

## **FSM Information Services**

### **Press Release**

#### **Japan Offers the FSM \$3,500,000 for the Procurement of Medical Equipment**

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—On June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020 the Honorable Kandhi Elieisar, Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs, received His Excellency Hidenobu Sobashima, Ambassador of Japan, in a signing ceremony for Japan to offer the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) 382 million Japanese Yen (approximately \$3,500,000) for the procurement of medical equipment. Also in attendance at the ceremony was Mr. Moses Pretrick, the Department of Health & Social Affairs' Manager for Environmental Health & Preparedness.

Citizens may recall that in November 2019, His Excellency David W. Panuelo, President of the FSM, was received by His Excellency Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan. Amongst the topics discussed in their meetings, such as the FSM's request for Japan's assistance expanding Pohnpei State Port's commercial and fisheries docks, and the FSM's explicit support for Japan's candidature to join the United Nations Security Council in 2022 (as well as support for Japan's permanent placement on the Security Council if and when it is reformed), Prime Minister Abe stated that Japan would strengthen its support to the FSM's sustainable economic and social development.

“The infectious disease of COVID-19 that has been rapidly spreading in various places of the world is now threatening not only the lives of human beings, but also their economic and social activities, and their dignity,” Ambassador Sobashima said in his remarks at the June 12th signing ceremony. “The current situation should be described as a human security crisis.”

“Under the current crisis,” Ambassador Sobashima continued, “where the countries with vulnerable health systems are facing particularly large impacts, we would like to emphasize the importance of strengthening health systems in addition to specific countermeasures for the patients. With these considerations and in view of the needs of the [FSM], Japan will offer this time the cooperation of grant assistance amounting to 382 million Japanese Yen or about 3.5 million U.S. dollars for the procurement of medical equipment made in Japan.”

Ambassador Sobashima noted his hope that this cooperation will help the FSM win the fight against COVID-19.

In his remarks, Secretary Elieisar said: “It is my certainly my privilege and honor...to receive this very generous offer from your Government to enable us to combat COVID-19. It has been said again and again that the only way to combat this Pandemic is to unify ourselves to work together in

solidarity. ...There is no question, Ambassador, that my Government is so grateful to be able to receive this generous assistance between our two countries.”

“We will continue to bless our cooperation and friendship based on the Kizuna or Special Bond that we have between our two countries. Thank you very much, and domo arigato,” Secretary Elieisar said.

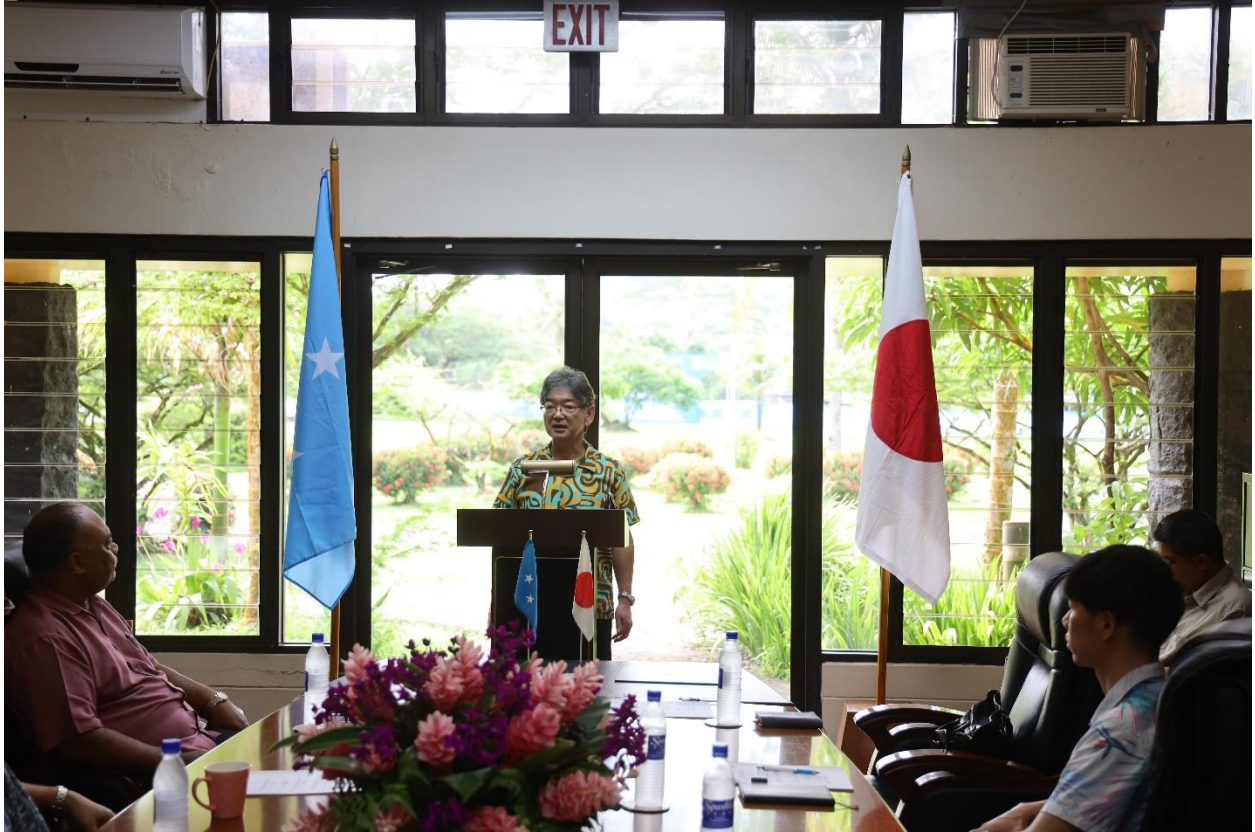
Upon the conclusion of the signing ceremony, President Panuelo offered his remarks of appreciation to the people and Government of Japan in the following statement: “To Prime Minister Abe, and the people and Government of Japan, on behalf of Vice President George and the people and Government of the FSM, we extend to you our deepest and most heartfelt appreciation for this generous assistance. For the more than 100 years of people-to-people relations between our two societies, our Kizuna has only grown and strengthened. In the context of the COVID-19 Pandemic, I agree with Ambassador Sobashima that it should be described as a human security crisis. With respect to the Indo-Pacific Strategy, I appreciate Japan’s contribution of financial support for the procurement of medical equipment so as to strengthen our Nation’s capacity to combat this human security threat. I stand in admiration of your peoples’ resilience in combatting the COVID-19 threat, and in humble appreciation for your peoples’ and Government’s generous assistance. Thank you, people and Government of Japan, for expressing your peace, friendship, cooperation, and love in our common humanity with the people and Government of the FSM. Kahlangan, kinisou, kulo, kammagar, and domo arigato.”



