Statement of Ambassador Sobashima Hidenobu at the Signing Ceremony for the Project for the Enhancement of Security at Pohnpei Port, Pohnpei State on March 19, 2021

The Hon. Reed Oliver, Governor, Pohnpei State,

The Hon. Francisco Mendiola, Chairman of the Board, Pohnpei Port Authority,

Mr. Pius Roby, General Manager, Pohnpei Port Authority,

Other Senior Officials of Pohnpei State Present,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honour and pleasure to represent the Government of Japan at this signing ceremony of the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects by the Government of Japan, for the Project for the Enhancement of Security at Pohnpei Port, Pohnpei State, amounting to up to US$ 64,472.

On the occasion of the visit of the Hon. Kono Taro, then Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan to the Federated States of Micronesia and other Pacific Island Countries in August 2019, Minister Kono proposed the cooperation between Japan and Pacific Island Countries for a future that is Active, Opportunity-filled, and Innovative, i.e. the AOI future.

On the occasion of visit of H. E. David W. Panuelo, President of the FSM to Japan in November 2019, H.E. Abe Shinzo, then Prime Minister of Japan stated that Japan would strengthen its support for the FSM’s sustainable economic and social development.

Pohnpei Port is the main gateway of the FSM, collocated with the international airport, and thus it is an important venue for business activities with the huge inflows and outflows of people and goods, but, because of that, is susceptible to various possible crimes, including smuggling and human trafficking.

To address this problem, Pohnpei Port Authority formulated a proposal to construct a traffic monitoring facility equipped with the gates, exclusive lanes and sign boards as well as a certain sets of security cameras, on the causeway to the port so that it may control the access of cars to the port, and requested the Government of Japan to finance its construction of the facility except for the gates which will be constructed by Pohnpei Port Authority with its own financial resources.

We considered and decided to respond positively.

In conclusion, I hope that this project will proceed smoothly and will improve the security and safety of Pohnpei Port and Pohnpei State, benefiting its population of about 36,000 people, and thus will contribute to the AOI future of the Federated States of Micronesia.

Thank you.