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## **2000 Annual Report on International Religious Freedom: Federated States of Micronesia**

Released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor  
U.S. Department of State, September 5, 2000

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### **FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA**

The Constitution provides for freedom of religion, and the Government respects this right in practice.

There was no change in the status of respect for religious freedom during the period covered by this report.

Both government policy and the generally amicable relationship among religions in society contribute to the free practice of religion.

The U.S. Government discusses religious freedom issues with the Government in the context of its overall dialog and policy of promoting human rights.

#### **Section I. Freedom of Religion**

##### **Legal/Policy Framework**

The Constitution provides for freedom of religion, and the Government respects this right in practice. The Bill of Rights forbids establishment of a state religion and governmental restrictions on freedom of religion.

##### **Religious Demography**

Most Protestant denominations as well as the Roman Catholic Church are present on the four major islands of the country. The most prevalent Protestant denomination is the United Church of Christ. Baptists, Seventh-Day Adventists, members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormon), and adherents of the Baha'i Faith are also represented. On Kosrae 99 percent of the population are members of the United Church of Christ; on Pohnpei approximately 50 percent of the population are Protestant and 50 percent are Catholic; on Chuuk and Yap, approximately 60 percent are Catholic and 40 percent are Protestant. There is a small group of Buddhists on Pohnpei.

On the island of Pohnpei, clan divisions mark religious boundaries in some measure. More Protestants live on the western side of the island, but more Catholics live on the eastern side.

Missionaries of many faiths work within the nation. Seventh-Day Adventists, members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, and other foreign missionary groups operate without hindrance on all four islands.

Most immigrants are from the Philippines; most of these are Catholics and join local Catholic churches.

There is no government-sponsored ecumenical activity.

There was no change in the status of respect for religious freedom during the period covered by this report.

There were no reports of religious detainees or prisoners.

#### Forced Religious Conversion of Minor U.S. Citizens

There were no reports of the forced religious conversion of minor U.S. citizens who had been abducted or illegally removed from the United States, or of the Government's refusal to allow such citizens to be returned to the United States.

### **Section II. Societal Attitudes**

In general there are amicable relations between the religious communities.

### **Section III. U.S. Government Policy**

The U.S. Embassy discusses religious freedom issues with the Government in the overall context of the promotion of human rights.

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