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Position Paper of
Marianas Political Status Commission
Regarding U.S. Military Land
Requirements in the Marianas

The Marianas Political Status Commission has carefully considered the requests made by the United States for land in the Marianas to meet U.S. military requirements. This position paper contains the response of the Commission to these U.S. requests.

1. Farallon de Medinilla: The Commission is willing to make this small, uninhabited island available for continued use as a target area. The Commission requires firm assurances that maximum safety precautions will be enforced by U.S. authorities in connection with United States use of this island.
2. Tanapag Harbor, Saipan: The Commission is willing to make available to the United States almost all of the approximately 320 acres (130 hectares) adjacent to the harbor and south of Charlie Dock requested by the United States. The only portion of this area which the Commission believes should be retained by the Marianas Government is the land south of Charlie Dock to the north side of "A" Dock. The Commission is prepared to commit that this area will be used exclusively for harbor-related purposes. The remainder of the

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320 acres will be available to the United States on the following conditions:

(a) That the United States commits to develop the land principally as a Memorial Park in accord with the preliminary plans announced by the United States and that these plans be further developed on a joint basis between the United States and appropriate Marianas Representatives;

(b) That the United States promises to permit maximum feasible joint use of all land and facilities developed for military purposes, and to make any land which is not used for the Memorial Park or for military purposes available for civilian harbor-related uses if the Marianas Government so requests; and

(c) That the United States promises to enter into a joint venture with the Commonwealth on an appropriate matching fund basis to develop "A" Dock for civilian use consistent with U.S. contingency needs, assuming it has not been developed for military purposes if and when additional dock facilities are required and "A" Dock is the most suitable location for such expansion.

3. Isley Field, Saipan: The Commission is willing to make available to the United States the approximately 500 acres (200 hectares) located immediately south of the runway and within the south boundry road of the airport. This land will be made available on the condition that the United States agrees to consider in good faith future reasonable requests by the Marianas Government for the lease-back of such portions of this land as may be needed for appropriate civilian activities which

are compatible with possible contingent military use of the land by the United States.

4. Tinian: The Commission is willing to make available to the United States land on Tinian for the proposed joint service military base, approximately 17,500 acres (7,080 hectares), in accordance with the plans which the U.S. has presented. The Commission requests the United States to reevaluate its acreage needs in good faith, especially in the area south and east of the northeastern portion of the proposed runway, in order to reduce to a minimum the amount of land which will be taken from our people for military purposes. Land on Tinian will be made available on the following conditions, in addition to the terms of the United States offer:

(a) The Commission requires firm assurances in the formal status agreement and/or in the lease agreement that the Tinian harbor will be controlled by civilian authorities representing the Commonwealth of the Marianas to the maximum extent possible;

(b) The Commission requires firm assurances in the formal status agreement and/or in the lease agreement that civilian users of the harbor will have access on a non-discriminatory basis to harbor facilities and that satisfactory arrangements will be made to accommodate the needs of such civilian users to have facilities which are conveniently located near the dock. It is the Commission's view that these questions should be studied by the proposed Joint Civilian-Military Relations Committee and that the recommendations of this Committee should be reported back to the

parties before the formal status agreement is signed; and

(c) The Commission requires firm assurances in the formal status agreement and/or in the lease agreement that the United States will permit maximum civilian use of the land on the base for agricultural , fishing, recreational or other purposes compatible with the military operation of the base. In particular, the Commission wants substantial land to be made available promptly on appropriate leaseback arrangements for civilian use. The Commission believes that this question, including the extent of land and the terms of the leaseback, should be reviewed by the Joint Civilian-Military Relations Committee and that the Committee's recommendations should be reported back to the parties before the formal status agreement is signed.

The Commission would appreciate an official response by the U.S. Delegation to this statement by the Commission of its position on making land available in the Marianas to meet U.S. military requirements.

If the parties can reach agreement on the terms set forth above, the Commission is prepared to instruct its representatives to the Joint Civilian - Military Relations Committee to begin consideration of the many questions regarding planning and joint use of facilities which have been identified during these negotiations. The Commission recommends that terms of reference for this Committee be agreed to by the parties as was done in connection with the Ad Hoc Preparatory Committee on Transition.

In light of the Commission's response to the U.S. military requirements for land in the Marianas, it might be appropriate to pause a minute and reflect on how far we have come in the past 18 months. These negotiations have been long and difficult. Both sides -- from time to time -- have experienced frustration and disappointment. Nevertheless, we have continued to negotiate in good faith and solemnity on the many complex and sensitive subjects on our agenda. The Commission firmly believes that we have made outstanding progress and that the end of these negotiations is now clearly in sight.

As the U.S. Delegation knows, the Commission's decision regarding U.S. land requirements in the Marianas set forth in this position paper is a highly sensitive one. Many of the residents of Tinian -- perhaps even a majority -- will be opposed to the Commission's position. Tempers run high on this issue; and threats of physical violence have been heard. The members of the Commission must be concerned about popular sentiment on this issue at the same time that they recognize the Commission's responsibility to all of the people of the Marianas and their descendants. We assume that the U.S. Delegation shares this concern, since the extent of opposition on Tinian to U.S. military plans for the island has an obvious bearing on eventual approval or disapproval by the people of the status agreement and the future relations with the civilian community on Tinian.

Based on its experience over the past years, the Commission has some well-considered views on how best to present and defend

its decision to the people of Tinian. It has been the Commission's experience that any commitment regarding U.S. military land requirements is best understood by the people in the context of the overall political and economic benefits of the proposed new political status for the Marianas. In both public and private discussions, we have found many of our citizens receptive to the argument that some sacrifice or concession to the United States is required if the people of the Marianas are to enjoy the advantages of the proposed new status as a Commonwealth within the American political family. The more specific the Commission is able to be regarding the proposed new status, the more persuasive the Commission can be regarding its decision to agree to the U.S. military land requirements in the Marianas.

For this reason, the Commission is not prepared to agree to any public announcement (joint or unilateral) of its decision regarding land requirements until the United States agrees to a satisfactory level of Phase II financial support for the Marianas.

The level of Phase II support is one of the most important outstanding issues in these negotiations. It has been publicly identified as one of the two most important items on the agenda of this session of the negotiations, the other being U.S. military land requirements. The positions of both parties as of the end of the last session are publicly known. The Commission has substantially revised its position on Phase II financial support and

presented its views in a detailed position paper on May 15, 1974. The Commission awaits the official response of the U.S. Delegation to our Phase II proposal. As soon as agreement on this subject is reached, the Commission is prepared to join in an announcement which reports the tentative agreement of the parties on both agenda items --U.S. land requirements and Phase II financial support.