

Status Talks Seen In June



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SAIPAN (MNS) - The next round of negotiations between the U.S. government and the Joint Committee on Future Status of the Congress of Micronesia probably will take place in early June on Saipan, according to Sen. Lazarus Salii of Palau, chairman of the joint committee.

The senator said the date and location will be proposed by his committee to the U.S. side and are subject to U.S. agreement, but that sufficient progress has been made in informal discussions the past five months to warrant another formal round of negotiations.

Salii and two other members of the joint committee met early this month in Carmel, Calif., with Ambassador Franklin Haydn Williams, the President's personal representative for Micronesian Status Negotiations, and other members of the American delegation. The Palau senator reported to his committee on those meetings while on Guam.

"The talks with Ambassador Williams involved a review of the drafts on Titles Four through 12 of the Draft Compact of Free Association," Salii told Micronesian News Service yesterday. "These include the titles on finance, U.S. laws applicable in Micronesia, termination of the compact, trade and commerce, immigration and travel, citizenship and nationality, amending the compact and settlement of disputes."

Asked to comment on rumors that he and Williams had agreed that the status negotiations now will be conducted on the basis of five districts rather than six, excluding the Marianas, Salii said such reports are "absolutely false."

The senator said that while on Guam he and the other committee members also had informal talks with members of the Guam Political Status Commission.