution of the reform package under the Suva Agreement and acknowledged Fiji, in particular the former PM Frank Bainimarama in institutionalising the reform package.

The Republic of Kiribati will host the 22nd MPS •

Ambassador Deiyee addresses UN security council

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The debate aims to highlight the risks posed by sea-level rise and create solutions and ways for the Security Council to address these risks in the global security architecture.

“Depending on temperature scenarios, it is estimated that between 130 million to half a billion people live in areas that will be submerged in the long run. This would be devastating particularly for the Small Islands Developing States, where one-third of the population live below five metres above sea level.

“To contain this threat, it is essential that the global community accelerates its efforts to adapt and mitigate climate change and keeps a 1.5 degrees Celsius limit to temperature rise within reach.

“To this end, States must take ambitious actions in their implementation of the Paris Agreement and decisions under the Paris Agreement, including the Glasgow Climate Pact and the Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan.”

The Republic of Nauru and the Federal Government of Germany co-founded the Group of Friends on Climate and Security in August 2018. A total of 27 UN member states joined the group with a mission to boost the involvement of the United Nations in areas such as developing solutions for the impact of climate change on security policy and raising public awareness.

Nauru has been a vocal supporter of human rights and self-determination for its Pacific neighbours. Its involvement in the United Nations extends across issues relating to Pacific aid, development, nuclear testing, global warming, rising sea-levels and other affairs. •

UN sustainable development cooperation framework signed

President Russ Kun and United Nations Resident Coordinator Jaap Van Hierden officially signed the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF 2023-2027) and the official rolling out of the two-year Country Implementation Plan (CIP) for Nauru, 6 February.

UNSDCF's focus is to help Pacific nations achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by guiding the program, planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluating the cycle. This official signing allows the start of the two-year CIP for Nauru with an aim to have "no one left behind".

President Kun stated that the new partnership cycle came at a critical time for Nauru as the people recover from the COVID pandemic and strive towards a green economy.

"This instrument will enable us to leverage all programs, funding, and expertise of the UN agencies in Nauru to effectively battle the challenges posed by the climate change and achieve the SDGs," President Kun said.

Mr Hierden reassured the President that the UN will continue to support the people of Nauru to achieve sustainable development goals and enable the upcoming generations to lead "prosperous and peaceful lives".

After signing the UNSDCF, Mr Hierden took the time to discuss the overview of the CIP and the fields of collaboration between the



UN resident coordinator Van Hierden signs the development cooperation framework with President Kun

UN and the Government of Nauru. He went on to give updates on the progress of the UN Reform and establishment of the UN Multi Country Office in Micronesia based in Pohnpei.

Mr Hierden arrived on Nauru on 3 February and departed on 9 February. During his stay, Mr Hierden paid courtesy calls on cabinet ministers and government departments such as the Internal Affairs, People Living with Disabilities and the Women's and Social Development Affairs to discuss programs that will strengthen collaboration for the next two years of the UN CIP in Nauru •

Balanced school meal workshop

The Department of Health held a workshop to plan for healthy and balanced school meals with teachers and caterers at the USP Nauru Campus, 9 February.

The objective of the workshop is to train the school caterers on the standards and quality of meals served to students and was organised after the Department of Health raised concerns over the increasing number of people with Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) in Nauru.

Acting Director for Public Health Don Kadir, says children must be taught healthy lifestyle behaviours in order to minimise the increasing numbers of NCDs.

"If we want individuals to live a healthy life we need to ensure healthy choices starts from an early stage. The school feeding program is an important aspect of healthy child development."

The workshop gave participants the opportunity to openly discuss and see what could be done to improve food quality and further emphasised the importance of balanced meals involving the three main food groups.

These include health giving foods which consists of fruits and vegetables, energy giving foods which consists of bread, pastries and oats, and body building foods which consists of meats and protein.



Teachers and school caterers attend health workshop

[Photo: Nauru Media]

According to the 2015–2016 NCD Report, it is believed that over 70 per cent of the adult population in Nauru are obese.

Nutritionist Lavenia Kaliraki, who facilitated the workshop highlighted the importance of taking care of one's health to avoid illnesses in the future.

"If you don't make time for your wellness, you will be forced to make time for your illness," Ms Kaliraki said.

The Department of Health will be closely monitoring the schools and the caterers' residences to ensure their compliance.

Failure to adhere to the food safety standards is a chargeable offence under the Food Safety Act 2005 •



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Japan donates ambulances

The Government of Japan donated two ambulances fully equipped with medical instruments including stretchers, oxygen inhaler, suction unit and first aid kit.

