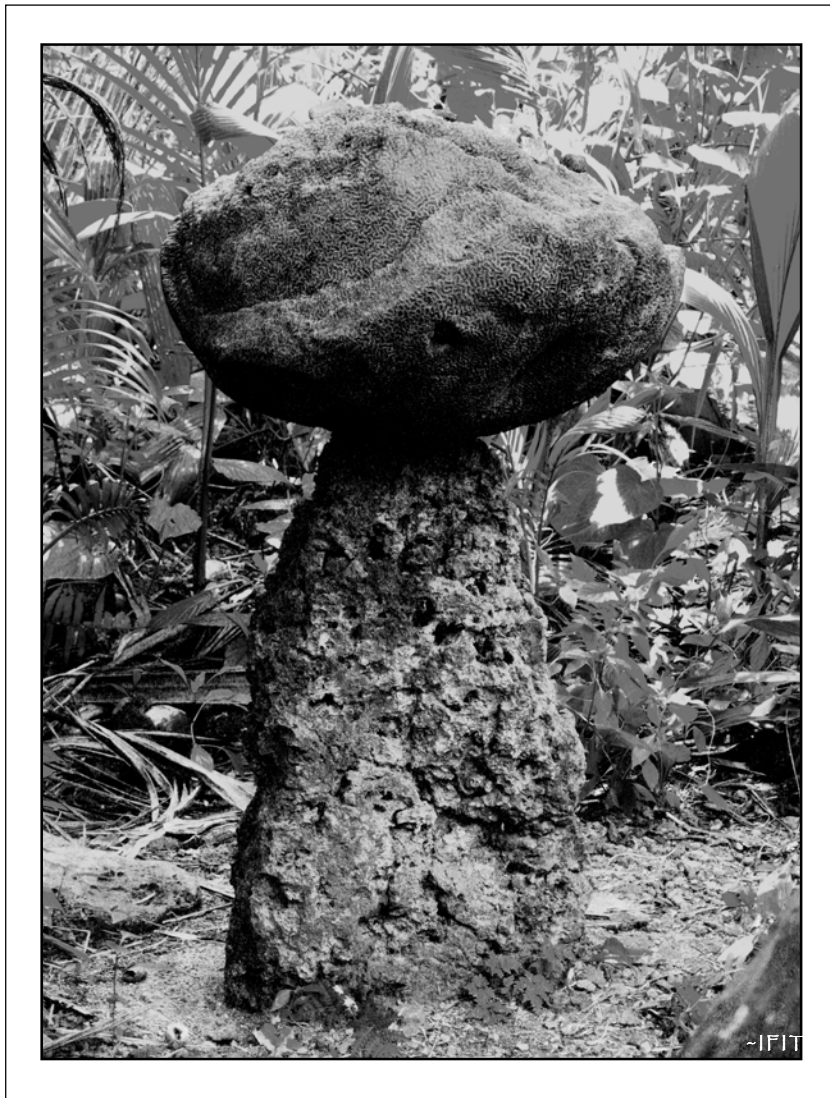


HITA GUÅHAN!



**Chamoru Testimonies to the United Nations
New York, NY - 2008**

FANOHGGE CHAMORU

HYMN OF GUÅHAN

Fanohge Chamoru put i tano'-ta, kanta i ma tunã-ña gi todú i lugát.
Para i Onra, para i Gloria; Abiba i isla sen parat
Para i onra, para i gloria; abiba i isla sen parat

U todú i tiempo i pas para hita, yan ginen i langet na bendesion.
Kontra i piligru, na'fansãfo' ham; Yu'os prutehi i islan Guåhan
Kontra i piligru, na'fansãfo' ham; Yu'os prutehi i islan Guåhan

Translated in English:

Stand Chamorros for our land, and sing her praise from shore to shore
For her honor, for her glory, exalt our island forever more.
For her honor, for her glory, exalt our island forever more.

The time has come for peace for all of us, and for heaven's blessing to come
Against all perils, do not forsake us, God protect our island of Guåhan
Against all perils, do not forsake us, God protect our island of Guåhan.

CHAMORU INIFRESI

PLEDGE OF GUÅHAN

Ginen i mas takhelo' gi Hinasso-ku, i mas takhalom gi Kurason-hu, yan i mas figo'
na Nina'siñã-hu, Hu ufresen maisa yu' para bai hu Prutehi, yan hu Difende i
Hinengge, i Kottura, i Lengguahi, i Aire, i Hanom yan i tano' Chamoru, ni'lrensiã-ku
Direchu ginen as Yu'os Tãta. Este hu Afitma gi hilo' i biphia yan i banderã-hu, i
banderan Guåhan.

Translated in English:

From the highest of my thoughts, from the deepest of my heart, and with the
utmost of my strength, I offer myself to protect and to defend the beliefs, the
culture, the language, the air, the water and the land of the Chamoru, which are
our inherent God-given rights. This I will affirm by the holy words and our
banner, the flag of Guåhan!

On the Cover: *Latte* (*lat-tee*) are large pillars built by the indigenous Chamoru people of the Mariana Islands. They consist of a tall base (*haligi*) made of limestone and basalt, and a stone cap (*tãsa*) resting at the top. These pillars support the sacred centers (homes) of the village, and range from **6 to 20 columns of latte** serving as a base for the home.

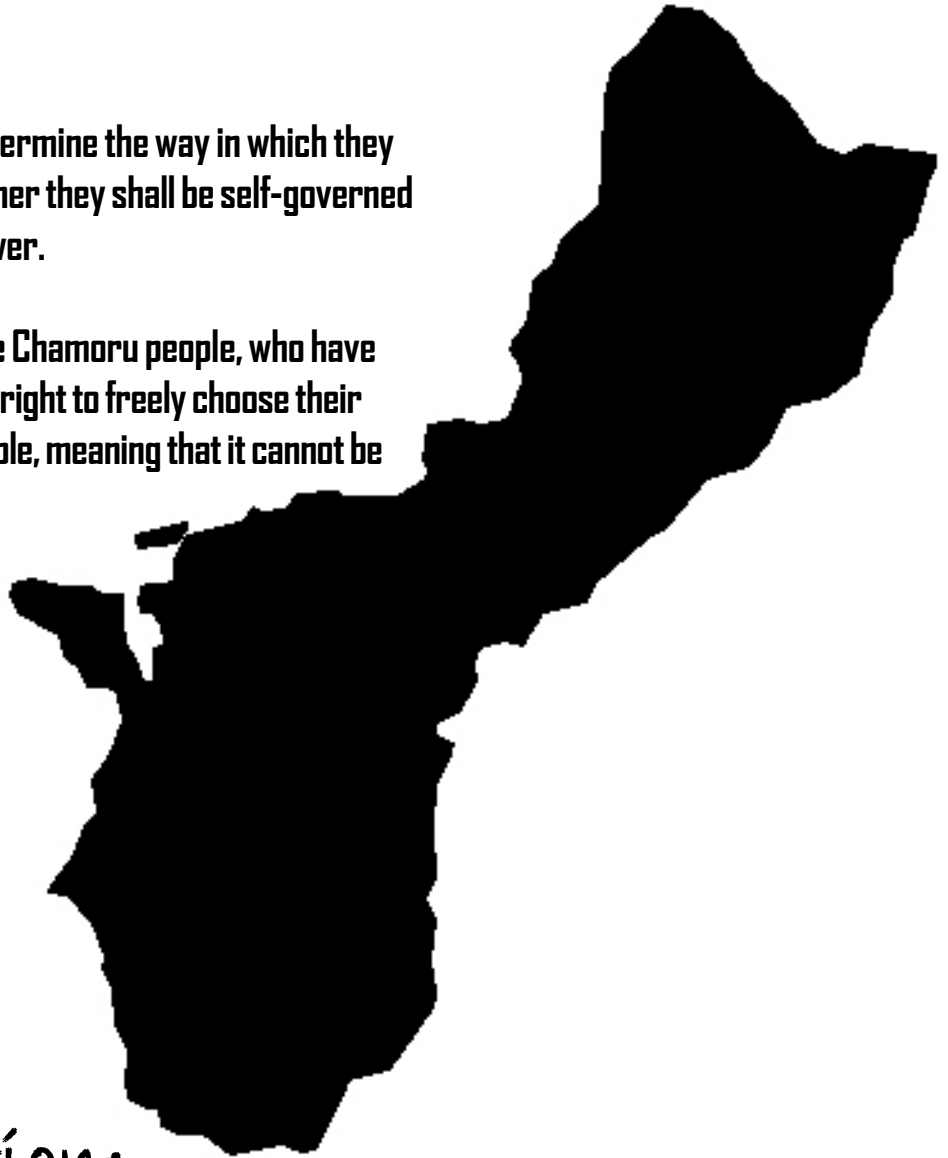


Chamoru Self-Determination:

· I Direchon I Taotao

· The right of a people to determine the way in which they shall be governed and whether they shall be self-governed or governed by another power.

