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**Message from Ambassador Yosiwo P George
On the Occasion of the FSM Veterans of Foreign Wars Day**

11 November 2008

**Embassy of the Federated States of Micronesia
Washington DC**

Dear Citizens and Friends of the FSM Residing in the US –

While the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) does not have a standing army, its Government has designated the 11th of November as the “FSM Veterans of Foreign Wars Day.” It was so designated in order to enable us as individual citizens and as a Nation to recognize the contributions and appropriately pay tribute to the sacrifices of our FSM citizens serving in wars fought on foreign soils thousands of miles away from home.

On this important occasion, it is fitting and proper that, on behalf of President Emanuel Mori and in my own name, I pay our highest respects to our veterans residing throughout the US for the sacrifices they have made and for their exemplary actions. We also wish to extend our warmest greetings and encouragement to our citizens presently serving in the US Armed Forces throughout the world. It is our hope that you continue to find safety while carrying out your important duties and responsibilities.

It is also appropriate on this special occasion to reflect on the historic friendship between the peoples of the FSM and the US and to recommit ourselves to the objectives of the Compact of Free Association that was intended to embody the spirit of that friendship. One key feature of this treaty is the assumption of responsibility by the US of the defense and security responsibility over the FSM, just as the FSM is obliged not to allow the use of its land and waters by third-party countries for military purposes. It is the Compact that facilitates greater participation of the FSM citizens in the US military.

I am proud to say that, as has been pointed out by various US Government officials, on a per capita basis there are more FSM citizens

than US citizens serving in the US military. Citizens of the FSM have served in armed conflicts in the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean, and South Asia; and there are scores of our citizens still on duty in Iraq, Afghanistan, South Korea, Germany, Japan, the US itself, and many other places.

This is an indication about the critical importance of the defense and security element of our overall relationship with the US. It is also a measure of expectation of assistance in our defense and security cooperation.

It is anticipated that there will be an increasing number of our citizens discharged from the US military. In this connection, I am pleased to note the concerns that the US Government has shown toward the welfare and future lives of our veterans. In the "Leaders Health Summit" convened in Honolulu toward the end of last September by the Departments of Interior, Health & Human Services, Veteran Affairs, and Defense, one of the featured themes was on ensuring the healthcare of our veterans. It was partly for the anticipated increase in the number of veterans from the insular or US-affiliated areas that the four departments convening the Summit decided to create an Interagency Coordinated Assets for Insular Health Response (ICAIHR). With the creation of the ICAIHR, there is hope that the interests of our veterans will be receiving attention. This is definitely an issue of ongoing cooperation and consultation.

While our national defense and security is a subject matter of the Compact, the historic relationship between Micronesia and the United States precedes the treaty. In fact, there were Micronesians who served in the US military before the Compact went into effect. I also want to acknowledge the services and sacrifices of these other veterans, such as Frank Semens, Masachiro Christlib, Sixto Howard, Manuel Judah, Jeff Timothy, Paliknoa Welley, Jesse Hagliefeg, and James Mortan.

Let me conclude by recognizing again our FSM veterans of foreign wars for their sacrifices, contributions, and achievements. Thank you.

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