Remarks of Mr. Sobashima Hidenobu, Ambassador of Japan to the Federated States of Micronesia at the Handover Ceremony of the Project for Construction of New Recycling Center, Pohnpei State

on Friday 21 May 2021

The Hon. Reed Oliver, Governor, Pohnpei State,

The Hon. Helgena Johnson, Senator, Pohnpei State Legislature,

Your Highness Mr. John Adolph, Iso Nahnken of Madolenihmw, and Administrator, Office of Transportation and Infrastructure,

Mr. Stuart Penias, Chairman, Board of Directors, Environmental Protection Agency,

Mr. Henry Susaia, Executive Director, Environmental Protection Agency,

Other Dignitaries and Officials of Pohnpei State present,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honor and pleasure to represent the Government of Japan at this handover ceremony of the New Recycling Center, Pohnpei State,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate Pohnpei State on the successful repatriation of the FSM citizens to Pohnpei on 13 and 14 May, last week.

With the progress of the vaccination, and the appropriate measures taken to prevent the inflow of COVID-19, I am confident that Pohnpei State and the Federated States of Micronesia will remain COVID-free.

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

The Recycling Center in Pohnpei State has played an important role for reducing the volumes of the wastes, and even generating incomes through the Container Deposit Legislation Program under way now.

I have heard that, by this Deposit Program, a total of 20 million aluminum cans have been recovered since 2017.

However, the location and the size of the Recycling Center was not ideal to collect a large number of cans properly, or to avoid the traffic congestion at the time of collection, causing problems for smooth implementation of the Deposit Program.

Furthermore, the piles of the cans waiting to be pressed have caused an environmental problem with gathering mosquitoes and other insects.

Under the circumstances, at the request of Pohnpei State, the Government of Japan decided to offer the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects, and the grant contract was signed in March 2020, for the Project for Construction of New Recycling Center, Pohnpei State, amounting to up to 87,609 US Dollars.

In October 2020, the Groundbreaking Ceremony was held here to start its construction.

I am glad to acknowledge that the construction has been completed and we may hand over the New Recycling Center now.

Congratulations!

This New Recycling Center can collect and pressure to downsize additional 4 million aluminum cans.

The traffic here is much better than at the previous Recycling Center.

I hope that no such an environmental problem as was existing in the previous Recycling Center will take place here.

Furthermore, the habit of recycling taking root in Pohnpei people should nurture the culture against littering.

Thus this New Recycling Center should benefit all 36,000 people living in Pohnpei Island.

In conclusion, I hope that the New Recycling Center will contribute to the sustainable economic and social development of Pohnpei State, and will develop to become a symbol of the friendship between Japan and the FSM.

Thank you.