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Joint statement by Ambassador Franklin Haydn Williams, The President's Personal Representative for Micronesian Status Negotiations and Senator Edward DLG Pangelinan, Chairman of the Marianas Political Status Commission

Ambassador Franklin Haydn Williams, the President's Personal Representative for Micronesian Status Negotiations, and Senator Edward DLG Pangelinan and President Vicente N. Santos, Chairman and Vice-Chairman, respectively, of the MPSC, met on Guam on Wednesday, August 29 to discuss the steps now underway in the ongoing negotiations toward the future political status of the Mariana Islands District.

The Ambassador was happy to accept an invitation to meet jointly on Saipan with the Marianas District Legislature and the Micronesian Political Status Commission to review current activities and the progress of the sub-committees now at work on each side.

These sub-committees have been set up in accordance with an agreement outlined in the Joint Communique of June 4 at the conclusion of the second session of talks on Saipan. They are working in such fields as legal aspects of the envisaged status arrangement, economics and finance, and land. At the meeting, which was held on Friday afternoon, August 31, it was noted in connection with the important subject of land, that a U.S. mission from the OMSN had recently visited Saipan to explore more fully and make recommendations concerning the handling of the public land question in the Marianas. The Ambassador reported that its findings are under active consideration by his office. Similarly, it was noted that with respect to the special land situation and U.S. military requirements on Tinian, two U.S. survey teams, one Navy and one Air Force, have made preliminary visits to the island and that more will be coming for the purpose of acquiring sufficient technical information to facilitate the negotiations.

The Ambassador, the Senator and the President agreed that approximately

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two months would be required to examine the results of the studies which have been launched. They therefore agreed tentatively that the next meeting in the Marianas Status Negotiations series should take place after mid-November probably opening November 19 on Saipan.

In addition to these matters, the meeting on Guam welcomed further exchanges on the question of homestead and new business permits for use of public lands on Tinian. The subject was also discussed at the joint session of the MDL/MPSC and the Ambassador agreed that advance consultation and better communication between the two sides were necessary, and the parties concerned stated that they would endeavor to keep this need in mind as the negotiations proceed.