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MARIANA ISLANDS DISTRICT LEGISLATURE
GOVERNMENT OF THE MARIANAS
SAIPAN, MARIANA ISLANDS

IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MAY 26, 1972

STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT [VICENTE N. SANTOS]
PETITIONER, DELIVERED TO THE TRUSTEESHIP
COUNCIL AT ITS THIRTY-NINTH SESSION
MAY 26, 1972

President and Honorable Members of the Trusteeship Council:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity and privilege of
coming before you to reexpress the wishes of the people of the
Mariana Islands District to develop a permanent association with the
governing authority.

I am Vicente N. Santos, President of the District Legislature
of the Marianas; an elected position I have held since 1963. My
ancestors have lived in the Mariana Islands for many generations.
The Mariana District is one of six districts composing the Trust

Territories of the Pacific Islands that was unilaterally placed under the International Trusteeship System with the United States of America as the administering authority. My role here today is to acquaint this great International Body with the efforts of the District Legislature to gain a permanent association with the United States of America.

I say reexpress the political desires of the people because for nearly a decade the elected body representing the people of Rota, Tinian, Saipan and the Northern Islands, that make up the Mariana District, have been steadfast in their desire to develop a permanent association with the administering authority -- the United States of America.

The most important single incentive for the expression of the District Legislature over the last decade has been the change contained in Chapter XII, Article 76, Subparagraph (b) of the Charter of this Organization which states in part:

... to promote the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the inhabitants of the Trust Territories, and their progressive development towards self-government or independence as may be appropriate to the particular circumstances of each territory and its people and the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned ...

The indigenous peoples of the Marianas have not been unaware of the commendable efforts of the United Nations since its founding to advance the great cause of self-determination. People in every corner of the earth have been encouraged and supported in their efforts to freely determine their own fate. We believe this Council will

Willingness of our requests and continue this great tradition and support the freely expressed wishes of the Marianas to develop a non-Trustee relationship with the United States of America.

Quite frankly, Mr. President, we want to be included in what future historians will call "The Era of Self-Determination".

Our desire for permanent association with the United States has an historical basis which I want to briefly call to your attention. The Treaty of Paris ending the Spanish-American War contained an "historical accident" which separated the indigenous peoples of Rota, Saipan and Tinian from their historical economic, cultural, religious and common language ties with Guam. For 350 years prior to that treaty these islands had a common history under the administration of Spain. This accident of history which separated the indigenous peoples was perpetuated in the 20th century by the League of Nations and later by the United Nations when it created the trusteeship agreement with the United States in 1947.

We are here today to advise you that our people have on many many occasions expressed their desire to correct this error of history. In 1969, for example, pursuant to a petition of the Mariana Island District Legislature, a Special Poll was held on a district-wide basis. The plebiscite set out a series of choices for the people and after public and free discussions all registered voters were asked to cast a secret ballot. The result confirmed the fact that the majority of the people want a permanent association with the United States of America. A copy of the result of this plebiscite is included as Exhibit A. Since 1969, village town-hall type meetings have been held throughout the Marianas.

and they reconfirm and in fact more strongly indicate the desire of the people for permanent association with the administering authority.

In addition to the plebiscite results, the records of this honorable body will show that since the creation of the Mariana Islands District Legislature in 1963, the people of the Mariana Islands District have expressed their political desire to become a permanent part of the administering authority.

Resolution No. 2 - 1963, passed on August 5, 1963, requested the administering authority to conduct a plebiscite on the political future of the Mariana Islands District and to designate October 24, 1963 for that purpose.

Resolution No. 3 - 1963, also passed on August 5, 1963, requested the administering authority to reconsider the petition requesting the reunification of the Mariana Islands.

Resolution No. 22 - 1964, passed on February 10, 1964, requested this honorable body, the Trusteeship Council, to reconsider the petition under Resolution No. 7 that was enacted by the Saipan Municipal Legislature, relative to the reintegration of the Mariana Islands, directly under the Doctrine of Human Rights, and in consonance with the objectives of the United Nations policy in the International Declaration of Human Rights.

Resolution No. 6 - 1965, passed on August 6, 1965, requested the administering authority and the United States Congress to grant United States citizenship to the inhabitants of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

Resolution No. 12 - 1965, passed on August 19, 1965, requested

the United States Congress to favorably consider changing the political status of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

Resolution No. 56 - 1965, passed on August 23, 1965, requested the Legislature of the Territory of Guam to request the United States Congress to amend the Organic Act of the Territory of Guam to extend the boundaries of that U.S. Territory to include the islands of the Mariana Islands District.

