



## **94-09-07: Statement of Micronesia, H.E. Eliuel K. Pretrick**

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AS WRITTEN

THE FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

STATEMENT BY

THE HONORABLE ELIUEL.K. PRETRICK

SECRETARY (MINISTER) OF HEALTH

GOVERNMENT OF THE FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

AT

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

September 7, 1994

CAIRO, EGYPT

Check against delivery

Federated States of Micronesia

ICPD STATEMENT

Mr. President, Madame secretary-general, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies

and Gentlemen,

I am honored to address the conference on this important occasion for the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia.

Mr. President,

Let me join those who have spoken earlier and convey my delegation's congratulations to you on your unanimous election to preside over this conference. With your able stewardship, my delegation is confident that this conference will be a constructive process toward addressing the crucial issues on population and development.

I also would like express my government's gratitude to the Secretary-General of the Conference, Dr. Nafis Sadik, for her tireless efforts in bringing us through the preparatory meetings to this important occasion. We have admired her brilliant guidance and expertise in focusing our work throughout the process.

Mr. President,

The Federated States of Micronesia covers an ocean area of approximately one million square miles. Within this vast ocean area are over six hundred islands but totaling a mere 270 square miles of habitable land area. While small in terms of land area, our country has one of the highest population growth rates in the world - 3.4 percent annually and a population density of 400 per square mile.

The total population of our country is around one hundred thousand. While the size of our population may seem insignificant when compared to

other parts of the worried, the impact of the rapid growth rate and population distribution on our country is equal to that experienced by many larger and developed countries. Indeed the adverse effects associated with rapid population growth are magnified due to the very limited amount of habitable land in our country.

Over the last ten years, the population distribution in the Federated States of Micronesia, has been increasingly centralized in our municipal centers. This internal migration stems in part from economic programs that favor our municipal centers. The shift from a subsistence way of life to one that is dependent on a cash economy has increased the numbers of people who are compelled to migrate to the district centers to support their families. This internal migration has strained the limited resources and available services of our municipal centers bringing about further outmigration of our skilled people overseas. This "brain drain" or loss of skilled people diminishes our nation's capacity-building and development efforts.

My government recognizes the need to formulate and implement population strategies that bring about a balance between population, resources and developmental priorities, as well as providing economic incentives for our outlying areas which promote equitable and sustainable growth. In doing so, we are aware that our national efforts will have limited success without cooperation and assistance from the international community.

Recognizing some of our limitations with regard to capacity-building and resource mobilization, the Pacific community met in Vanuatu last year to review some of the issues associated with population and development in the region. Those concerns are incorporated in the Draft Plan of Action before this conference. This regional partnership in the Pacific has

helped focus and prioritize some of our regional concerns associated with population and development. But, the diversity in the Pacific with respect to cultures, national economies, resources and varying levels of development, make it difficult to implement equally, the outcomes of regional and international conferences.

Partnership with the developed sector of the international community should be part of population and development strategies. An example of this partnership is the National Census that will begin later this month in the Federated States of Micronesia . With the assistance of the United States of America and UNFPA, our government will finally be able to gather information required for policy formulation, planning and monitoring of developmental projects in our country. The census will not only provide for a better understanding of our population as it relates to national developmental policies and priorities, it will also contribute to regional efforts to improve research, analysis and information on population and development, all which are important for effective planning and policy formulation in small island states.

Mr. President,

I alluded earlier to the different scale of economic development in our Pacific region not to highlight our regional differences, but to share the view that understanding these differences may lead us to producing a Program of Action that is sensitive and embracing of developmental issues associated with population. The Program of Action must also consider the capacity of developing states to implement the outcome of this important conference. We have watched as the debate on the Program of Action has narrowed discussion of the issues along political and cultural lines, and we fear that one of the most important components, development, has been

relegated to the side lines. While we feel that the other elements are also important in reviewing the population question, we hope that this meeting will broaden its basis of discussion to include sustainable development.

Several years ago a task force was empaneled by the President of our country to develop a population policy as it became critically obvious that such a policy was essential for our country's development. The Federated States of Micronesia views this conference and the Program of Action as instrumental in assisting our island country in our efforts to formulate and implement integrated population and development policies and strategies that ensure our sustainable development.

We commend the delegations that have worked steadfastly through PrepCom 111, to bring the Draft Program of Action before this conference. Clearly, there are still differing views on some of the issues in the document. In this connection, Mr. President, I wish to express the views of the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia on some of these outstanding matters.

First, my government wishes to express its strong support for the empowerment of women and the enhancement of their role and status. This view is consistent with my government's position presented at the Vienna Conference on Human Rights last year. In our discussions with respect to the empowerment of women, I appeal to delegations to be flexible in their approach so that we may find our way through the divergent views that we have heard in this hall.