



Republic of the Marshall Islands
STATEMENT by H.E. Ambassador Doreen DEBRUM
79th Session of the World Health Assembly
18 May 2026
Geneva

Item 3: General Discussion

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1. Mr. President, Director General, Honorable Ministers, Excellencies, and Distinguished Delegates,
2. Reflecting on the theme of this assembly “Reshaping Global Health: A Shared Responsibility”, we in the Marshall Islands are guided by the motto “Jepilpilin ke ejukaan” which means Accomplishment through joint effort. And it is this call that we want to be heard from the distant shores of our atoll nation, to advance global health efforts in a collaborative, fair and inclusive manner.
3. Together with other Small Island Developing States, the Marshall Islands face distinct health threats and carry a disproportionate burden relating to the impacts of climate change on health, nutrition and the prevention of NCDs.
4. These health threats place a considerable strain on SIDS health systems, which are already challenged with a plethora of technical and capacity

constraints. In turn, this undermines our economic resilience and deepens existing structural vulnerabilities.

5. To effectively and fairly improve global health security, our Shared Responsibility should not only be about doing more for those who have less, but also about doing better, and most importantly together.
6. In this regard, we urge Member States to hear the voices of SIDS, including across the Pacific, and acknowledge our special circumstances. Support must be provided to SIDS to strengthen our capacity to respond to health emergencies, including those resulting from climate change, and safeguard the fundamental human right to health for our people.
7. Finally, Mr. President, we must further emphasize that a recognition of the Shared Responsibility to Reshape Global Health underscores the importance of comprehensive global health cooperation. In this regard, the Marshall Islands reaffirms that this cooperation must include the 23 million people of Taiwan, as it did by inviting them to participate as observers at the WHA prior to 2017. This inclusion will strengthen both regional and global health security and advance WHO's efforts to build a more comprehensive global health framework.
8. Kommol tata and I thank you, Mr. President.