

3. *Reaffirms its conviction* that such factors as territorial size, geographical location, size of population and limited natural resources should in no way delay the implementation of the Declaration, which fully applies to Guam;

4. *Reaffirms* the importance of fostering an awareness among the people of Guam of the possibilities open to them with regard to their right to self-determination and calls upon the United States of America, as the administering Power, in co-operation with the territorial Government, to expedite the process of decolonization strictly in accordance with the expressed wishes of the people of the Territory;

5. *Reaffirms its strong conviction* that the presence of military bases and installations in the Territory could constitute a major obstacle to the implementation of the Declaration and that it is the responsibility of the administering Power to ensure that the existence of such bases and installations does not hinder the population of the Territory from exercising its right to self-determination and independence in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations;

6. *Urges* the administering Power to continue to take all necessary measures not to involve the Territory in any offensive acts or interference against other States and to comply fully with the purposes and principles of the Charter, the Declaration and the resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly relating to military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories under their administration;

7. *Reaffirms* the responsibility of the administering Power, under the Charter, to promote the economic and social development of Guam and, in that connection, calls upon the administering Power to take further steps to strengthen and diversify the economy of the Territory, with a view to reducing its economic dependence on the administering Power;

8. *Reiterates* that one of the obstacles to economic growth in Guam is the holding of large tracts of land by the United States federal authorities, and calls upon the administering Power, in co-operation with the territorial Government, to expedite the transfer of land to the people of the Territory and to take the necessary steps to safeguard their property rights;

9. *Urges* the administering Power, in co-operation with the territorial Government, to take effective measures to safeguard and guarantee the inalienable right of the people of Guam to own and dispose of the natural resources of the Territory, including marine resources, and to establish and maintain control over the future development of those resources, as well as to support measures by the territorial Government aimed at removing constraints to growth in commercial fishing and agriculture;

10. *Reaffirms* the importance of continued efforts by the territorial Government, with the support of the administering Power, to promote and develop Guam's unique cultural identity;

11. *Urges* the administering Power to give full recognition to the status and rights of the Chamorro people;

12. *Requests* the Special Committee to continue the examination of this question at its next session, including the possible dispatch of a further visiting mission to Guam at an appropriate time and in consultation with the administering Power, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session.

44/99. Question of the United States Virgin Islands

The General Assembly,

Having considered the question of the United States Virgin Islands,

Having examined the relevant chapters of the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples,¹⁹

Recalling its resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, containing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, and all resolutions and decisions of the United Nations relating to the United States Virgin Islands, including in particular General Assembly resolution 43/44 of 22 November 1988,

Conscious of the need to ensure the full and speedy implementation of the Declaration in respect of the Territory,

Having heard the statement of the representative of the United States of America, as the administering Power,¹⁵

Recalling the statement of the representative of the administering Power that the participation of the people of the Territory in the electoral process demonstrated that they exercised responsibility for local government and local political affairs and recalling also that the representative of the administering Power re-emphasized the policy of her Government to respond to the wishes of the people regarding their future political status whenever they indicated the direction in which they wished to proceed,²²

Noting with satisfaction that the territorial Commission on Status and Federal Relations started its work in September 1988 in preparation for the referendum on the Territory's future political status that had been scheduled to be held on 14 November 1989,

Noting, however, that the devastation to the Territory caused by hurricane Hugo resulted in an indefinite postponement of the referendum,

Noting also that legislation of July 1988 would lengthen from 30 to 90 days the residency requirement for voting in general elections and that a ruling of the United States Supreme Court could render the new law inoperative before it is due to take effect at the general elections to be held in the Territory in 1990,²³

Aware of the special circumstances of the geographical location and economic conditions of the Territory and bearing in mind the necessity of diversifying and strengthening further its economy as a matter of priority in order to promote economic stability,

Noting the measures being taken by the territorial Government with a view to strengthening the Territory's financial viability and facilitating its economic development,

Taking note of the statement of the representative of the Territory that his Government shares the concern of other Caribbean countries over the rapid depletion of the region's marine resources due to massive overfishing, mostly by large extraregional vessels, and bearing in mind the measures taken by the territorial Government and the administering Power to address this problem,

Noting the stated position of the Government of the United States Virgin Islands on the disposition of Water

²² *Ibid.*, Forty-third Session, Fourth Committee, 11th meeting, and corrigendum

²³ See A. AC.109/986, para. 20.

