

Speech by Chairman Romolow at IPU Belgrade

Honorable Speakers, fellow parliamentarians, Ladies and gentlemen

Next week, October 24 is a national holiday in Micronesia, and has been so since 1991. It is United Nations Day. It celebrates the day when the newly independent country of the Federated States of Micronesia joined the United Nations, and of course the United Nations itself.

This showed the commitment of the newly created Federated States of Micronesia to international law and institutions.

Micronesia has acceded to and ratified a large number of treaties including all those having to do with Human Rights as well as the Geneva Conventions. We are a signatory to the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty as well as the Conference to Abolish Chemical Weapons. We have ratified CEDAW and the Convention on the Rights of the child.

Our economic well being depends on UNCLOS and the revenues we derive from our Exclusive Economic Zone.

But the one Agreement we are most concerned and proud of is the Paris Agreement. We are proud of having taken part in the negotiation, and our Congress ratified the Agreement in record time.

We are also an active participant in the Montreal Convention on Substance that Deplete the Ozone Layer, and we are proud of the record we established in dealing with threats to the Ozone Layer, directly helping with Climate Change.

This is of course rather overwhelming at times for a small country like ours.

Recently Micronesia took part in the Regional Workshop on SDGs in Ulanbaatar, Mongolia organized by the IPU. We reassessed and renewed our commitment to the SDGs, but conscious of our limitations we decided to prioritize three areas: Climate Change, the Ocean, and Health.

We will keep pushing for action to deal with Climate Change [and at times are amazed when our friends do not appear to show the same commitment]. We will increase our efforts to deal with the Ocean, in particular the issues of waste and overfishing. And we are following with interest the debates on Universal Health Care.

We eagerly to possibility of cooperation on a regional or bilateral bases to deal with those issues.

International Law is a serious and at times existential matter for Micronesia.

Thank you for your attention