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THIRD INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF COLONIALISM

**Pacific regional seminar on the implementation of the Third International Decade for
the Eradication of Colonialism: accelerating action**

Denarau, Nadi, Fiji
21 to 23 May 2014

STATEMENT BY

MR. EDWARD A. ALVAREZ

(GUAM)

STATEMENT

OF THE

NON-SELF GOVERNING TERRITORY OF GUAM

TO THE

PACIFIC REGIONAL SEMINAR ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE THIRD DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF
COLONIALISM

IN

NADI, FIJI

FROM 21 MAY TO 23 MAY 2014

PREPARED AND PRESENTED BY: EDWARD A. ALVAREZ - EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR, COMMISSION ON DECOLONIZATION

HAGA ADAI CHAIRMAN XAVIER LASSO MENDOZA. FIRST OFF, OUR GOVERNOR, EDDIE BAZA CALVO WOULD LIKE TO CONGRATULATE YOU ON YOUR SELECTION AS CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE OF 24! OUR DELEGATION BELIEVES THESE ARE EXCITING TIMES FOR DECOLONIZATION BASED ON THE RECENT U.N. MISSION TO NEW CALEDONIA AND THE LISTING OF TAHITI AS A NON -SELF GOVERNING TERRITORY, IN ADDITION TO ALL THE OTHER WORK THE COMMITTEE HAS ENGAGED IN RELATIVE TO THE REMAINING CASES. WE HOPE THE COMMITTEE CONTINUES TOWARD THE PATH OF DECOLONIZING THE REMAINING TERRITORIES AND THAT MORE MISSIONS WILL FOLLOW IN THE FUTURE! WHILE WE ARE ALMOST HALFWAY THROUGH THIS DECADE, IN OUR OPINION, THERE HAS BEEN PROGRESS AND WE APPLAUD AND ENCOURAGE THIS TO FURTHER DEVELOP UNDER YOUR LEADERSHIP.

IN THE CASE OF GUAM, I AM PROUD TO REPORT THAT FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MANY YEARS, THE GUAM COMMISSION ON DECOLONIZATION HAS A BUDGET REQUEST IN OUR LEGISLATURE FOR ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS TO BEGIN THE PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAM THAT WE COULD ONLY TALK ABOUT THREE YEARS AGO. WHILE THIS IS MONEY IS ONLY A SMALL MOUNT COMPARED TO WHAT IS NEEDED FOR A FULL ON PROGRAM. IT IS A GOOD START! AS WAS RELAYED AT THE 2011 UN SEMINAR IN THE ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINE ISLANDS, GUAM WAS IN A GRAVE FINANCIAL STATE WHEN WE TOOK

OFFICE THAT YEAR, AND I COULD NOT COMMIT ANY MONIES TO THIS EFFORT AT THAT TIME. BUT THROUGH SHEER FINANCIAL PRUDENCE AND FRUGALITY, COUPLED WITH TOUGH FISCAL POLICY, GUAM HAS GREATLY IMPROVED ITS FINANCIAL CONDITION TO THE POINT THAT ITS DEFICIT OF HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS HAS BEEN ERASED! TODAY, GUAM IS PERHAPS THE ONLY U.S. TERRITORY WITH A STABLE ECONOMY HOWEVER, WE CONTINUE TO BE PRAGMATIC AND CLOSELY MONITOR THIS ASPECT OF OUR GOVERNMENT AND ARE CONFIDENT THAT WE WILL CONTINUE FUNDING THE COMMISSION IN THE FUTURE.