· This Right is inherent in the Chamoru people, who have been historically denied the right to freely choose their political future; it is inalienable, meaning that it cannot be bought, sold or transferred.



Decolonization:

■ The process of achieving self-determination by a colonial or dependent territory is known as decolonization.

■ In 1946, The United States placed Guam on the United Nations List of Non-Self Governing Territories (list of colonies to be decolonized).

■ Guam remains one of 16 Non-Self-Governing Territories, and mounting evidence exists that Guam's administering power, the United States of America, has neglected its moral and legal obligation to allow for the self-determination and ensure the economic, social and cultural well-being of the Chamoru people.



"Sovereignty can be defined as an inalienable right for all people to exist as a nation in their own land. Chamorus have this inalienable right and the inherent responsibility to protect the land, water, air, spirituality, language and culture in order for our people to survive."

**-Angel Leon Guerrero Santos
I Nasion Chamoru: "Chamoru Nation"
November 9, 1991**

CHAMORUS ADDRESS UNITED NATIONS

Groups connect increased militarization to Guam's continuing status as a US colony



Hita Guåhan is a compilation of testimonies presented by Chamorus from Guåhan to the United Nations in New York in 2008. These testimonies carry on the legacy of more than 20 years of Chamorus who've appealed to the United Nations on behalf of Guam and Chamoru human rights.

On October 7, 2008, a delegation of Chamorus testified in front of the United Nations Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) on the question of Guåhan's continued colonization. For the first time in years, the Committee received testimony from a Guåhan elected official. Senator Vicente Pangelinan prepared a testimony, read by Chamoru attorney Aileen Quan. The rest of the delegation included Victoria-Lola Leon Guerrero of I Nasion Chamoru, Craig Santos Perez of Guåhan Indigenous Collective, and

Michael A. Tun'cap of Famoksaian. The delegates discussed the cumulative adverse impacts of U.S. colonization and the current military build-up, highlighting such issues as environmental contamination, Chamoru displacement, alarming cancer rates, and the infrastructural strains expected from the island's unprecedented population boom—which will make the Chamoru people a minority group in our homeland. The Chamoru delegation also met personally with UN Fourth Committee Chairman Jorge Arguello of Argentina, and world leaders from the Philippines, Indonesia, and the Virgin Islands to discuss ways to successfully expedite Guåhan's Chamoru self-determination process.

On June 11, 2008, the Special Committee on Decolonization (Committee of 24) heard the testimony of Sabina Flores Perez. The Committee of 24 reviews the political, economic and social situation in each of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories on the United Nations list, including Guåhan. In her testimony, Perez stressed the urgency of protecting the right of Chamorus to self-determination in the face of intensified militarization by the administering Power, insisting that the United States' \$15 billion plans to further transform Guåhan into a forward base had been developed without the informed consent and against the will of the Chamoru people.

On May 2, 2008, the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues at its Seventh Session adopted recommendations to implement the U.N.'s dormant decolonization agenda. These recommendations were based on the conclusions of a half-day discussion on the Pacific region where a host of non-governmental organizations expressed concerns for the lack of implementation of the United Nations decolonization mandate, and offered solutions to jump-start the process. Julian Aguon played a major role in this discussion with his presentation of a collective intervention from I Nasion Chamoru and affiliated indigenous Chamoru organizations. The intervention was also supported by: Society for Threatened Peoples International (ECOSOC); CORE (ECOSOC); Western Shoshone Defense Project; Flying Eagle Woman Fund (ECOSOC); Mohawk Nation at Kahmawake; Cultural Development and Research Institute; Famoksaian; Organization of People for Indigenous Rights; Colonized Chamoru Coalition; Chamoru Landowners Association; Chamoru Language Teachers Association; Guahan Indigenous Collective; Hurao, Inc.; Landowners United; Chamoru Veterans Association; and Fuetsan Famaloan. Aguon argued that "massive military expansion (on Guåhan) exacts devastating consequences on the Chamoru people...who already suffer the signature maladies of a colonial condition." He went further to explain that "this aggressive militarization of our homeland endangers our fundamental and inalienable right to self-determination, the exercise of which our administering power, the United States, has strategically denied us – in glaring betrayal of its international obligations under the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; UN General Assembly Resolution 1514, to name but some."

From the Soul and Spirit of Our Ancestors



Hafa Adai distinguished members of the United Nations Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) and Chairman, H.E. Mr. Jorge Arguello,

Ginen y anti y espiritu yan y man fotna na taotao Guahan na hu presenta este na testimonu, yan u fan libre y taotao pagu. It is from the soul and the spirit of our ancestors that I present this testimony today for the liberation of the people today.

I am Vicente Lino Cabrera Pangelinan, a seven term Senator in the Guam Legislature here today to present my position as an elected representative of the people of Guam on the question of Guam before this body.

It is not only the right of the native inhabitants that this body is chartered with advancing, it is the protection of that right in an environment that allows for it to exercise in its purest form. The development of the island and the recent decisions by our administering authority dilutes our right to self-determination every single day that we are denied this right.

Our desire is clear and our policy reflected in the laws that we have enacted. I come before this body to petition for action and support from this body.

This year, my office re-vitalized the registration of our native inhabitants and their descendants to identify those in our homeland that are vested with this most basic of human rights, the right to self-determination. I will be seeking additional financial resources to accelerate this registration and will again petition our administering authority to provide us with the financial and technical resources to advance this process to its ultimate conclusion; the conducting of a plebiscite and the vote by the people.

I request that this body lay before the representatives of our administering authority to this most august body this petition and apply all its resources to move our administering authority to comply with our request. We should not be made to wait for another day, for another day we do not have. Their actions and expansion of their military presence, the most massive military undertaking in the movement of military personnel since World War Two (these are their words) is making sure that if and when that day comes, it will not be a day that belongs to the colonized people of Guahan.

Our inalienable right to self-determination, as affirmed by General Resolutions 1514 and 1541, and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples must be enforced by this body. We have sustained its ever threatening existence by actions of our administering authority and we come before you to attest to this.

The Fourth Committee must immediately enact the process of decolonization for Guahan, home to a colonized people, the Chamorros. This process must include a fully funded and far-reaching education campaign informing all Chamorus from Guahan of our right to self-determination and decolonization options.

I thank you again for the opportunity to present this most urgent petition in my capacity as an elected representative of the people of Guam

*-Sinangan Si Senadot Vicente Lino Cabrera Pangelinan
Liheslaturan Guahan
-Testified at the UN by Ailene Quan*



-IFIT



Protect: land, water, air, spirituality, language, culture & human rights



Hafa Adai distinguished members of the United Nations Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) and Chairman, H.E. Mr. Jorge Arguello,

Guahu si Victoria-Lola Leon Guerrero. Dankolo na si yu'us ma'ase (thank you very much) for allowing me to address this very important international body. I am here on behalf of the Chamoru grassroots organization "I Nasion Chamoru," which was established in 1991 to proclaim the existence of the Chamoru people as a nation. I Nasion Chamoru celebrates the 4,000 year old history of the Chamoru people in our islands, and vows to protect the land, water, air, spirituality, language, culture and human rights of the Chamoru people. I Nasion Chamoru members have addressed this committee for several years, including our maga'haga (female leader) Debbie Quinata, who sends her regards.