The vehicles were handed over by Yamada Yosuke, First Secretary for Economic Development Cooperation Division with the Japan Embassy in Fiji, in a ceremony held at the Republic of Nauru Hospital grounds, 14 February.

The vehicles, Nissan Motors model KC-466, are provided by the Economic Social Development Programme (ESDP) and were delivered to Nauru on 8 February.



Deputy Secretary for health and medical services Andrew O'Connell receives the donation on behalf of the hospital

These ambulances will allow emergency services to operate more effectively and respond faster to emergencies around the island.

Meanwhile, the First Secretary at the Embassy of Japan's Fiji office, Kotoha Itakura and her team were also in Nauru to meet with government officials and discuss ways in which Nauru and Japan can further strengthen their bilateral relations as well as doing preparation work for a cultural event planned for later in the year.

Ms Itakura says the 55 years of diplomatic relations between Nauru and Japan means "our relationship is as old as Nauru's independence and our ties with Nauruan people go further back".

"The Embassy of Japan in Fiji is accredited to Nauru and, it is our mission to enhance our bilateral relations based on our historical ties and during the trip this time, we were delighted to find out there is a lot more potential for our relations from political, economic to cultural.

"We hope that Japan's assistance [in donating the ambulance and other medical equipment] will improve the medical situation of Nauru and we are also confident that this assistance will further strengthen friendship shared between the people and governments of Nauru and Japan," Ms Itakura said.

On a previous occasion the Japanese government provided the RON Hospital with medical equipment worth AUD1 million which included a portable ultrasound scanner •

Ambassador Damour presents credentials

His Excellency President Russ Kun received the letter of credence for Ms Marie C. Damour accrediting her as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America (US) to the Republic of Nauru with residence in Fiji, 8 February.

On arrival at the government office, Ms Damour was received by the Police Commissioner Iven Notte for the inspection of the Nauru Police Force Guard of Honour before being escorted to the Office of the President.



Ambassador Damour with President Kun at the presentation of credentials

President Kun said that he was honoured to accept Ambassador Damour's letter of credence and that he is looking forward to working with her in strengthening cooperation between the two allied nations.

Ambassador Damour is an experienced member of the US foreign office and is also Ambassador to Fiji, Kiribati, Tonga, and Tuvalu. She succeeds Joseph Cella who served in the role for over two years.

Ambassador Damour has worked in five different regions in the world and served in multiple leadership and policy-making roles during her time with the US foreign office.

Nauru and the US established diplomatic relations in 1976, eight years after Nauru achieved Independence and have since cooperated together on a variety of issues such as regional security and sustainable economic development.

Nauru has also engaged with U.S. Indo-Pacific Command workshops in the past, focusing on issues related to natural disasters relief, humanitarian assistance and maritime security.

Since the Ambassador's arrival to Nauru on 6 February, she visited the solar farms, mining sites, the Naoero Museum and the Nauru Port •





FACT SHEET

Pacific Islands Forum Special Leaders Retreat

23 - 24 February 2023

Reflection, Renewal, Celebration

What is a Special Leaders Retreat?

Fiji Prime Minister and Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, the Hon Sitiveni Rabuka will welcome Leaders to Fiji for this key meeting.

Each year Pacific Islands Forum Leaders meet at the Leaders Meeting, and when there are pressing matters outside of this time a Special Leaders Retreat may be convened. This is the 5th Special Leaders Retreat in the Forum's history.

Following the 2022 Leaders Meeting held in Suva, Fiji, the theme of Reflection, Renewal, Celebration will continue.

"This is an opportune moment to convene as a Forum Family to celebrate Pacific regionalism under the vision of our 2050 Strategy. This Special Leaders meeting demonstrates Leaders' dedicated commitment to building PIF solidarity and unity"

Henry Puna, Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum

What is on the agenda?

- The Meeting will consider and finalise the operationalisation of the Suva Agreement that was endorsed by Forum Leaders at their meeting in Suva, Fiji in July, 2022.

- Other items on the agenda include an update on the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and the Government of Japan's plan to release ALPS -treated water into the Pacific Ocean.
- The meeting will also see the transition of the Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum from Fiji to the Cook Islands. The Hon. Mark Brown, Prime Minister of the Cook Islands will host the 52nd Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting later in 2023.
- This meeting will give Leaders a chance to gather in person and to discuss common priorities, setting the course for the year ahead and reinforcing ties and the mana of our Pacific Way.

About Us

The Pacific Islands Forum is the region's premier political and economic policy organisation.

Founded in 1971, PIF has 18 members:

Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

Find out more: www.forumsec.org/forum-leaders

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Republic of Nauru

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