“Building Back Better”
77th Session of the
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
April 27, 2021 (2:00 p.m.)

His Excellency President of the 75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly,
His Excellency Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Madame Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and
Executive Secretary of UN ESCAP,
His Excellency Chairman of the 77th Session of ESCAP,
Excellencies, Distinguished Members, Colleagues and Friends,

Good morning, good afternoon and good evening!

1. At the outset, I wish to first and foremost submit sincerest respect and sentiments of goodwill to all who are on this virtual platform, honoring this occasion of our 77th Session of our Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific or ESCAP.

2. As a member of our UN ESCAP, I wish to affirm that the Federated States of Micronesia continues to be very thankful and be very appreciative of its robust engagement portfolio with ESCAP – a portfolio carved-out through many years of cooperation and collaboration.

3. Excellencies, I am quite certain that all would unanimously agree that our world has significantly changed over the past year. The unexpected emergence of the COVID-19 virus has no doubt been extremely testing for our common humanity. Its pandemic nature, established on a monumental global scale, has impacted tremendous lives and livelihoods for many members of our global community of families – and, these adverse impacts continue to this very moment, as we speak.
Thus, within this context, kindly allow me to seize this occasion, to convey heavy heartfelt condolences for the loss of precious lives of your respective peoples. In some ways, perhaps this devastating experience serves as a reminder to all of us of the vulnerabilities of mankind or simply, of how precious life really is.

4. Excellencies, I am also quite certain that many may agree that our humanity will prevail as we have done on many past occasions where our common heritage and livelihood are threatened. Thus, I am extremely encouraged by the very fitting theme of our session, “Building Back Better”.

5. In simply terms, this theme generally translates into the notion that we must continue to work together if we are to recover from these existential threat such as the COVID-19 as well as Climate Change. Combined together these threats represent monumental challenges that can only be effectively addressed through the combined efforts of all nations, united as one family.

6. From the hindsight of the FSM, national efforts aimed to alleviate the impact of COVID-19 continues to be implemented; thus, mirroring the theme of “Building Back Better”. Under the leadership of His Excellency President David W. Panuelo, the country has developed debt-free activities, in partnership with the Asian Development Bank, to provision loans for micro-enterprise programs that carries a 2-year zero interest, and of which a minimum of 50% of such loan programs are dedicated exclusively to support women in businesses. The country has also constructed and delivered an FSM economic stimulus package that assist low-income families, persons with disabilities, and government assistance to businesses in the private sector. These are just but a few examples of national programs developed with aim for economic stimulation and thus, carries the spirit of “Building Back Better”.
7. Excellencies, as part and parcel of national efforts to “Building Back Better”, the FSM continues to collaborate with regional, international and country partners to implement its international commitments and obligations as a member of the United Nations. As a direct result of such healthy and progressive engagements was the very welcoming decision recently rendered from a United Nations Multi-Country Office (MCO) to be based in the North Pacific to provide dedicated programmatic support to the FSM, Marshall Islands, Palau, Nauru and Kiribati.

8. Towards this end, the FSM wishes to associate itself with statements made yesterday by His Excellency President David Kabua of the Marshall Islands and that of His Excellency President Taneti Maamau of Kiribati, both of which supports the strengthening of the United Nations systems in the Northern Micronesia region. As such, we seek strong endorsement and support from ESCAP and its membership for the physical presence and representation of our ESCAP in the new UN Multi-Country Office. Such an important integration will not only ensure closer representation of ESCAP to the entire Pacific region clientele, but will also tremendously enhance portfolio of the new UN Multi-Country Office.

9. Excellencies, our collective presence in our Session signifies the importance of cooperation and partnership. To conclude I wish to extend all nations what we seek from each: peace, friendship, cooperation, and love in our common humanity.

10. Thank you.