I also represent the voices and opinions of my relatives and elders on Guåhan (Guam), who work daily to fight the continued colonization and militarization of our island. I carry the same message that has been presented to this committee for over two decades by Chamoru community leaders and elected officials like former Senator Hope Cristobal, former Congressman Robert Underwood and Ed Benavente. I fight the same fight that took the lives of Ron Rivera and former Senator and founder of I Nasion Chamoru Angel Santos. Our message has been loud and clear – the Chamoru people of Guåhan deserve to exercise our basic, inalienable human right to self-determination. But with only two years left in the second decade for the eradication of colonialism, sixty-three years after our administering power added Guåhan to the UN list of Non-Self Governing Territories, and almost fifty years after the UN passed General Assembly Resolutions 1514 (the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples) and 1541 (which estab-

lishes the three options for self-determination), Guåhan remains colonized.

Now, more than ever, the work of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee is needed on Guåhan. In order to truly eradicate colonialism, this committee must work in the interests of the people of Guåhan and not crumble to the demands of our administering power, despite its domineering role in the United Nations. The United States' claims that the Chamoru people's right to self-determination is a

domestic issue that should not involve the United Nations are hypocritical and distract this committee from taking action against the hyper-militarization and continued colonization of Guåhan.

As I stand before you, the US is actively working to drastically expand their military and commercial presence on our island, creating a greater economic and social dependency that does not equip our people for decolonization, but

rather pushes us devastatingly further away from it.

The US, which already occupies one-third of our island for military purposes, plans to move 17,000 Marines and their family members from Okinawa, Japan to Guåhan by 2014. In addition to those plans, the US Navy has begun to enhance its infrastructure, logistics capabilities, and waterfront facilities with the desire to support transient nuclear aircraft carriers, combat logistics force ships, submarines, surface combatants, and high-speed transport ships at their Naval Base. The US Air Force plans to develop a global intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance strike hub at Andersen Air Force Base by hosting various types of aircraft, such as fighters, bombers, tankers, and Global Hawk systems. And the Army plans to place a ballistic missile defense task force on our island.

As cited in the UN Guam Working Paper, David Bice, executive director of the office assigned to orchestrate the





Continued from Page 7

US military build-up, estimates that Guåhan will see an increase of 19,000 military personnel, 20,000 military family members and 20,000 foreign construction workers on the island in the next six years. As a result, Guåhan's small population of 173,000 is expected to increase 34 percent with 59,000 more people. Such a population boom will make the 62,900 Chamorus on the island a minority group in our homeland, where we already struggle to keep our culture and language alive in light of imposed US educational standards that force us to learn English and US history over our native Chamoru tongue and historical understanding of ourselves.

Part of the goal to militarize Guåhan is to reduce the US military's burden on Japanese communities. Guåhan deserves the same respect. But because we remain in possession of the United States, our rights to create economic and social alternatives that free us from being dependent on the US, and help us maintain our culture and language, are being explicitly ignored.

The US military's burden on Guåhan's communities will increase manifold. The military has already begun awarding construction contracts and building on military bases, despite the fact that no official plan has been funded or approved for this military build-up, and no official assessment of the environmental impacts has been completed. The US is conducting an Environmental Impact Study in a rushed two-year timeframe that does not include much participation or input from the island community. And in a preliminary version of that study, the US did not present evidence that the social, cultural or political implications of such a massive population boom and military build-up will be addressed.

Both the US Department of Defense (DOD) and the

Government of Guam face multiple challenges in trying to address the needs associated with this unprecedented military build-up, largely due to colossal uncertainties in the planning process. What is certain is that Guåhan is expected to shoulder the costs and strains of the tremendous infrastructural burden that is this military expansion. The Government of Guam reports that an influx of foreign workers will pull on local emergency care services, medical facilities, public utilities, transportation networks, and the availability of temporary housing.

DOD and Government of Guam officials have said that the island's infrastructure is inadequate to meet the increased demands of the military buildup. For example, the wastewater system serving the central part of the island, where a lot of development is already taking place, is at capacity. At a recent congressional hearing, the governor of Guåhan testified that our island's government would need \$6.1 billion to fund infrastructure upgrades. These costs are separate from the DOD's estimated \$15 billion need for plans within the military bases. Therefore, the United States will not cover the costs of Guåhan's needed infrastructure upgrades, and our local government, which has a current deficit of over \$511 million, will have to put our island in massive debt to meet the needs of our administering power.

According to United States law, Guåhan is a possession of the United States but not part of the United States. This is evidenced in the planning process for the US military build-up on Guåhan. There is no consultation with the people of Guåhan and no regard paid to the needs of our people. The governor, lieutenant governor and their staff have provided input in the planning process, but have no real decision-making power in one of the largest decisions ever



made for the island that will have rippling effects on future generations of Chamorus.

The hyper-militarization of Guåhan is setting delays to the UN decolonization process. In remaining a Non Self-Governing Territory, Guåhan loses its right to fight the military build-up and the US can go about its plans with little-to-no opposition. I urge this committee to act immediately as the situation I've described to you is grave. Without action on Guåhan, the UN will have turned its back on colonization in the 21st century. The UN Secretary General himself recently declared there is no room for colonialism in 2008. I urge you to take heed of your mandate or else the Chamoru people will become extinct in our homeland.

The Fourth Committee must give top priority to the fulfillment of our inalienable right to self-determination, as affirmed by General Resolutions 1514 and 1541, and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Fourth Committee must immediately enact the process of decolonization for Guåhan in lieu of the severe, irreversible impacts of US militarization.

This process must include a fully funded and far-reaching education campaign informing all Chamorus from Guåhan of our right to self-determination and decolonization options.

The Fourth Committee must thoroughly investigate the administering power's non-compliance with its treaty obligations under the Charter of the United Nations to promote economic, social, and cultural well-being on Guåhan.

The Fourth Committee must send UN representatives to the island within the next six months to assess the implications of US militarization plans on the decolonization of Guåhan, and the human rights implications of the cumulative impacts of the US military's presence on our island. The Fourth Committee must contact Guåhan leaders and delegates who have presented testimony before this body, and UN funding must be allocated immediately to advance this study. We cannot rely on faulty impact studies conducted by the US, which are used to justify their actions rather than truly assess their impacts on our island.

Finally, the Fourth Committee must comply with the recommendations of other UN agencies, especially the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, which recently requested an expert seminar be held to examine the impact of the UN decolonization process on indigenous peoples of the Non Self-Governing Territories.

This committee must prioritize collaboration with Chamoru organizations and experts, such as I Nasion Chamoru, Famoksaian, Fuetsan Famalao'an and all those who have provided testimony in the past two decades.

Thank you again for hearing our testimony today. We must work together to ensure the inalienable human right to self-determination for the Chamoru people of Guåhan, and the survival of a Chamoru Nation in our homeland.

*-Sinangan Si Victoria-Lola Montecalvo Leon Guerrero
I Nasion Chamoru*



According to estimates, Guåhan will see a 34 % population explosion of:

- 19,000 military personnel
- 20,000 military family members
- 20,000 foreign construction workers

In 6 years, Chamorus will become a minority group in their homeland.

Contamination of the Pacific



Hafa Adai distinguished members of the United Nations Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) and Chairman, H.E. Mr. Jorge Arguello,

My name is Craig Santos Perez and I'm a poet and native son of Guam. I represent the Guahan Indigenous Collective, a grassroots organization committed to keeping Chamoru culture alive through public education and artistic expression. I'm here to testify about the fangs of militarization and colonialism destroying the Chamoru people of Guam.

