



**UNITED NATIONS
MICRONESIA**



UN Resident Coordinator Presents Credentials to Federated States of Micronesia President

(Palikir, 22 November 2021) –The United Nations reaffirmed its commitment to the people in Micronesia when UN Resident Coordinator Jaap van Hierden, presented his credentials to H.E David W. Panuelo, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), today.

Appointed by UN Secretary-General António Guterres in October 2021 as his official representative, Mr van Hierden, a Dutch national, will be the most senior UN official in the country, responsible for the overall running of UN operations of the multi-country Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO), which includes FSM, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

Mr. van Hierden has devoted about 30 years to development, peacebuilding and humanitarian assistance. Prior to taking up the position of UN Resident Coordinator for Micronesia, he headed the international NGO Cordaid in Afghanistan. From 1991-2016, Mr. van Hierden held numerous managerial and leadership positions at the country, regional and corporate levels in Sierra Leone, Malaysia, USA, Denmark, Thailand, Cambodia and the Phillipines with the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), UN Development Programme (UNDP) and UNOPS. After having been part of the team that built up UNOPS, Mr. van Hierden went on to become the UNOPS Deputy Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific from 2009 to 2013 and Country Director and Representative for Cambodia and the Philippines from 2013 to 2016.

Mr. van Hierden holds a Master's degree in Agricultural Economics from Wageningen University with specialisations in development economics, marketing and business administration.

Mr van Hierden's appointment underscores the UN's commitment to Small Island Developing States and support towards Micronesia's realization of the central, transformative goals enshrined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Sustainable Development Goals represent the unequivocal commitment of all UN Member States to eradicate poverty in all its forms, end discrimination and exclusion, and reduce the inequalities and vulnerabilities that leave people behind and undermine the potential of individuals.

In his remarks to the President Panuelo, Mr. van Hierden confirmed that the UN will strengthen its support to the FSM government across all national priorities, leveraging partnerships and innovation in support of climate change adaptation, social development and inclusive, sustainable economic growth. It is anticipated that the UN presence in FSM and the other Micronesian countries, will be gradually reinforced due to the establishment of the multi-country office.

The Resident Coordinator is supported by the multi-country Resident Coordinator's Office, which, in accordance with the UN Reform launched by the UN Secretary-General in 2019, leads in UN strategic planning, communications and advocacy, partnerships and development finance, development analysis, as well as UN results monitoring and reporting. The multi-country RCO will work in close collaboration with all UN agencies, funds and programmes.

The appointment of a representative of the UN Secretary-General and the opening of the multi-country Resident Coordinator's Office Micronesia demonstrates a stronger focus on providing tailor-made, demand-driven support to the Micronesian countries.

Mr. van Hierden is married and has four children. He is accompanied in FSM by his wife and youngest son.

