

I MINA'TRENTAI KUÀTTRO NA LIHESLATURAN GUÁHAN
RESOLUTION NO. 51-34 (LS): SUPPORTING THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF GUAM
MOVE FORWARD TO APPEAL THE RULING OF THE DISTRICT COURT OF GUAM TO
ASSIST IN DEFENDING THE RIGHTS OF THE NATIVE INHABITANTS OF GUAM
March 17, 2017

Buenas yan Háfa adai distinguished members of I Mina'trentai Kuáttro Na Liheslaturan Guáhan, Speaker B.J. Cruz, Vice Speaker Therese Terlaje, and Senators. Dankolo na si yu'os ma'ase for your time in allowing me the opportunity to address you today. I lend my voice and words today not to our struggle, but our hope that one day we will be able decolonize our island by decolonizing our minds and lives. In our own healing from colonialism and historical trauma, I offer a poem I had written as positive energy and renewed strength in our connected journey forward where we advocate and affirm what we have and what is innately ours— our voice.

We Are US

Amid internal-interpersonal power-differential,
an inmate has to face the calamities and injustices
of internment camps imprisoned in their minds.

A delegate is only represented—
her mere presence is dismissed,
her voice silenced by an administrative power
refusing to acknowledge her need.

A non-self-governing people die for democratic principles
when their own sovereignty and innate human right
is uprooted as that of their jungles,
water, air, homes, lives, and minds.

I Taotao Tano' continue to get massacred as our young face the brunt of wars,
positioned in a global world that does not acknowledge our existence.
We are foot soldiers being dragged into bloody wars,
tortured by the aftermath of post-traumas
that forever change our mental images
as abruptly as typhoons destroy our homes
and permanently affect our landscape.

Their mission is our self-demise as we falsely blame each other
and point fingers placed on triggers that strategically
rip apart our families and cultural identity, our self-worth.
We place value on Uncle Sam and The Commander in Chief
rather than on our own uncles, aunts, nieces, nephews, and relatives.
We use capitalism to measure others' worth and currencies
before ever attempting to acknowledge our innate invaluable resources—ourselves.

Our Manaina cry out as we chant in a choir of confusion
where elites rule over the humble, deepening our disconnection to each other
as massive as the Marianas Trench.

Indigenous souldiers of a colony carry out missions where democratic principles are spread and fought for, as these warriors return home to a non-self-governing territory where lands inherently theirs are eradicated as others' possessions.

Ownership must be paid in dues before being bought out; the gamble is not a risk— it's already decided.

We are owned.

Children are told somewhere in a far distant land there exists a better life that is unlike you. Youth swear in to give up of themselves and fight for principles that were explicitly taken from us, as they implicitly bartered atomic bombs, Agent Orange, and burial sites into a nation, a culture, and a people that existed before the U.S.

We were US before the U.S.

Our waters are polluted with contaminated language that curse our confidence, self-esteem, worth and dignity as toxic cycles and systems that once allowed slavery and dehumanized people as objects of commerce, traded warriors for wars, sovereign lands for military fortresses, culture for assimilation, native for naïve, Guahan for have-nots, Micronesia for Valiant Shield, jungles for live-firing ranges, matrilineal for a patriarchal society, Saina for administering powers, inafa'maolek for self-greed, The Emperor of Japan for The Insular Empire, an educational system for military recruitment and ASVAB dispensaries, indigeneity for immorality, and sovereign for forced colonization.

This forbidden truth shames our authenticity. Our lands are untouched by the families that once thrived and lived there as armies of machinery receive orders to destroy, bruise, abuse, torture, and kill roots that interconnect our bloodlines and histories. The present is a reflection of past trauma where in the absence of an abuser, we physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually abuse ourselves, professing to do it for monetary gain and a false sense of liberty.

We no longer are just occupied or colonized, we have been conquered and minimized to that of a location, a battleground, a strategic military base, and now an option of a live firing range. We still exist and are still alive; in the hearts of our people, we will forever thrive.

The recent ruling of Davis v. Guam is not representative of my Chamoru culture, but rather the totality of CHamoru colonization; it is illustrative of the elements that impact our lives due to living through the internal wars of a colonial system embedded in the unconscious conscience of dysfunctional systems imposed on our familia.

The once organized, unincorporated territory is starting to believe
in her self-determination and freedom,
her innate beauty and value, her indigeneity,
sacredness, and story.

Don't let their constitution define Chamoru rights

Don't let their injustice define our indigeneity

**Don't let your voice be silenced when your people are looking to you as leaders to advocate not for a
plebiscite, but for our next generation.**

Don't let the future of our people end here.

Don't let the U.S. define US.

Saina ma'āse.

si Josette Marie Lujan Quinata