CHAIRMAN MENDOZA, THIS MONEY WILL BE USED TO FOR A VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES SUCH AS WEBSITES, TV PROGRAMS, AND CONFERENCES. COMMISSION WEBSITES AND THE USE OF THE INTERNET WILL GO A LONG WAY TO REACH OUT TO OUR YOUNG ADULTS WHO FREQUENT THESE MEDIUMS AS A WAY TO GET INFORMATION AND KEEP UP TO DATE WITH CURRENT EVENTS. TV PROGRAMS CAN BE PRODUCED TO BE PLAYED ON PUBLIC ACCESS CHANNELS SUCH AS THE LEGISLATIVE AND GOVERNOR'S CHANNEL, AS WELL AS OUR PUBLIC BROADCASTING SYSTEM CHANNEL. IN THIS VEIN, THE COMMISSION MAY REQUEST OUR CABLE COMPANIES TO PLAY THESE PROGRAMS PRO BONO ON THEIR STATIONS. WE HOPE THE RESPONSE WILL BE ONE OF TEAMWORK AND COOPERATION WITH THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE BEST INTEREST OF OUR PEOPLE

IN MIND. HOPEFULLY, THE MESSAGING SURROUNDING THIS ISSUE WILL MAKE GREAT STRIDES TOWARD CLARIFYING ONCE AND FOR ALL WHAT IT IS ALL ABOUT AND HOW IT EFFECTS PEOPLE'S DAILY LIVES, AND MOST OF ALL, THAT OUR POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR ADMINISTERING POWER NEEDS TO BE MODERNIZED!

IN THE MEANTIME, THE COMMISSION REMAINS ACTIVE IN ITS PUBLIC AWARENESS PROGRAM REACHING OUT TO THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HIGH SCHOOLS TO CONDUCT PRESENTATIONS TO STUDENTS ABOUT THE CORRECT MESSAGING REGARDING DECOLONIZATION.

SIMULTANEOUSLY, IT DOES THE SAME WITH CIVIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS, ATTEMPTING TO QUELL THE SPREADING OF MIS- INFORMATION BY THE MEDIA, WHO UNFORTUNATELY CONTINUE TO DISTORT AND CONFUSE OUR PUBLIC. ALTHOUGH THIS IS NOTHING NEW, I HOPE ONE DAY SOON, THIS WILL STOP BECAUSE WHAT MAY END UP HAPPENING IS OUR VOTING PUBLIC MIGHT BECOME UNSURE ON WHAT TO BELIEVE, OR NO LONGER WANT TO KNOW WHAT TO BELIEVE. LET ME MAKE IT CLEAR THAT NOT ALL MEDIA SUBSCRIBE TO THIS PRACTICE, BUT FOR THOSE WHO DO, A GREAT DISSERVICE IS DONE TO OUR PEOPLE AND THIS IS NOT THE GOAL OF JOURNALISM! CHAIRMAN MENDOZA, WE ARE DOING OUR SHARE TO REACH OUR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES WHEN IT COMES TO OUR DECOLONIZATION PROCESS, BUT WE CAN CERTAINLY USE SOME MORE HELP.

PARTICULARLY, IN REFERENCE TO THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF

INTERIOR FUNDING THAT APPEARS TO HAVE BECOME A FLEETING MYSTERY. ON TWO OCCASIONS, THE COMMISSION DID ITS DUE DILIGENCE BY FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS FROM THIS DEPARTMENT, IN ONE INSTANCE, WE WERE INSTRUCTED TO WRITE A BUDGET PROPOSAL IN 2012, WHICH WE LATER LEARNED WAS NOT THE RIGHT FORMAT. THE SECOND INSTANCE CALLED FOR A GRANT PROPOSAL, WHICH WAS WRITTEN IN NOVEMBER 2012, BUT AGAIN WITH NO RESULT. A LETTER WAS SENT IN JULY 2013 AGAIN WITH NO RESPONSE. THUS, WHILE IT APPEARED THE COMMISSION DID NOT SUBMIT ANYTHING, I'D LIKE TO STATE FACTUALLY THAT THIS IS NOT THE CASE. ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, WE ARE GOING TO CONTINUE TO PURSUE THIS MONEY AND WOULD APPRECIATE ANY ASSISTANCE THIS COMMITTEE CAN PROVIDE. I WAS PLEASED TO KNOW THAT AFTER BEING ABSENT FOR SO MANY YEARS, THE U.S. REPRESENTATIVE TO THIS SEMINAR ATTENDED LAST YEAR IN ECUADOR AND I HOPE TO CONTINUE DIALOGUE THIS YEAR IN SOME SHAPE OR FORM. CHAIRMAN MENDOZA, IN LIGHT OF ALL THE ABOVE, I RESPECTFULLY REMIND THE COMMITTEE TO FOLLOW THROUGH WITH THE RESOLUTIONS IT HAS PASSED THROUGHOUT THE DECADES. THE PEOPLE OF GUAM ARE STILL HOPEFUL THIS ISSUE WILL BECOME REALITY AND IT IS ONLY RIGHT THAT GUAM AND THE OTHER REMAINING TERRITORIES EXERCISE THIS INALIENABLE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION, SOMETHING WE ALL SHOULD OF DONE LONG