**Pictured Above:** Ambassador Sobashima fist-bumps the FSM's Manager for Environmental Health & Preparedness



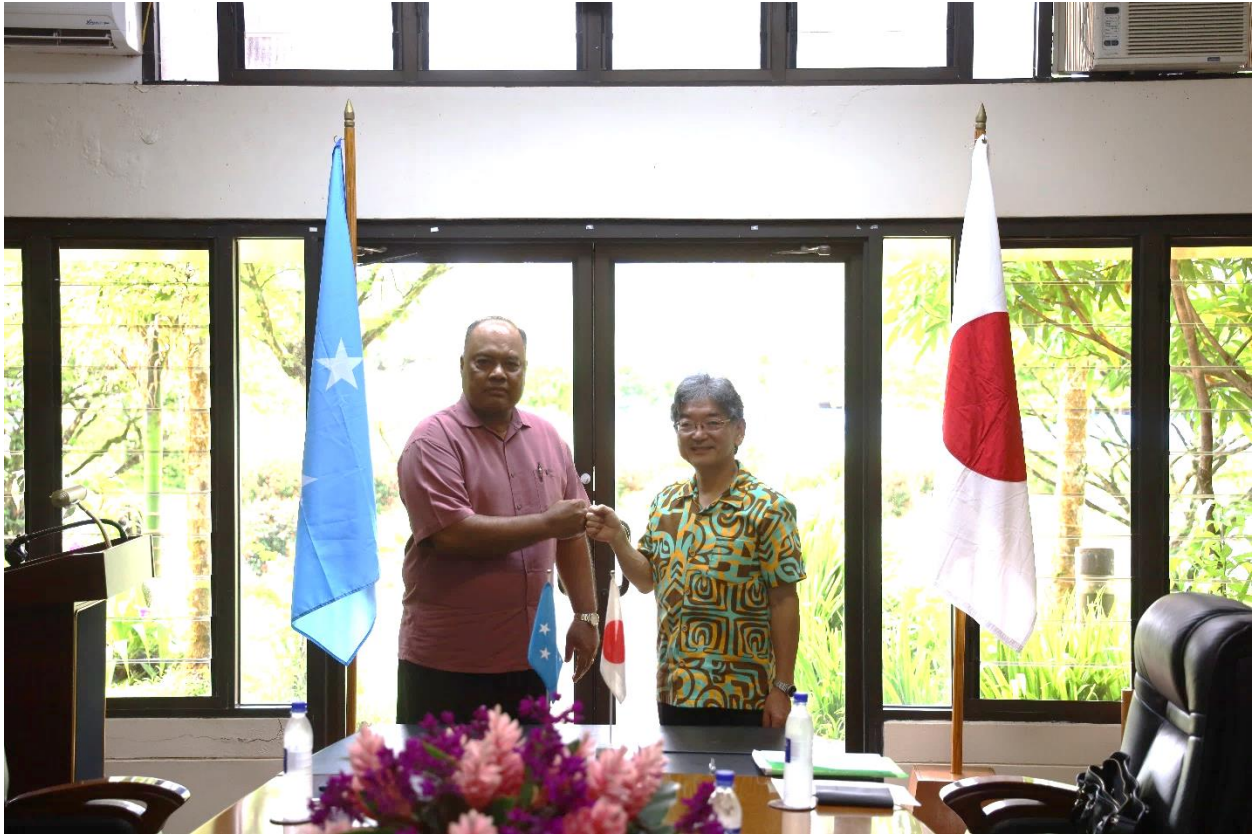
**Pictured Above:** Secretary Elieisar & Ambassador Sobashima sign the necessary paperwork to formalize Japan's assistance to the FSM



**Pictured Above:** Ambassador Sobashima describes Japan's assistance of 382 million Yen for the procurement of medical equipment made in Japan



**Pictured Above:** Secretary Elieisar announces the FSM's appreciation for receiving this generous assistance from the people and Government of Japan



**Pictured Above:** The FSM-Japan Kizuna (Special Bond) as demonstrated by a fist-bump between Secretary Elieisar and Ambassador Sobashima