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Ford Pledges Early Action On Mariana Islands Tie

WASHINGTON, June 20 (Reuters) — President Ford today promised an early effort to urge Congress to associate the northern Mariana Islands in the Pacific with the United States.

The President, in a statement, hailed the outcome of a plebiscite on Tuesday in the tiny trust territories that heavily favored a commonwealth covenant with the United States along the lines of that of Puerto Rico.

"I intend to submit without delay the covenant to the Congress with my strong endorsement for its early favorable action," the President said.

"It is my earnest hope that we may look forward to further steps in the near future which will move the people of the northern Mariana Islands still closer to the long-desired ultimate goal of political union with the United States," he added.