These fangs dig deep. During and immediately after World War Two, brown tree snakes invaded Guam as stowaways on U.S. naval cargo ships. By 1968, the snakes colonized the entire island, their population reaching a density of 13,000 per square mile. As a result, Guam's seabirds, 10 of 13 endemic species of forest birds, 2 of 3 native mammals, and 6 of 10 native species of lizards have all gone extinct.

The U.S. plans to introduce—this time intentionally—a more familiar breed of predators to Guam: an estimated 19,000 military personnel and 20,000 of their dependants, along with numerous overseas businesses and 20,000 contract workers to support the military build-up. Add this to the 14,000 military personnel already on Guam, and that's a combined total of 73,000—outnumbering the entire Chamoru population on Guam, which is roughly 62,900.

This hyper-militarization poses grave implications for our human right to self-determination because the U.S. currently asserts that its citizens—this transient population—have a “constitutional” right to vote in our plebiscite.

Furthermore, this hyper-militarization (continuing a long history of militarization on Guam), will severely devastate our environmental, social, physical and cultural health. Since World War II, military dumping and nuclear testing has contaminated the Pacific with PCBs and radiation. In addition, PCBs and other military toxic waste have choked the breath out of the largest barrier reef system of Guam, poisoning fish and fishing grounds. As recently as July of this year, the USS Houston, a U.S. Navy nuclear submarine home-ported on Guam, leaked trace amounts of radioactivity into our waters.

The violation doesn't end on our shores; the military also occupies and infects our ancestral lands. Currently, the U.S. military occupies a third of the island, and the impending build-up has interrupted the return of federal excess lands to

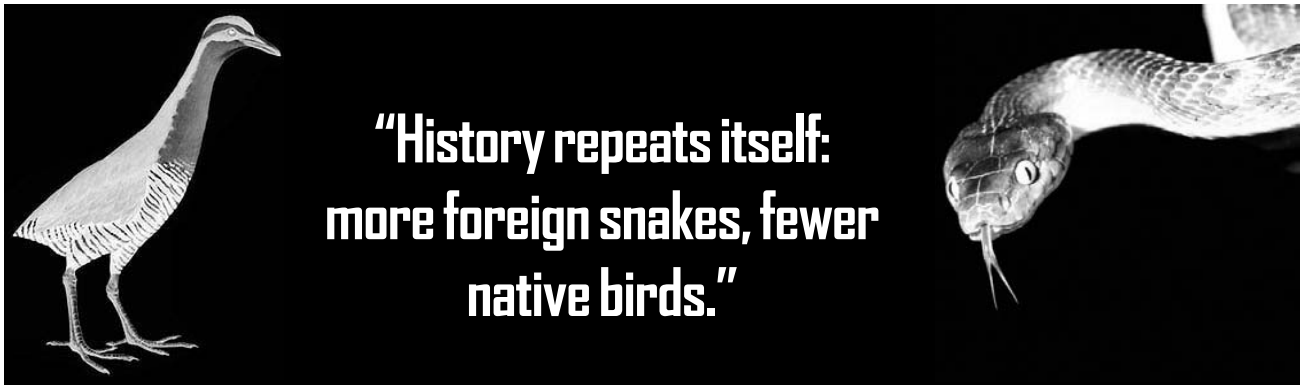
original land-owners and threatens to claim more lands for live fire training. Not only has the U.S. continued to deprive us of our right to land, but they also pollute these lands. Eighty contaminated military dumpsites still exist on Guam. The now civilian Ordot landfill (a former World War Two military dumpsite) contains 17 toxic chemicals, including arsenic, lead, chromium, PCBs, and cyanide. The same 17 pollutants are also found in the landfills located over the island's aquifer at Andersen Air Force Base in northern Guam.

While the U.S. military erodes the integrity of our land, expectations from the military build-up have more than doubled real estate prices and tripled home costs. Coupled with a struggling economy and rising living costs, many landless Chamorus have been economically coerced to leave the island and others have become homeless. Even our ancestors are being affected: a \$30 million expansion of the Guam Hotel Okura has excavated an ancient Chamoru cemetery. More than 300 ancestral remains have already been unearthed.

While new condominiums, hotels, and high-end homes are beginning to rise, the sky is falling. In July 2007, an F/A-18C Hornet crashed in the waters around Guam during a training mission. This year, at least 3 other military aircrafts have crashed in or near Andersen Air Force Base.

U.S. colonial presence has not only damaged our bodies of land and water, but it's deteriorated our physical bodies as well. The military used Guam as a decontamination site during its nuclear testing in the 1970s, which resulted in massive radiation and agent orange and purple exposure. High incidences of various kinds of cancer and neuro-degenerative diseases, such amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, Parkinsonism-dementia, and Lytico-Botig plague the Chamoru people. Toxic chemicals have snaked into our bloodstream, causing multiple sclerosis, Alzheimer's, renal dysfunction, cardiovascular disease, liver dysfunction, deafness, blindness, epilepsy, seizures, arthritis, anemia,





stillbirths, and infertility—all of which Chamorus disproportionately suffer. And because our mental health is woven to our physical health, Chamorus suffer dramatically high rates of incarceration, family violence, substance abuse, teenage suicides, and school drop-outs. The presence of the U.S. military has choked the breath out of our daughters and sons, mothers and fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers.

Like the last totot (Marianas Fruit-dove) on Guam being slowly swallowed by the brown tree snake, Chamorus are being disappeared. Diseases have killed most of our elders: only five percent of the island is over the age of 65. Young Chamorus are joining the U.S. military and dying in America's wars at alarming rates. In 2005, four of the U.S. Army's top twelve recruitment producers were based on Guam. In 2007, Guam ranked No. 1 for recruiting success in the Army National Guard's assessment of 54 states and territories. In the current war on terror, our killed-in-action rate is now five times the US national average. Since the war on terror began in 2001, 29 sons of Micronesia have died—17 of them from Guam.

In terms of population, Chamorus constituted 45 percent of Guam's population in 1980; in 1990, 43 percent; in 2000, 37 percent. In devastating contrast, the planned influx of non-Chamorus will increase Guam's overall population by about 30 percent, causing a 20-year population growth over the next five years. History repeats itself: more foreign snakes, fewer native birds.

The U.S. Pentagon is currently conducting an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (OEIS) for the build-up. However, the study is problematic in a number of ways, including the rushed speed of the study (a mere 2 years, with a 2009 completion date); the framing of the "impact" (which excludes many social, health, and environmental issues and focuses on economic "positives"); and the research methods (which relies on outdated data sets and "experts" composed mainly of the political and business elite). These Impact Statements are only invested in legitimizing the military build-up.

The door of the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism in the 21st Century will not be open for much longer. And even though powerful snakes block our passage, we are willing to struggle for our rights—but we need your help.

The Fourth Committee must give top priority to the fulfillment of our inalienable right to self-determination, as affirmed by General Resolutions 1514 and 1541, and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The Fourth Committee must immediately enact the process of decolonization for Guam in lieu of the severe, irreversible impact of U.S. militarization. This process must include a fully funded and far-reaching education campaign informing all Chamorus from Guam of our right to self-determination and decolonization options.

The Fourth Committee must thoroughly investigate the administering power's non-compliance with its treaty obligations under the Charter of the United Nations to promote economic, social, and cultural well-being on Guam.

The Fourth Committee must send UN representatives to the island within the next six months to assess the implications of US militarization plans on the decolonization of Guam, and the human rights implications of the cumulative impacts of the US military's presence on our island. The Fourth Committee must contact Guam leaders and delegates who have presented testimony before this body, and UN funding must be allocated immediately to advance this study. We cannot rely on faulty impact studies conducted by the US, which are used to justify their actions rather than truly assess their impacts on our island.

Finally, the Fourth Committee must comply with the recommendations of other UN agencies, especially the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, which recently requested an expert seminar be held to examine the impact of the UN decolonization process on indigenous peoples of the Non Self-Governing Territories.

