

Statement of Ambassador Sobashima Hidenobu at His Introductory
Reception on November 21, 2019

Traditional Leaders,

The Hon. Bethwel Henry, One of the Founding Fathers and the First
Speaker of the FSM Congress,

The Hon. Emanuel Mori, the Seventh President of the FSM,

The Hon. Dennis Yamase, Chief Justice, FSM Supreme Court,

The Hon. Kalwin Kephas, Secretary, Department of Education,

The Hon. Ginger Mida, Post Master General,

The Hon. Arthy Nena, Lt. Governor, State of Kosrae,

Other Senior Government Officials Present,

Your Excellency Mr. George Fraser, Ambassador of Australia,

Your Excellency Mr. Robert Riley, Ambassador of the United States of
America,

Your Excellency Mr. Huang Zheng, Ambassador of the People' s Republic
of China,

Other Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

Leaders and Members of Churches and Faith Organizations,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for your presence at my introductory reception.

I am Sobashima Hidenobu, new Ambassador of Japan to the Federated
States of Micronesia (FSM).

I arrived in Pohnpei with my wife Chikako and our Chef Mr. Waki
Kiyotaka on October 7.

While Japan and the FSM established the diplomatic relations in 1988,
their people' s exchanges date back more than 120 years ago, and there
are a great number of citizens of the FSM of Japanese origin.

In the recent years, while extensive activities of fishing by Japanese vessels have been seen in the waters of the FSM, the Government of Japan has been engaged in various development cooperation projects in the FSM including technical cooperation through people-to-people exchanges by JICA. Exchanges organized by private and academic institutions have been also abundant between the two countries.

The Government of Japan attaches importance to promoting the “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” .

The unshakably friendly relationship which has been consolidated between Japan and the FSM, a country almost at the center of the Pacific which is linked to Japan by the sea, provides a strong basis for the “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” .

I am particularly pleased with the fact that His Excellency Mr. David Panuelo, President of the FSM visited Japan two times already after my arrival here last month.

First, to attend the Enthronement Ceremony of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan last month, and secondly, to pay an official bilateral visit to meet Prime Minister Abe Shinzo, among other official functions last week.

Prime Minister Abe expressed his intention to expand Japan’ s cooperation to the FSM, and President Panuelo supported Japan’ s positions on various matters including on North Korea, among other issues.

To the visits of the President of the FSM to Japan, I feel obliged to repay accordingly.

Two weeks ago, Mr. Kasio Mida, former Ambassador of the FSM to Japan received the Order of Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star from Japan, presented by Prime Minister Abe, and had audience with H. M. the Emperor.

Ambassador Mida is here with us this evening.

Congratulations!

We would like to ask Ambassador Mida to say a few words later.

Under these circumstances, I am determined to do my best, building upon the long-standing friendly and cooperative relations between our two countries, and in cooperation with the Japanese residents, experts, volunteers, NGOs and companies in the FSM, among other partners, to further advance the relations.

I look forward to cooperating with all of you present here this evening to this end.

In conclusion, I hope all of you present here will enjoy this reception.

Now I would now like to propose a toast to the good health and happiness of all of you present here, and the friendly and cooperative relationship between Japan and the FSM.

Paiamwahu!

Thank you.