

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 23-01

RE: COMMITTEE TO WAIT ON THE PRESIDENT

MAY 12, 2023

The Honorable Esmond B. Moses
Speaker, Twenty-Third Congress
Federated States of Micronesia
First Regular Session, 2023

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Your Committee to Wait on the President was duly appointed on May 11, 2023, consisting of members Robson U. Romolow, Joseph J. Urusemal, Merlynn Abello-Alfonso and Paliknoa K. Welly. Robson U. Romolow was designated as the chairman. The meeting with the President and the Vice President took place on May 11, 2023 at 3:00 pm. The President extended his congratulations to the members of Congress for their election to serve in the 23rd Congress of the Federated State of Micronesia, and especially to the newly elected Speaker, Vice Speaker and Floor Leader. The Chairman thanked the President and Vice President and the key members of the Executive branch on behalf of Congress for the opportunity to meet. The Chairman took a moment to congratulate and acknowledge the President and Vice President on their election. He extended his best wishes and hope that our two branches would enjoy a productive and successful working relationship. Chairman reported that Congress was in session and was ready to transact business. The Committee communicated the priorities of Congress for this session, and it received an agenda from the President for the meeting.

The President stated that he had no formal agenda for this meeting, however, he will be resubmitting the FY24 President's Budget Book shortly. He will also be transmitting a short supplemental budget bill with some items that need urgent

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attention, such as, additional funding for the special election and the inauguration.

The Committee asked if new budget recommendations were expected in the resubmitted FY24 Budget Book. The President stated it was too early to revise any Compact related items. Further, he made the announcement that high level negotiators from the U.S., including the U.S. Special Envoy, will be arriving in Pohnpei Monday. It is expected that a Memorandum of Understanding between the U.S. and the FSM will be signed during their visit. There were discussions regarding a formal signing to take place later this month in Papua New Guinea. Questions were raised about the type and significance of the ceremony in Papua New Guinea. The President stated that he was meeting tomorrow with the JCRP and the Department of Foreign Affairs, and he would further advise Congress regarding Compact issues after those discussions.

The Committee also advised that there were inconsistencies in the pay of our heads of overseas missions and the DCM of mission due to the Public Service System pay raises at the beginning of the year. The President is aware that some gaps remain to be filled and it is his intention to have all permanent National government employees benefit from the pay increase.

Your Committee also inquired as to when the Congress could expect nominations for heads of departments and ambassadors to be transmitted. The President stated that he was extending the offer for short term contracts to all political appointees for 90 days. His work on selecting a new cabinet will begin immediately, but he is confident of smooth transition.

Both your Committee, and the President and Vice President reiterated their desire for a good working relationship during the upcoming 23rd FSM Congress. The Committee will be supplementing this report during the discussing of this meeting with the President, it has endeavored to make this report brief, and requests that Members address any additional questions during the discussion of the report on the floor of Congress.

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Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Robson U. Romolow
Robson U. Romolow, chairman

/s/ Joseph J. Urusemal
Joseph J. Urusemal, member

/s/ Merlynn Abello-Alfonso
Merlynn Abello-Alfonso, member

/s/ Paliknoa K. Welly
Paliknoa K. Welly, member