

Day 1 Tuesday, March 23, 2021

Agenda Item 2

Regional perspectives on accelerating progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Session 1: Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic in Asia and the Pacific

Time: 11:00-12:30 (4:00pm - 5:30pm RMI/Fiji Time)

Meeting Papers:

https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/event-documents/APFSD8_1E_0.pdf

Country Statement: Delivered by H.E. Tregar Albon Ishoda, RMI Ambassador to Suva

The RMI thanks ESCAP for the papers prepared for this meeting and the opportunity to dialogue on solutions for recovery from COVID-19.

The RMI faces many of the development challenges shared by our Pacific brothers and sisters and reiterates the need for solutions to be tailored to the context of small island developing states. Before COVID-19, we were already faced with a range of challenges in implementing the SDGs. Today, COVID-19 has exacerbated these issues and further affects our ability to implement a wide range of activities.

The RMI recognizes the need for strengthened regional cooperation and coordination with international donors and financial institutions for recovery to be effective. In order to ensure sustainability of current policy responses to COVID-19 we need adaptive solutions that sustain us in the longer term. For a low lying island nation, that means better access to climate financing and adaptive capacity building.

The RMI would like to acknowledge and commend the on-going work of the regional Partners such as Forum Secretariat and the Council of Regional Organization of the Pacific (CROP) , WHO and WFP through the Pacific Humanitarian Pathway- COVID-19 (PHP-C)in responding to the Government of the Marshall Islands National COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan. In essence, we also want to thank the PHP-C for being able to transport the medical supplies and humanitarian needs timely.

It is widely known that the economic costs from COVID-19 are unprecedented and Marshall Islands is no exception. The government national budget continues to face direct

impacts to GDP with significant reductions in public revenue particularly from the fisheries sector, where we depend so much on injection to the national income.

To address the economic downturn, the government has provided emergency cash benefit payout to the unemployed as introduction of unemployment subsidies in the urban center including providing cash support to many medium- small businesses who lost major income due to COVID-19.

Moving forward, we would like to register and acknowledge the Regional Report from the COVID-19 Economic Recovery Taskforce with assistance from the Forum Secretariat. This will help us in advancing the national preliminary planning of the Post-COVID-19 economic impact as discussed aforementioned.

The RMI upholds The Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development and we are keen on strengthening this subregional mechanism for improved coordination and utilizing it to progress the region's implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Kommol Tata.