

STATEMENT OF EDWARD DLG. PANGELINAN
BEFORE THE UNITED NATIONS TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL
MAY 28, 1975

Mr. President, and distinguished members of the United Nations Trusteeship Council, I am Edward DLG. Pangelinan, Chairman of the Marianas Political Status Commission from Saipan. It is my privilege once again to appear before this august body as a petitioner from the Mariana Island District on behalf of the members of the Marianas Political Status Commission. With me this morning are members of the Marianas Political Status Commission: Dr. Francisco T. Palacios, Mr. Jose R. Cruz and Senator Pedro A. Tenorio. Also with me, and appearing as a petitioner is Olympio T. Borja, who represents the people of the Marianas in the Senate of the Congress of Micronesia. Each of us will address this body on various aspects relative to our future political status in the Marianas. On behalf of our delegation I wish to extend to you and the members of the Trusteeship Council our appreciation for the opportunity to appear before the Council as petitioners. We bring to you the warm greetings and Hafa Adai from the people of the Marianas.

Some three years ago I appeared before you as one of the petitioners to inform the Trusteeship Council

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I have requested transcripts from U.S.U.N.

~~Edward DLG~~

that the people of the Marianas had made the most significant decision in their lives, to pursue separate status negotiations for the people of the Marianas. At that time I also indicated to you that the Mariana Islands District Legislature had established the Marianas Political Status Commission for the purpose of negotiating a close and enduring political relationship with the United States of America. The creation of the Status Commission marked the culmination of approximately twenty years of expression by the people of the Marianas to join with the United States of America in a relationship that is best suited to the people of our islands. Since the establishment of the Status Commission I have had the honor of serving as its Chairman.

In pursuit of its mandate, the Status Commission undertook an extensive study and review of various political relationships that could be adopted to meet the aspirations of the people of the Marianas. Over the course of the past two and one-half years the Status Commission negotiated with the President's Personal Representative, leading to a Commonwealth relationship with the United States. The progress of the Status Commission in its negotiating efforts was reviewed with you by members of our Commission during the past two years and the records of our negotiations have been presented to you as they developed.

On February 15, 1975 the Marianas Political Status Commission concluded its negotiations with the United States of America by signing a Status Agreement which we call a "Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America." It is my privilege on behalf of the Status Commission to formally present to you copies of that Covenant and other documents relating to the negotiations. Subsequent to the signing of the Covenant, the Marianas Political Status Commission reported to the District Legislature its activities pursuant to its mandate under District Law 3-124. After extensive consideration by the District Legislature, the Covenant was unanimously adopted in a resolution by the District Legislature. This resolution is attached in one of our exhibits for your record.

In addition to this Resolution, I am presenting to you copies of other Resolutions which indicate the activities of the Legislature since their approval of the Covenant. Of particular concern to you is Resolution No. 126-1975, which respectfully requests the United States of America as Administering Authority of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands to set a date and call a plebiscite in the Mariana Islands District relative to the Covenant. As a result of this Resolution the United States responded by issuing Secretarial Order No. 2973 which established

the procedures for the calling of such a plebiscite.

The President of the United States, through a proclamation, has appointed Edwin Canham to be the Plebiscite Commissioner and has set June 17, 1975 as the date for holding a plebiscite relative to the Covenant in the Mariana Islands District. The same Secretarial Order invites the Trusteeship Council to send observers to the Marianas for the plebiscite. As of today, the Plebiscite Commissioner has successfully registered over 5,4000 voters in the Marianas and is now conducting an extensive political education program for the purpose of informing the people of our islands of the implications of the Covenant. Concurrently the Marianas Political Status Commission and a committee created by the District Legislature is undertaking similar efforts to enlighten our people. Dr. Francisco T. Palacios will speak on political education generally and specifically on the activities of the Status Commission relative to its political education program.

I would like to review with you briefly the major provisions of the Covenant. The Covenant, in essence, has ten major articles. Article I addresses itself to the political relationship which the people of the Marianas will enter into under a commonwealth relationship with the United States of America. Of particular concern, the Article guarantees the people of the Marianas maximum

self-government. In this fashion the people of the Marianas will be able to formulate and adopt their own Constitution and will have the power to modify and change provisions of their Constitution without hindrance from the United States government. Of significant importance, the Covenant provides that the fundamental aspects of the political relationship cannot be changed without the consent of both of the parties.

Article II provides the internal mechanism by which the people of the Marianas will formulate and establish their Constitution and the scope of the control of the people of the Marianas over their internal affairs.

Article III provides the opportunity for the people of the Marianas to acquire U.S. citizenship or U.S. nationality as each individual may choose.

Article IV provides that the United States federal courts will be extended to the people of the Marianas as additional guarantees of the protection of individual rights and the opportunity afforded to all people to seek redress within the framework of the United States judicial system.

Article V provides for a formula in which federal laws will be made applicable or inapplicable to the Marianas.

Article VI deals with provisions regarding revenue and taxation in the Marianas.

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Article VII describes the scope and range of federal financial assistance, services and programs to the people of the Marianas.

Article VIII addresses itself to the question of land and military land requirements for the Marianas. I would like to point out that Article VIII is accompanied in the Covenant by a Technical Agreement which describes the responsibilities and the obligations of the parties relative to the land requirement by the United States Government for defense purposes.

Article IX addresses itself to the question of consultation and representation of the people of the Marianas in the United States government.

Article X provides for the effective dates of the various provisions of the Covenant and also defines certain terminology used in the Covenant.

Please note that there are two additional documents included along with the Covenant, the Technical Agreement which I have already indicated describes the relationship of U.S. military and Marianas civil authorities, and the Negotiating History which states the intention of the parties as to certain major provisions of the Covenant.

Mr. President, before I ask that Dr. Palacios be recognized, I want to thank the Council again for its courtesy and to ask it to extend its continued support to the

people of the Marianas in their quest to exercise their right of self-determination. Upon these conclusions of our remarks, our delegation will be most pleased to answer any questions that you, Mr. President, or any of the members of the Council may have.

Thank you.