This committee must prioritize collaboration with Chamoru organizations and experts, such as I Nasion Chamoru, Famoksaian, Fuetsan Famalao'an and all those who have provided testimony in the past two decades.

Thank you for listening, and I hope we can continue to work towards achieving decolonization and self-determination for the indigenous Chamoru people of Guam.



*-Sinangan Si Craig Santos Perez
Guahan Indigenous Collective*



A Long History of Exclusion



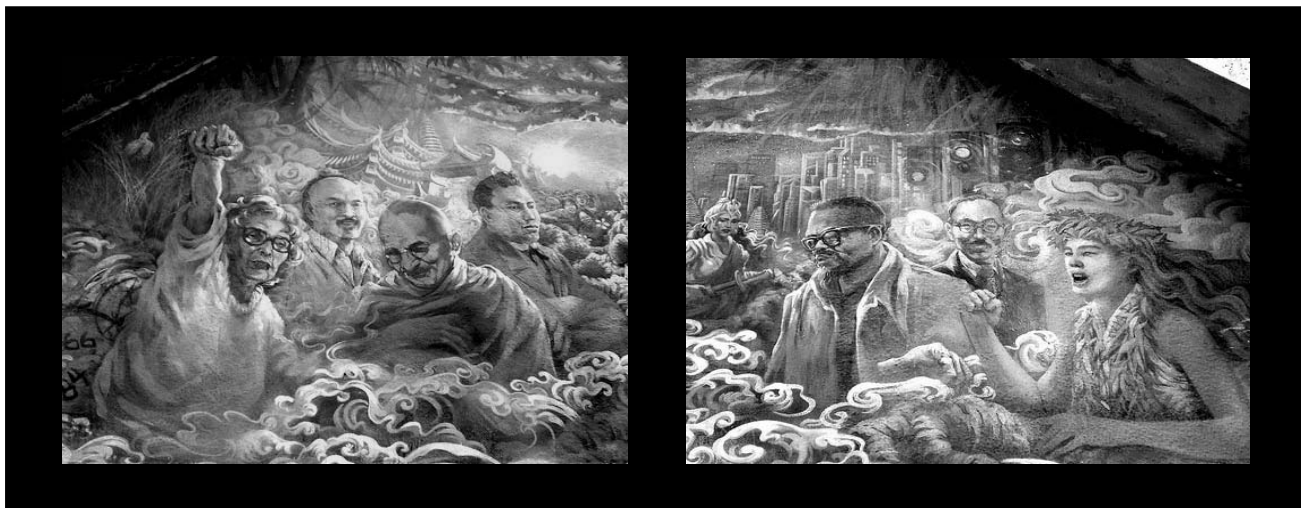
Hafa Adai yan buenasi! (Hello and good day) Your Excellency Mr. Chairman Jorge Aguello, and distinguished members of the Fourth Committee: Dangkolu na si Yu'os ma'ase (sincere thank you) for your invitation to participate at this important testimony for the remainder of the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism in the 21st century.

I am Michael Anthony Tuncap, a Chamorro teacher and national community organizer from the University of California Berkeley. I was born in the village of Aniguak, Guam and I am the Great Grand Son of Ana Acfalle of Merizo and Ramona Terlaje of Aniguak. I am here as the Famoksaiyan Trustee to the Pacific Islander Commission at the University of California Berkeley. Famoksaiyan and the UC Pacific Islander Commission work together as an advisory council of indigenous scholars, teachers and community leaders from Guam, American Samoa, Tonga, the Philippines and Hawai'i. Our collective mission is to promote the human and civil rights of indigenous Pacific Islanders through education, community organizing and health advocacy. We have been brought together by the struggle to survive the recent military expansion and nuclear testing of our Pacific homeland.

The continued occupation of American military forces in Guam and the Northern Marianas Islands are rooted in a system of racial inequality between European Americans,

Asian and Pacific settlers and the indigenous Chamorro people. Since our initial contact with the United States in 1898, massive pacification and military occupation have prevented the Chamoru people from exercising our inalienable right to self determination. My testimony today focuses on the structural relationship between racism and American military occupation in Guam and the Northern Mariana's. Colonial ideas of racial and gendered superiority have shaped a long history of military violence and U.S economic security. American military aggression has shaped the public policies and immigration laws that led to the genocide of the Western frontier, legalized chattel slavery and the colonization of the Pacific. These militarized conditions are still prevalent in institutions that define American citizenship for many of our brothers and sisters in the Pacific and Caribbean colonies.

Over the last twenty years, the UN Fourth Committee on Decolonization has heard testimonies from former Guam Senator Hope Alvarez Cristobal, Sabina Perez, and many other indigenous world leaders. Their testimonies demonstrate the connection between racial ideologies and institutional discrimination resulting from American militarism. The history of American imperialism is deeply connected to a long history of exclusion, manifesting it in forms of violence both physical and social. We, the people of Guam, recognize that race continues to define the boundaries of the nation and the constituents of a militarized territory. Why are the American people in the Mariana's denied the right to vote? Why are there American bases in Guam if the people lack political voting rights? What role has race played in the political-



Chamoru rights leader and former Senator Angel L.G. Santos is featured in this Asian and Pacific Islander mural in the Cesar Chavez Student Center at San Francisco State University.

lationship between the United States and their Chamoru territories? How can the United States ignore the United Nations Declaration for decolonization and the inalienable right of self determination for indigenous people?

“We the citizens for justice and peace on Guam voice our concern to the joint military exercises amid three aircraft carriers in the Pacific. We oppose the scheduled transfer of more than 7000 US Marines, and the increasing military presence post-September 11, 2001. We strongly believe that increased militarization on Guam is a violation of the human rights to self determination of the indigenous people. The United States is legally responsible under international law to protect the people of the island and the culture of the Chamorro people and that the intensified militarization of Guam and the Asia/Pacific region is a polarizing force that has put our people in grave danger rather than provide stability.”

The history of U.S militarism demonstrates the continued importance of race in determining national and international relations. The native and settle people of Guam have endured racial nationalism or exclusion based on continuous and discontinuous understandings of native Pacific Islanders. Social tensions rooted in the history of racism and struggle for minorities to attain “full citizenship.” Senator Cristobal and Sabina Perez have noted the complex ways that citizenship has been curtailed through the resurgence of U.S militarism.

The legacies of a racialized military occupation in Guam continue to inform a widely accepted belief in difference between the citizen and non-citizen. The colorblind framework of the United States as a ‘nation of immigrants’ ignores the complex differences in the histories and cultures of indigenous Micronesian people, especially in Guam. Military discourses conceal the xenophobic immigration policies and manifestations of U.S racial ideologies. As Chamorro scholars and policy makers pursue new ways of addressing racial problems of exclusion and citizenship, the question of self determination in Guam remains unanswered. If we, the people of Guam and the Northern Mariana’s Islands are to survive expanding U.S militarism,

The Fourth Committee must give top priority to the fulfillment of our inalienable right to self-determination, as affirmed by General Resolutions 1514 and 1541, and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Fourth Committee must immediately enact the process of decolonization for Guåhan in lieu of the severe, irreversible impacts of US militarization. This process must include a fully funded and far-reaching education campaign informing all Chamorus from Guåhan of our right to self-determination and decolonization options.

