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PRESS RELEASE - AMERICAN MEMORIAL PARK

In the current round of negotiations between the Marianas Political Status Commission and the United States, Ambassador Williams has elaborated on preliminary plans by the United States for an American Memorial Park in the Micro Beach area of Saipan. This area, from Micro Beach road northward to "A" Dock and extending westward to Wallace Highway, is part of an area required by the United States for contingency purposes. Since there are no present military use requirements, Ambassador Williams last December proposed a large living memorial park for the area honoring both Americans, and Chamorros and Carolinians who lost their lives in the Northern Marianas in World War II.

At a meeting last March with Senator Edward DLG Pangelinan and Legislature President Vicente Santos, Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Marianas Political Status Commission and Marianas District Administrator Francisco Ada, Ambassador Williams presented a conceptual design of the park. The plan called for extensive landscaping of the area and included family picnic sites, wooded trails, a small boat marina, and an arboretum and botanical garden. Also proposed were areas for sports and recreation,

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including a swimming pool, tennis and basketball courts and field games. A revised plan, presented last week, also includes a public amphitheatre which was suggested by the Marianas leadership last March as a possible memorial to people of these islands who lost their lives in World War II.

In his most recent comments, Ambassador Williams reemphasized that the park would be "a living memorial to our loved ones to be used and enjoyed by all the people of the Marianas." Both delegations to the negotiations agreed the park would be a major step for the conservation of the Micro Beach and marina area.

In meetings in Washington prior to this session of status talks, the heads of the Departments of Defense and Interior, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Director of the Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations met to discuss the American Memorial Park and commissioned Interior's Bureau of Outdoor Recreation to submit a phased development plan. This will be made available to the Marianas leadership for additional input and suggestions. Subject to final approval by the United States Government, the

Marianas Political Status Commission, and local authorities, actual construction of the park could begin as soon as the political status question for the Marianas is settled but it is hoped that the land clearing phase can begin sooner.