Resolution No. 4 - 1967, passed on February 10, 1967, requested this honorable body, the Trusteeship Council, to urge the administering authority to take concrete steps to prepare the people for self-determination and to set a deadline for a plebiscite in the Mariana Islands District.

Resolution No. 43 - 1967, passed on August 28, 1967, requesting the administering authority to approve the reunification of the Mariana Islands District with the United States Territory of Guam.

Resolution No. 8 - 1967, passed on February 10, 1967, requested this honorable body to urge the administering authority to abolish immigration restrictions and permit free entry of inhabitants of the Mariana Islands District into the United States.

Resolution No. 7 - 1967, passed on February 10, 1967, requested the administering authority to unify the Mariana Islands District with the Territory of Guam as a Territory of the Marianas in consonance with the objective of the United Nation's policy under the Declaration of Human Rights.

Resolution No. 4 - 1968, passed on January 19, 1968, requested the administering authority to grant United States citizenship to the

people of the Mariana Islands District and to permit the reunification of the Mariana Islands District with the Territory of Guam.

Resolution No. 8 - 1967, passed on February 10, 1967, requested this honorable body to urge the administering authority to relax immigration restrictions and permit freentry of inhabitants of the Mariana Islands District into the United States.

Resolution No. 7 - 1967, passed on February 10, 1967, requested the administering authority to unify the Mariana Islands District with the Territory of Guam as a Territory of the Marianas in consonance with the objective of the United Nation's policy under the Declaration of Human Rights.

Resolution No. 4 - 1968, passed on January 19, 1968, requesting the administering authority to grant United States citizenship to the people of the Mariana Islands District and to permit the reunification of the Mariana Islands District with the Territory of Guam.

Resolution No. 27 - 1969, passed on February 26, 1969, created a Select Committee to continue the study of the reunification of the Mariana Islands District within the governmental framework of the Territory of Guam and of the methods available for bringing about reunification.

Resolution No. 13 - 1969, passed on August 25, 1969, authorized the President of the Mariana Islands District Legislature to appoint a plebiscite committee to hold public meetings throughout the Mariana Islands District to explain to the people the purposes of the district wide plebiscite to be held in November, 1969.

Resolution No. 13 - 1970, passed on February 18, 1970, requested this honorable body to effect the immediate reunification of the Mariana Islands District with the Territory of Guam as is envisioned under the Doctrine of Human Rights, and in consonance with the objectives of the United Nation's adherence to its International Declaration of Human Rights.

Resolution No. 12 - 1970, passed on August 21, 1970, endorsed the proposal of the administering authority to establish a Commonwealth of Micronesia and urging that the administering authority submit that Commonwealth proposal to the people of the Mariana Islands District for endorsement and to proceed with its implementation in the Marianas until the people of the other districts are ready to decide their future political status.

Resolution No. 11 - 1970, passed on August 20, 1970, extended an invitation to the administering authority to meet and discuss with the Mariana Islands District Legislature the proposal to establish a Commonwealth of Micronesia.

Resolution No. 13 - 1970, passed on August 24, 1970, requested this honorable body to recognize the cultural differences between the districts of the Trust Territory and to allow each district to determine its own political future.

Resolution No. 30 - 1971, passed on February 19, 1971, that the Security Council and the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations that the Mariana Islands District will secede from the Trust Territory by force of arms if necessary.

These resolutions clearly manifest the deep seated wishes of our people to seek their desired future political determination that we are confident will be achieved, hopefully with the blessings of this honorable body whose assistance to the inhabitants of the Trust Territory has been of immeasurable proportions.

Mr. President, the underlying fact expressed in the resolutions mentioned above is the desire of the Marianas peoples to belong.

Our history is one of third parties deciding our fate? One need only review our history of control by the Spanish from the 16th century, the Germans from 1898 to 1923, the Japanese (League of Nations) from 1923 to 1947, and the United States (United Nations) from 1947 to the present to understand that we long now to belong on our terms and in accordance with our freely expressed wishes. There is no doubt in my mind that great economic, social and educational developments will take place if we are successful in gaining permanent association with the United States of America.

In furtherance of this manifested desire, the Mariana Islands District Legislature has enacted a law that would provide for the establishment of the Marianas Future Political Status Commission. Pursuant to Law No. 1-1972 and Resolution No. 1-1972, I am inserting this law into the record for your review and information.

On behalf of our people of the Mariana Islands District Legislature, I wish to again express our deep and sincere appreciation to the members of this honorable body for all of its assistance and understanding.

Thank you.