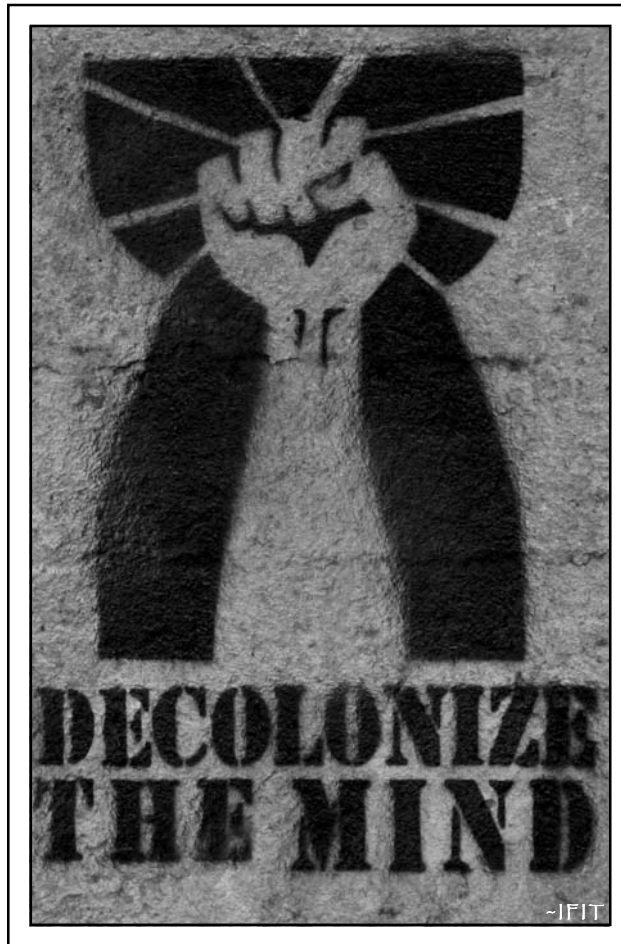
The Fourth Committee must thoroughly investigate the administering power’s non-compliance with its treaty obligations under the Charter of the United Nations to promote economic, social, and cultural well-being on Guåhan.

The Fourth Committee must send UN representatives to the island within the next six months to assess the implications of US militarization plans on the decolonization of Guåhan, and the human rights implications of the cumulative impacts of the US military’s presence on our island. The Fourth Committee must contact Guåhan leaders and delegates who have presented testimony before this body, and UN funding must be allocated immediately to advance this study. We cannot rely on faulty impact studies conducted by the US, which are used to justify their actions rather than truly assess their impacts on our island.

Finally, the Fourth Committee must comply with the recommendations of other UN agencies, especially the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, which recently requested an expert seminar be held to examine the impact of the UN decolonization process on indigenous peoples of the Non Self-Governing Territories.

This committee must prioritize collaboration with Chamoru organizations and experts, such as I Nasion Chamoru, Famoksaiyan, Fuetsan Famalao’an and all those who have provided testimony in the past two decades. ✊

*-Sinangan Si Michael Anthony Tuncap
Famoksaiyan*





Hafa adai, Mr. Chairman Marty Natalegawa and distinguished members of the Committee. My name is Sabina Flores Perez. I speak to you today as an indigenous Chamorro woman from the island of Guam. I come from a people and civilization that has been in the making for over 4000 years and has survived nearly 500 hundred years of uninterrupted colonization. I am honored to speak in solidarity with those who have appealed to the United Nations on behalf of Guam and Chamorro human rights, inclusive of the most recent testimony by Hope Alvarez Cristobal at the 2008 Pacific Regional Seminar in Bandung, Indonesia.

As part of my testimony, I would like to acknowledge the depth and detail of Mrs. Cristobal's statement by resubmitting the written testimony as an addendum, to highlight key points in her testimony and to reinforce previous recommendations.

Since my testimony at the UN Special Committee of 24 in 2007, I have found that the Working Paper on Guam, as it is written, is inadequate in that 1) it fails to record that the Administering Power's plans for intensified militarization of the non-self governing territory of Guam is in violation of the United Nations Charter, UN resolution 1514, UN Resolution 1541 and UN Resolution A/56/61 on the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, and 2) it does not provide a complete picture of the economic, social, environmental crisis in connection with the huge power imbalance between the Guam and the Administering Power, the United States of America.

The indigenous people of Guam, which has been objectified as a strategic location and has played and continues to play a crucial role in the overall U.S. national economic and military defense scheme without our consent or consultation, are experiencing numerous threats to human rights of self-determination at multiple levels, and now more than ever in the face of this largest, most violent wave of U.S. militarization of our island home. Furthermore, the future of the indigenous people of Guam is being over-determined by US economic and military interests as opposed to self-determined. This is evident in the current hyper-militarization of our island home.

The current plan of intensified militarization, slated to cost US\$15 billion, was developed without the informed consent and against the will of the Chamorro people. It will further transform our island home into a forward base with the following developments, among many: the establishment of a Global Strike Force, the refurbishing of Naval Base Guam to enhance its capacity to port nuclear air craft carriers, the construction of an Army Base to serve as Patriot Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) task force, and the planned

construction of a highway to be used solely for military purposes. The road will cut through the island to connect the two biggest military bases, Anderson Air Force Base in the north and Naval Station in the south, making it easier and faster for the United States to transport weapons throughout the island.

It will include the scheduled initial transfer this year of 8000 U.S. Marines and their 9000 dependents from Okinawa. The projected total influx of 35,000 military personnel, their families and support staff from other parts of Asia will result in a 23% population increase over the next 6 ½ years compared to the U.S. population growth of 5% from 2000 to 2005. With the current population at 167,000, the influx will radically alter the demography of the island, further marginalizing Chamorros with absolutely no guarantees that our right to self-determination will remain intact. This military influx threatens our inalienable right to self-determination. Instructive here is the statement made by the Deputy Commander of U.S. Pacific Command, U.S. Air Force Lieutenant General Daniel P. Leaf in his visit to Guam in September 2006 who stated that US troops have a US Constitutional Right to participate in Guam's local elections. If this is an example of US policy regarding local governance, then Chamorro self-determination is gravely endangered. Moreover, this military buildup of Guam goes against the Administering Power's moral and legal obligations to protect our human rights.

The massive militarization of our island home undermining our human right to self-determination before we even had the chance to vote on a political status is being coupled with an aggressive privatization agenda being pushed by the local Chamber of Commerce, which is dominated by US Statesiders. This wresting from public control of our natural and economic resources is no doubt endangering yet more of our human rights. Our water, power, and port through which flows 90% of our food, are under relentless attack of being privatized, all within the trust of the Administering Power. All on the U.S.' watch.

The survival of our people is at stake given our designated role as the "tip of the spear" and the "unsinkable carrier" of the U.S. Our livelihood has been impacted with long-term, persistent and cumulative exposure of military contamination of all kinds. At least 78 toxic military sites have been identified for cleanup from past military activities, countless others are hidden, some have been handed over to the local government to clean up, such as the Ordot Dump, which was created by the U.S. Navy and which has been used by the local population, and new ones are being created, with increased military trainings both on land and off-shore.

Our water resources in close proximity of both military bases in Guam are seriously compromised by our Administering Power. Andersen Air Force Base sits atop the Northern aquifer, which supplies 75% of the island's drinking water. The Navy Base contains Fena lake, which supplies some of the southern residents. We stand to lose a huge water resource in the southern village of Inarajan to the development of a new landfill, one that our local government is being pressured to open in time when both military bases' landfills (both Navy and Airforce) are scheduled to close. The opening of a new landfill in Inarajan and the concomitant closure of the Ordot dump is one example of how military planners are using federal legal action to create infrastructure to support the military influx, at the expense of the local population.

The economic situation is dire. The military influx, which was promoted as the panacea to our local government's economic woes, is exacerbating living conditions for many residents, 25% of whom are below the federally-defined poverty level. Rent and housing prices have skyrocketed beyond the reach of many residents who have fixed or low incomes. Our people are struggling to make ends meet, and many are fleeing.

Chamorros are at a serious risk of losing control of our homeland. The high speculative market is enticing families with significant land holdings to cash in. Large tracts of lands have been sold and developed into high-end condos. A single transaction had 1% of the island sold to a private company. Green areas and significant ancestral burials are being bulldozed and developed for housing and tourism in anticipation of the military influx. The U.S. Department of the Interior² has taken an active role in promoting foreign businesses to come to Guam to build up the accompanying military-based economy.

Let's be clear: The massive militarization is not developed in the best interests or with the consent of the indigenous people of Guam and is in violation of the Administering Power's "sacred trust obligation" under Article 73 of the UN Charter to ensure our transition from colonization to freedom. This military buildup will forever secure the political and cultural dispossession of the indigenous Chamoru people of Guam.

