

**SECOND PHASE OF WSIS, 16-18 NOVEMBER, TUNIS**  
**FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA**  
**STATEMENT**  
**BY**  
**THE HONORABLE ANDREW R YATILMAN**  
**SECRETARY (MINISTER) OF**  
**TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATION, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Mr Chairman  
Your Majesties, Excellencies,  
Ministers, Heads of Delegations,  
Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am most pleased to join the previous speakers in thanking the Government of Tunisia for kindly hosting the second phase of the World Summit on Information Society and for providing excellent facilities and arrangements for our meetings. We are indeed grateful to the leaders and people of Tunisia for their warm hospitality and generosity.

Let me seize the opportunity to also convey President Joseph Urusemal's greetings and best wishes for the success of the Summit. We extend our sincere gratitude to Secretary-General Annan for his leadership and invaluable support of the WSIS process. Many individuals and organizations put in long hours and energies in the work that brought us to where we are today. We cannot name everyone, but with your indulgence we would like to pay special recognition to the contributions of the ITU, UNESCO and all the officers and staff of the WSIS Secretariat itself.

Excellencies and Delegates,

We mislead none in saying that the road that brought us to Tunis has been a long, bumpy, and arduous one. There were serious obstacles, and I am inclined to think that there are remaining difficulties that lie ahead for all of us.

We were never under any illusion that the task left behind after the first phase of the Summit in Geneva would be easy; but the fact that many of the obstacles were resolved has renewed our high hopes in the collective commitment to the visions that were endorsed two years ago in Geneva. With such determination and a sense of enlightened duty, I am confident that we will be able to overcome any remaining difficulties that may test our resolve in the days ahead. The source of my confidence is the overwhelming belief in the ultimate benefits that are likely to be derived from an Information Society that is truly development-focused, person-oriented, inclusive, and open.

It goes without saying that it would be a grand error on our part if we succumb to the difficulties that may test our resolve from time to time and lose sight of the noble task for which we have been entrusted to carry out. Our task is to bridge the digital and development divides for the singular purpose of improving the quality of life for all of humanity. Failing that important task, we would in effect encourage the worsening of the digital and development divides which, in the eye of my country, would in the end become the common and serious plague for everyone in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Excellencies and Delegates,

My Government has been taking an active interest in the WSIS process since the convening of the ITU Conference of the Plenipotentiary Delegates in Minneapolis in 1998. Our active interest stems from the fact that the Federated States of Micronesia is a Small Island Developing State whose small population is scattered on many islands that spread over a large sea area.

Like many other SIDS, my country has unique needs in our nation-building endeavors that we believe strongly can be mitigated and remedied by ICTs.

Through appropriate ICT applications, we would have the opportunity, for instance, to improve the delivery of health care to our people, advance our educational system, improve the environment of private business and trade, and reduce the costs of communication.

It goes without saying that the development of a solid ICT infrastructure is a priority development issue for my country. I am pleased to note that the FSM has taken steps to formulate its national ICT plan and is now in the process of laying a fiber optic cable to bring greater bandwidth and broadband connectivity. We shall be grateful for any assistance that our friends and supporters can extend to us, considering that the development of a solid ICT infrastructure and appropriate ICT applications are, in a real sense, part and parcel of our nation-building efforts.

It is in this light, Ladies and Gentlemen, that my Delegation comes to Tunis with one important message, or request rather. We must not be satisfied with mere expression of principles. Indeed, we must move beyond slogans and arguments about semantics. Mere expression of lofty principles is meaningless if those principles are not translated into real actions. My Delegation joins others in calling upon all of us that, after Tunis, we move headlong to the stage where the promises and principles must be translated into concrete actions.

Thank you.