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Distr. RESTRICTED

PRS/2012/CRP.8

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

THIRD INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF COLONIALISM

Pacific regional seminar on the implementation of the Third International Decade for

CRP. P
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Written Statement of American Samoa Government

For the Honorable Togiola T.A. Tulafono

Governor of American Samoa

By Toetasi Fue Tuiteleleapaga, Governor's Chief Legal Counsel

United Nations Pacific Regional Seminar Special Committee of 24

Quito, Ecuador, 30 May to 1 June 2012

Honorable Chairman, Members of the Special Committee of 24, Ladies and Gentlemen: thank you for the invitation to address you here today on American Samoa's experience as a non self governing territory. I present this

statement today on behalf of our Governor, the Honorable Togiola T.A. Tulafono, who cannot be here owing to his presence at the 50th Independence

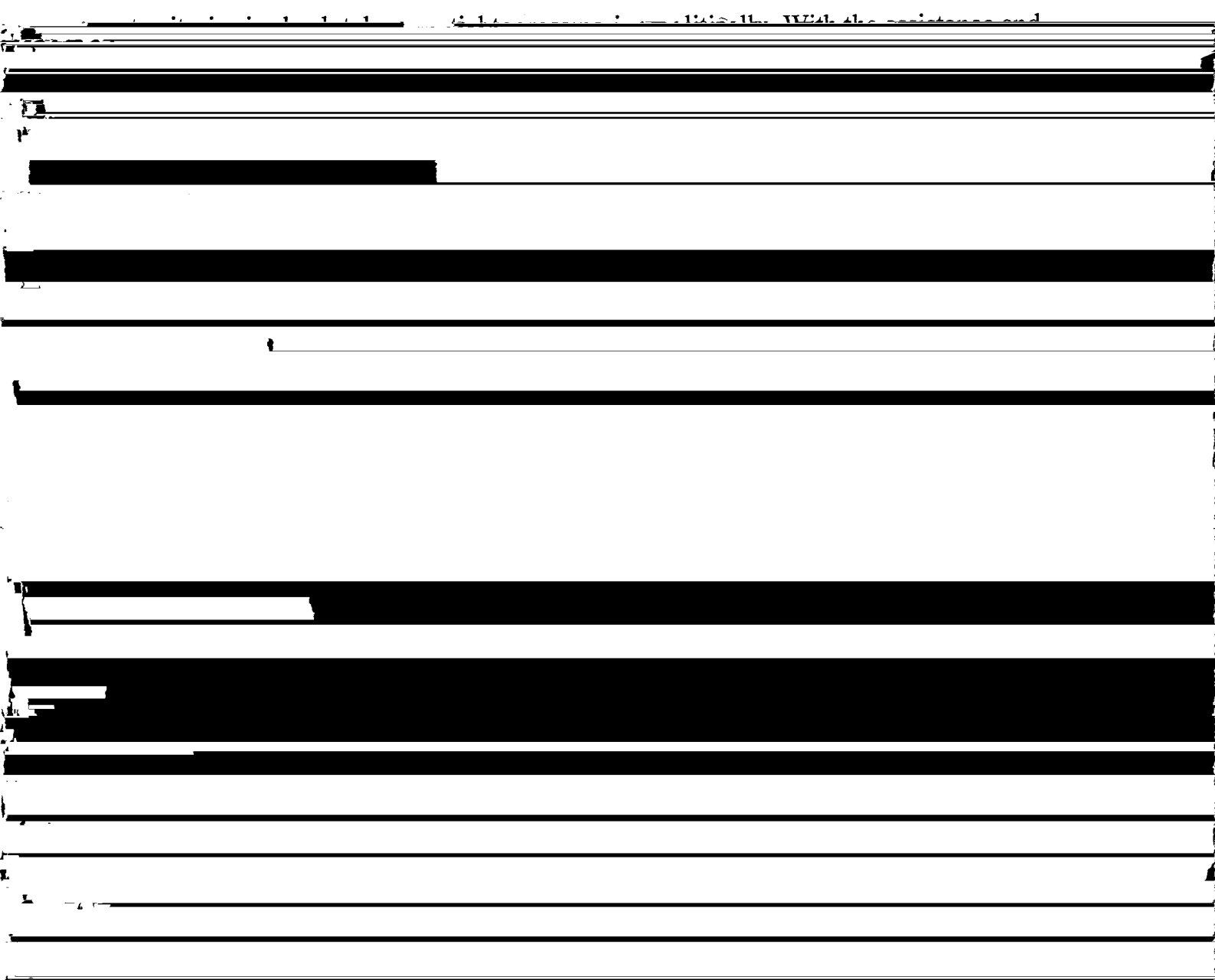
over those several years to remove American Samoa from the list of colonized territories because we felt our unincorporated and unorganized status was akin to being self governing. For those that are unfamiliar with these terms, "unincorporated" means that not all of the laws of the US apply to American

Samoa, "unorganized" means that the US Congress has never enacted legislation delineating the political relationship between the US and American Samoa.

While we do not advocate a change in our position of removal from the list of colonized states, American Samoa must continue to progress politically and economically while respecting the concerns of the United States and the United

It is with this in mind that I set forth a more pronounced follow up statement on our recommendations of last year. To this end, I recommend a more active involvement of the administering powers in the self determination efforts of their non self governing territories. In 2008, American Samoa's Future Political Status Study Commission submitted its report to the Territory on its findings and recommendations concerning American Samoa's political status. This study was critical to a general understanding of where we currently stand with regard to self governance.

It is my fervent belief that this type of activity, especially for non self governing



This type of thinking encourages more than just thoughts towards greater self governance, it encourages critical discussion and an exchange of ideas as to where the People see this Territory, their children's Territory in the future.

Over the past several years, American Samoa has tried, with little success to promote our unique and special circumstances which often leave us on the outside looking in. Such situations have resulted in undesirable results for the Territory as a whole with regard to air passenger and air cargo service to and from our islands. The general rules that work for the country do not always take into consideration what is best for a territory that is so far isolated from the rest of the country that its needs and requirements represent the perfect instance for waiver from rules whose intent is protection. Also, with regard to certain education programs – where American Samoa needs help the most there have been instances where American

economy is hampered by limited resources which inherently pit the interests of a tiny remote island against the needs of several hundred million US Citizens. The result of this state of affairs is that American Samoa's interests and the

Conclusion

In sum, I thank this Committee especially for item 1

my recommendation for an agreed, detailed work plan with effective mechanisms for determining the will of the people. That will must be one that is well informed and supported by the administering powers.

Thank you once again for this excellent opportunity. Soifua.