The level and grossness of the infraction indicates that we as a people have no recourse available to us within the framework of the US laws and its relationship to Guam. Through the 1950 Organic Act that was passed unilaterally by the U.S. Congress, Chamorros were granted citizenship without political representation, which exists till this day. On Guam, Chamorros cannot vote for the U.S. President, who is the Commander-in-Chief, who in turn determines the island's fate in the name of "national defense." The U.S. Congress has the power to pass laws unilaterally, such as the Title VII of the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008, which has expedited the military buildup of Guam by removing the cap of H1 visas in order to flood the island with workers for companies contracted to facilitate the military buildup of Guam. Time and again, we are reminded

that we are less than humans and mere objects, possessions by those policy makers and military leaders of the Administering Power. As one Captain Douglas bluntly states: *People on Guam seem to forget that they are a possession, and not an equal partner...If California says that they want to do this, it is like my wife saying that she wants to move here or there: I'll have to respect her wish and at least discuss it with her. If Guam says they want to do this or that, it is as if this cup here [he pointed at his coffee mug] expresses a wish: the answer will be, you belong to me and I can do with you as best I please.*

Furthermore, it is the exploitation of our political status and lack of political development that enables the Administering Power's military control of our island home and the recent hyper-militarization at huge cost to the Chamorro people and our only homeland.

We Chamorros, as the indigenous people of Guam ask for your assistance for relief from the violence that this intensified militarization brings. We as humans have the power to heal ourselves from the scars of colonialism, but we cannot do this alone, nor should we be asked to. The time to act is now. The Special Committee of 24 must live up to its mandate and end its current policy of "colonial accommodation."

I call upon the Members of the Committee, in accordance with the United Nations

Charter and General Assembly Resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541, amongst other mandates and actions on behalf of decolonization, to take the following actions:

1) Reaffirm and give top priority to the inalienable right of the Chamorro people of

Guam to self-determination in view of the Administering Power's intensified militarization planned within a window of 2-4 years,

2) Work with the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to report on the decolonization process at its eighth session in 2009, with a main objective of identifying deficiencies of the current UN-endorsed decolonization regime for the people of Guam as well as inter-UN-agency strategies to better facilitate decolonization,

3) Denounce the Administering Power's hyper-militarization of the non-selfgoverning territory of Guam as a breach of trust on the part of the Administering Power with regard to its obligation to safeguard the human right to self-determination of the Chamoru people of Guam,

4) Implement measures to increase the coordination of UN agencies toward decolonization and provide corrective measures against the current and cumulative impacts of colonization and militarization. Si Yu'os Ma'ase/Thank you Mr. Chairman and distinguished members for your attention and consideration. 🇬🇺

-Sinangan Si Sabina Flores Perez
UN Special Committee of 24



Storm of U.S. Militarization

Ati addeng-miyo your Excellencies. My name is Julian Aguon and I appear before you with the full support and blessings of my elders. I address you on behalf of the indigenous Chamoru people of Guam, an endangered people now being rushed toward full-blown extinction.

In 2008, the indigenous Chamoru people of Guam brace ourselves for a storm of U.S. militarization so enormous in scope, so volatile in nature, so irreversible in consequence. U.S. military realignment in the Asia-Pacific region seeks to homeport sixty percent of its Pacific Fleet in and around our ancient archipelago. With no input from the indigenous Chamoru people and over our deepening dissent, the US plans to flood Guam, its Colony in Perpetuity, with upwards of 50,000 people, which includes the 8,000 U.S. Marines and their 9,000 dependents being ousted by Okinawa and an outside labor force estimated upwards of 20,000 workers on construction contracts. In addition, six nuclear submarines will be added to the three already stationed in Guam as well as a monstrous Global Strike Force, a strike and intelligence surveillance reconnaissance hub at Andersen Air Force Base.

This buildup only complements the impressive Air Force and Navy show of force occupying 1/3 of our 212 square mile island already. This massive military expansionism exacts devastating consequences on my people, who make up only 37% of the 170,000 people living in Guam and who already suffer the signature maladies of a colonial condition.

The military buildup of Guam endangers our fundamental and inalienable human right to self-determination, the exercise of which our Administering Power, the United States, has strategically denied us—in glaring betrayal of its international obligations under the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, UN General Assembly Resolution 1514, to name but some.

The unilateral decision to hyper-militarize our homeland is the latest in a long line of covenant breaches on the part of our Administering Power to guide Guam toward self-governance. It was made totally without consulting the indigenous Chamoru people. No public education campaign regarding the social, cultural, and political consequences of this hyper-militarization has been seriously undertaken or even contemplated.

Of the 10.3 billion dollars settled upon by the U.S. and Japan for the transfer of U.S. Marines from Okinawa to Guam, nothing has been said as to whether or not this money

will be used to improve our flailing infrastructure. Recently, the largest joint military exercise in recent history conducted what were casually called war games off Guam waters. 22,000 US military personnel, 30 ships, and 280 aircraft partook in “Valiant Shield.” That weekend, water was cut off to a number of local villages on the Navy water line. The local people of those villages went some thirty days without running water. Across the military-constructed fence, the tap flowed freely for the U.S. military population. The suggestion of late is that Guam is expected to foot the bill of this re-occupation. Meetings with defense officials have proved empty. Military officers we have met with inform us only of their inability to commit to anything. In effect, they repeat that they have no working plans to spend money on civilian projects. Dollars tied to this transfer have been allocated to development only within the bases. Money for education in the territory will again be allocated to schools for children of U.S. military personnel and not ours. Meanwhile, virtually every public sector in Guam is being threatened with privatization.

There is talk of plans to condemn more of our land to accommodate its accelerated military needs. In contrast, there is no talk of plans to clean up radioactive contaminations (strontium, in particular) of Guam from toxins left over from the U.S.’ World War II activities and its intense nuclear bombing campaign of the Marshall Islands only 1200 miles from Guam. Indeed, the indigenous Chamoru people of Guam suffer extraordinarily high rates of cancer and dementia-related illness due to the U.S.’ widespread toxic contamination of Guam. For example, Chamorus suffer from nasopharynx cancer at a rate 1,999% higher than the U.S. average (per 100,000). To boot, Guam has 19 Superfund sites, most of which are associated with U.S. military base activities as in the case of Andersen Air Force Base and the former Naval Air Station. Nineteen sites is a significant number in consideration of the island’s small size of 212 square meters.

There is also no word on whether or not the U.S. plans to pay war reparations due to us since it forgave Japan its World War II war crimes committed against the Chamorus.

Like an awful re-run of World War II, when the U.S. unilaterally forgave Japan its horrific war crimes on our people, the US is back at the table negotiating away our human rights including our right to self-determination. Beyond the B-2 bombers in our skies, the ships playing war games in our waters, the added weapons of mass destruction, and the contamination that has robbed us of so many

loved ones by way of our extraordinarily high rates of cancers and dementia-related illnesses, there is a growing desperation back home. A desperate lethargy in the wind. A realization that if the UN remains unable to slow the manic speed of US militarization, Chamorus as a people will pass.

In 2005 and 2006, we appeared before the UN Special Political and Decolonization Committee, alerting the UN organ of these two frightening facts: 1) it was recently discovered that the U.S. Department of Interior purposefully killed a presidential directive handed down in 1975, which ordered that Guam be given a commonwealth status no less favorable than the one the U.S. was negotiating with the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands at that time; and 2) a campaign of the Guam Chamber of Commerce (primarily consisting of U.S. Statesiders) to privatize every one of Guam's public resources (the island's only water provider, only power provider, only local telephone provider, public schools, and its only port, on an island that imports 85-90% of its food and where private monopolies of public goods would truly make us captive to the forces of the market) is undermining our ancient indigenous civilization with violent speed. Eating us whole.