AGO.

FURTHERMORE, THERE IS STILL THIS SENSE OF URGENCY TO EXPEDITE THIS PROCESS AND BRING THIS MATTER FROM THOUGHT TO THEME AND FROM THEME TO RESOLUTION. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT ALL THE REMAINING TERRITORIES HAVE MORE THAN EARNED THIS RIGHT THROUGH HISTORICAL SUFFERANCE, BUT THIS IS THE VERY REASON THE COMMITTEE EXISTS AND I HOPE WE ALL AGREE THAT ANOTHER DECADE TO ERADICATE COLONIALISM ONLY LENDS ITSELF TO JUSTICE ONCE AGAIN DENIED! AND THIS IS A ROAD NONE OF US WANT TO GO DOWN.

IN CLOSING, I WANT TO REITERATE THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT THE ELECTORAL OFFICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS BEGIN TO SUPPLY INFORMATION ON THE POLITICAL STATUS OPTIONS, SINCE THE LACK OF THIS IS WHAT IMPEDES THE TERRITORIES FROM UNDERSTANDING MORE ABOUT THE THREE STATUS OPTIONS. THE LACK OF THIS FUNDAMENTAL INFORMATION IS WHAT STYMIES GUAM AND IMPEDES OUR PATH TO DECOLONIZATION, AND IN THE END, TERRITORIES WILL END UP TAKING THIS ON WITH LIMITED RESOURCES.

2. THAT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ENDORSE A WORK PROGRAM FOR THE DECOLONIZATION OF EACH TERRITORY. THIS CANNOT GO FORWARD WITHOUT THE ADMINISTERING POWER FURNISHING

INFORMATION ON THE TERRITORY. THUS, THE PROCESS BECOMES
QUITE LIMITED, AND IN THE END, NEVER IMPLEMENTED.

3. THAT THE CONDUCT OF PERIODIC ANALYSIS BE UNDERTAKEN ON
THE PROGRESS AND EXTENT OF THE DECOLONIZATION DECLARATION
IN EACH TERRITORY. WHILE WORKING PAPERS ARE IMPORTANT
DOCUMENTS, THEY ARE NOT THE TYPE OF DOCUMENTS CALLED FOR
IN THE RESOLUTIONS. WITHOUT SUCH ANALYSIS, IT IS DIFFICULT FOR
MEMBER STATES TO UNDERSTAND HOW NON SELF GOVERNING
TERRITORIES HAVE TAKEN OVER TIME DUE TO THE LACK OF
IMPLEMENTATION OF DECOLONIZATION RESOLUTIONS.

4. FINALLY, AND ONCE AGAIN, WE CALL ON THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE
TO IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GENERAL
ASSEMBLY, AND IMPLEMENT THEM AS A MATTER OF URGENCY.
OTHERWISE, THE ROLE OF OUR DECOLONIZATION WILL FADE INTO
LESSER IMPORTANCE, AND THE TENDENCY TO LEGITIMIZE THE
UNEQUAL TERRITORIAL RELATIONSHIPS MAY BE TOO DIFFICULT TO
RESIST.

CHAIRMAN MENDOZA, THANK YOU ONCE AGAIN FOR THE
OPPORTUNITY TO TESTIFY HERE TODAY. WE HOPE THE WORK OF THIS
COMMITTEE AND OUR TESTIMONY WILL SERVE AS A FOUNDATION
FOR ACTION TO BE TAKEN IN A TIMELY MATTER. THANK YOU!