Island as well as the need for the Territory to exercise control over its own resources,²⁴

Noting also the continued concern expressed by a petitioner at the reclamation and development of submerged land at Long Bay in the Charlotte Amalie Harbour, and taking note of the statement of the representative of the administering Power that the issue had been settled by litigation and that those activities were subject to the regulatory powers of the Government of the Territory,

Noting with concern the vulnerability of the Territory to drug trafficking and related activities,

Noting the active interest of the Government of the United States Virgin Islands in participating in the related work of the international and regional organizations concerned,

Expressing its sympathy to the people of the United States Virgin Islands for the extensive damage caused by hurricane Hugo in September 1989,

Recalling the dispatch in 1977 of a United Nations visiting mission to the Territory,

Mindful that United Nations visiting missions provide an effective means of ascertaining the situation in the small Territories, and considering that the possibility of sending a further visiting mission to the United States Virgin Islands at an appropriate time should be kept under review,

1. *Approves* the chapter of the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples relating to the United States Virgin Islands;¹²

2. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the people of the United States Virgin Islands to self-determination and independence in conformity with the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples;

3. *Reiterates the view* that such factors as territorial size, geographical location, size of population and limited natural resources should in no way delay the speedy exercise by the people of the Territory of their inalienable right to self-determination and independence in conformity with the Declaration, which fully applies to the United States Virgin Islands;

4. *Reiterates* that it is the responsibility of the United States of America, as the administering Power, to continue to create such conditions in the United States Virgin Islands as will enable the people of the Territory to exercise freely and without interference their inalienable right to self-determination and independence in conformity with resolution 1514 (XV);

5. *Reaffirms* that it is ultimately for the people of the United States Virgin Islands themselves to determine their future political status in accordance with the relevant

provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, the Declaration and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and, in that connection, calls upon the administering Power, in co-operation with the territorial Government, to facilitate programmes of political education in the Territory in order to foster an awareness among the people of the possibilities open to them in the exercise of their right to self-determination;

6. *Reaffirms* the responsibility of the administering Power under the Charter to continue to promote the economic and social development of the United States Virgin Islands, and urges the administering Power, in co-operation with the territorial Government, to continue to take measures with a view to strengthening and diversifying the Territory's economy;

7. *Urges* the administering Power, in co-operation with the territorial Government, to take effective measures to safeguard and guarantee the inalienable right of the people of the United States Virgin Islands to own and dispose of the natural resources of the Territory, including marine resources, and to establish and maintain control over the future development of those resources;

8. *Expresses its concern* about the continued depletion of the Territory's marine resources and urges the administering Power, in consultation with the territorial Government, to take the necessary steps to reverse this trend;

9. *Calls upon* the administering Power to continue to take all necessary measures, in co-operation with the territorial Government, to counter problems related to drug trafficking;

10. *Urges* the administering Power to facilitate the participation of the United States Virgin Islands in various international and regional organizations;

11. *Urges* Member States and specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system to extend all possible assistance with a view to rehabilitating and reconstructing the Territory devastated by hurricane Hugo.

12. *Urges* the administering Power to continue to take all necessary measures to comply fully with the purposes and principles of the Charter, the Declaration and the relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly relating to military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories under their administration;

13. *Requests* the Special Committee to continue the examination of this question at its next session, including the possible dispatch of a further visiting mission to the United States Virgin Islands at an appropriate time and in consultation with the administering Power, particularly in the light of the referendum referred to in the seventh and eighth preambular paragraphs of the present resolution, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session.

80th plenary meeting
11 December 1989

²⁴ See A/AC.109/955, paras. 33 and 53-55