Not much has changed since we last were here in New York. Our power provider has been privatized, our telecommunications sold. Our only water provider and one port are under relentless attack. The meager, questionable victories we have had to stay this mass privatization are only the result of indigenous Chamoru grassroots activists who, on their own—with no financial, institutional, or strategic support—holding both their hands up, holding the line as best they can. At great personal cost.

Your Excellencies: Know this—the indigenous Chamoru people of Guam are neither informed nor unified around this military buildup despite dominant media representations. For all intents and purposes, there is no free press in Guam. Local media only makes noise of the re-occupation, not sense of it. The Pacific Daily News—the American subsidiary newspaper that dominates the discourse—has cut off the oxygen supply to indigenous resistance movement. Rather than debating this buildup's enormous sociopolitical, environmental and cultural consequences, it has framed the conversation around how best to ask the U.S. (politely) for de facto consideration of our concerns. Without appearing un-American.

We are not Americans. We are Chamorus. We are heirs to a matrilineal, indigenous civilization born two thousand years before Jesus. And we are being disappeared. Off your radar.

All this, and only two years until the end of the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. And no midterm review by the Special Committee on Decolonization. No designation of any expert to track Guam's progress, or lack thereof, toward progressing off the UN list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. Not one UN visiting mission to Guam.

It is a sad commentary that the Administering Power year after year abstains or votes against UN resolutions ad-

ressing the "Question of Guam" and resolutions reflecting the work of the UN on decolonization including the resolution on the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism and the very recent Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. With this non-support by Guam's Administering Power, it is no wonder that the list of the Non-Self-Governing Territories under the administration of the United States has turned half a century old with little progress.

We Chamorus come to New York year after year, appealing to the UN decolonization committee to follow through with its mandate. Indeed, the UN has collected almost thirty years of our testimony, with nothing to show for it. I represent today the third generation of Chamoru activists to appear before the UN, desperately trying to safeguard our inalienable, still unrealized, human right to self-determination.

The failure of the U.S. to honor its international obligations to Guam and her native people, the non-responsiveness of the UN Special Committee on Decolonization to our rapid deterioration, and the overall non-performance of relevant U.S. and UN Decolonization organs and officials combine to carry our small chance of survival to its final coffin.

All this combines to elevate the human rights situation in Guam as a matter not only of decolonization, but ethnic cleansing. Indeed, when future generations look upon these days, they might label Guam not merely a U.S. colony, but rather, a UN colony. To date the Forum has deferred to the Special Committee. The time has come for the Forum to take the lead. To this end we request the Forum take the following action:

1. Sponsor an expert seminar in conjunction with the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Special Committee on Decolonization to examine the impact of the UN decolonization process regarding the indigenous peoples of the NSGTs—now and previously listed on the UN list of NSGTs. This seminar must be under the auspices of the Forum due to existing problems with the Secretariat of the Special Committee. We request that Independent Expert Carlyle G. Corbin be included in the seminar as well as the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous Peoples.

2. Utilize the Inter-Agency Support Group to begin to implement the Program of Implementation (POI) with UN Agencies, UNDP, UNEP and other agencies and specialized bodies as directed by the General Assembly; and

3. Communicate its concern for the human rights of indigenous peoples and all peoples in the NSGTs to the UN Human Rights Council and request that the Council designate a Special Rapporteur on the Situation of the Peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories

*-Sinangan Si Julian Aguon
I Nasion Chamoru*

UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues



HITA GUĀHAN

Hita, from within the Spirit calls and it is heard.
Evidenced by a noble Chamoru warrior who responded.
Moved beyond uncertainty of the unknown, taotaomo'na, s/he
came to realize a simple truth: that those of us who open up to
receive the wisdom of the Elders will surely be guided.

Hita, come together and remember where we have gone and where
we are from.
Follow the wisdom of our ancestors, for the love of our children,
gather.

Our people, we must overcome the feeling of impossibility.
Elders, sisters, brothers, children, let us become aware of our
strength within,
let us be fearless in these times.
Seek truth,
 strive for justice,
 live in love.

Hita. Gather and remember what our elders have said.
Safeguard our beliefs,
 our culture,
 our language.

Cha'mu angongoku agupa', sa' agupa ti agupa'mu. chachalani gi
tininas i lina'la'mu.
Protect that by which we live,
 the air that we breathe,
 the water that sustains us,
 the islands of our ancestors.

Become as one!

*This book is a tribute to our mothers, our fathers, our people, and to this
movement for a Cause that is much greater than us. Liviticated to those
who have come before and those who will come after.*

Saina Ma'åse

PRODUCTION STAFF:

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Kerri Ann Naputi Borja
Jon Blas

Saina ma'åse to all the people and organizations in Guåhan, California and New York, who made these testimonies and their delivery possible. This movement is too large and your contributions too plentiful to list on this simple page.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

United Nations Decolonization Efforts

- Information on the United Nations and decolonization may be found:
www.un.org/Depts/dpi/decolonization
- Requests for participation in the meetings of the Special Committee and the Fourth Committee, or in the regional seminars, may be submitted in writing to the Chairman of the Special Committee at the following address:
Chairman, Special Committee on decolonization
Department for General Assembly and Conference Management
United Nations
New York, NY 10017, U S A
Fax: (212) 963-5305
- Additional information can be obtained from:
Decolonization Unit
Department of Political Affairs
United Nations
New York, NY 10017, U S A
Fax: (212) 963-7752

Famoksaian

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Guam Commission on Decolonization

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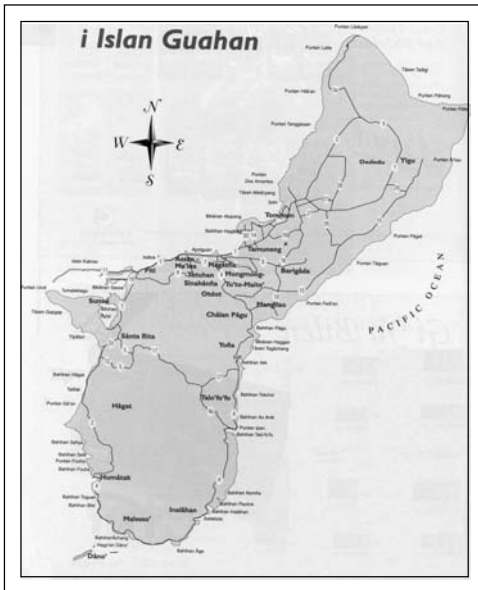
Chamoru Studies Association

Hope Cristobal
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Email: ecris@teleguam.net

REGISTER TODAY:



All people who were made U.S. citizens by virtue of the 1950 Organic Act, and their descendants can register for the decolonization registry at the:
Guam Election Commission
414 West Soledad Avenue
Guam Capital Investment Corporation Inc. (GCIC Building)
Suite 200, 2nd Floor, Hagatna
(671) 477-9791/2/3
director@gec.guam.gov



GUÅHAN

GUÅHAN is the original name of our homeland. GUÅHAN means "we have".

GUÅHAN is the southernmost island of the Mariana Islands chain and it is the largest island in Micronesia.

GUÅHAN has a total land mass of 212 square miles, excluding reef formations.

Colonial conquest of the Marianas has been heavily influenced by the strategic location of our islands as a gateway to the Asia region and an access point for trade. In 1521 Magellan was searching for a western sea route to the Maluku Islands, the "Spice Islands" located in what is now Indonesia. Although these islands were never found, Spain opened a way between Acapulco and Manila and established GUÅHAN as a primary stopping point to restock ships.

The Marianas continued as a colony of Spain for 333 years, until the "Spanish-American War" of 1898. GUÅHAN was sold to the United States along with Cuba, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico for \$20 million under the terms of Article 3 of the Treaty of Paris. The northern islands which include Sa'ipan, Tinian, and Luta were sold to Germany and are now a commonwealth of the United States. GUÅHAN was attacked on the same day as Pearl Harbor and taken by Japan for almost three years during World War II. The U.S. retook our island in 1944 and remains as its colonizer today.

