United Nations A/AC.109/2013/11



General Assembly

Distr.: General 6 March 2013

Original: English

Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

American Samoa

Working paper prepared by the Secretariat

Contents

			Page	
	The	Territory at a glance	3	
I.	I. Constitutional, legal and political issues			
II.	Bud	lget	6	
III.	Eco	onomic conditions	6	
	A.	General	6	
	B.	Fisheries and agriculture	8	
	C.	Tourism	8	
	D.	Transport and communications	8	
	E.	Water, sanitation system and utilities	9	
IV.	Soc	ial conditions	9	
	A.	General	9	
	B.	Labour and immigration	10	
	C.	Education	10	
	D.	Public health	11	
	E.	Crime and public safety	11	

Note: The information contained in the present working paper has been derived from public sources, including those of the territorial Government. Further details are contained in previous working papers available from www.un.org/en/decolonization/workingpapers.shtml.







A/AC.109/2013/11

V.	Env	ironmental protection and disaster preparedness	11
VI.	Relations with international organizations and partners		
VII.	II. Future status of the Territory		12
	A.	Position of territorial Government.	12
	B.	Position of administering Power	12
	C.	Action by the General Assembly	13

The Territory at a glance

Territory: American Samoa is a Non-Self-Governing Territory under the Charter. It is an unincorporated and unorganized territory of the United States of America, administered by the Office of Insular Affairs of the United States Department of the Interior.

Representative of administering Power: United States Department of the Interior, which has a representative resident on the ground.^a

Geography: Located in the South Pacific, approximately 3,700 kilometres south-west of Hawaii and 4,350 kilometres north-east of Australia. The Territory consists of seven islands: Tutuila and Aunuu, in addition to Ofu, Olosega and Ta'u (known as the Manu'a Islands) and the two coral atolls of Swains and Rose.

Land area: 200 km².

Exclusive economic zone: 404,391 km².

Population: 55,519 (2010 estimate).

Ethnic composition: Native Pacific Islander: 91.6 per cent; Asian: 2.8 per

cent; White: 1.2 per cent; Other ethnic origin: 2 per cent.

Languages: English, Samoan.
Seat of Government: Fagatogo.

Head of territorial Government: Governor Lolo Letalu Matalasi Moliga.

Main political parties: Democrat, Republican.

Elections: The most recent elections were held in November 2012 (Governor/Lieutenant Governor, the delegate to the United States House of Representatives and 20 members of the American Samoa House of Representatives). The next elections are due in November 2014 (House of Representatives).

Legislature: Bicameral "Fono", or legislative assembly.

Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita: \$9,315.

Economy: Fishing and agriculture.

Unemployment rate: 29.8 per cent (2005 estimate).

Monetary unit: United States dollar.

Brief history: It is believed that the Samoan archipelago was settled some 3,000 years ago by people migrating from South-East Asia. The Dutch were the first Europeans to discover the islands in 1722. The 1899 Treaty of Berlin, also known as the "Anglo-German Samoa Convention", apportioned to the United States the eastern islands of the Samoan archipelago.

3

^a Secretary's Order 2657 of 29 August 1951 and Secretary's Order 3009, as amended, of 3 November 1977, set forth the extent and nature of the authority of the Government of American Samoa and the manner in which the authority is to be exercised (see the Electronic Library of Interior Policies, United States Department of the Interior).

^b Exclusive economic zone data from the "Sea Around Us" project, a collaboration between the University of British Columbia and the Pew Environment Group (www.seaaroundus.org).

I. Constitutional, legal and political issues

- 1. By the late 1800s, internal strife among the chiefs of the islands of the Samoan archipelago and struggles among the colonial Powers of Germany, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States led to a period of instability. Deeds ceding these islands to the United States from the early 1900s were accepted by an Act of Congress on 20 February 1929. Pursuant to that Act, American Samoans were given the status of United States nationals. The Act provided for an American Samoan Government with all civil, judicial and military powers to be vested in a designee of the President of the United States. As the United States interest in the area had been mainly military, the Territory was placed under the jurisdiction of the United States Navy. On 29 June 1951, Executive Order 10264 of the United States President transferred administrative responsibility for the Territory to the Department of the Interior.
- 2. American Samoa is an "unincorporated and unorganized" Territory under United States law. Not all provisions of the United States Constitution or of United States law apply. Residents of American Samoa are not United States citizens. They are United States nationals who can freely enter the United States and work or reside anywhere they choose. Children born in the Territory to foreign parents become citizens of either the mother's or the father's country of origin, not United States nationals. American Samoans may not vote in general elections in the United States, but are permitted to participate in presidential primaries and caucuses.
- 3. The 1960 Constitution of American Samoa was revised in 1967 and subsequently amended in 1970 and 1977. Any amendments or modifications to the Constitution of American Samoa (as approved by the United States Secretary of the Interior) may be made only by an Act of the United States Congress. In 2008, a referendum that would have revised an aspect of the Constitution was narrowly defeated. The June-July 2010 Constitutional Convention proposed amendments or revisions to the current Constitution, including those related to the prohibition of further individualization of communal lands in the Territory, the establishment of an impartial jury in all criminal prosecutions, the enhancement of the Samoan language and culture in the educational system, the management and preservation of the natural resources of the Territory in accordance with local laws, and the provision for an impeachment of the Territory's leaders. However, at the November 2010 general election, the voters overwhelmingly defeated the proposed changes.
- 4. The Territory's Constitution provides for separate executive and legislative branches and an independent judiciary. The executive branch comprises a Governor and a Lieutenant Governor elected for four-year terms by universal adult suffrage. All American Samoans over 18 years of age are eligible to vote. The Governor is responsible for executing both American Samoan and United States laws and has veto power with regard to legislation passed by the "Fono", the American Samoa legislature.
- 5. General elections were held in American Samoa in November 2012. Voters chose a new Governor, independent candidate Lolo Letalu Matalasi Moliga, 20 members of the American Samoa House of Representatives, and the delegate to the United States House of Representatives. A referendum on an amendment to the revised Constitution, proposed by the thirty-second legislature was also held. The ballot question read: "Should article II, section 9 of the revised Constitution of

American Samoa be revised to give the Fono, rather than the Secretary of the United States Department of the Interior, the power to override the Governor's veto?" Voters rejected the proposal.

- 6. The Fono is a bicameral legislature, comprising an 18-member Senate, whose members are chosen by 14 tribal councils, and a 21-member House of Representatives, 20 of whom are elected by popular vote and 1 of whom is appointed as a non-voting delegate from Swains Island. Only a "matai", the traditional chief of an extended family, or "aiga", can become a senator. Senators hold office for a four-year term and representatives for a two-year term. The Fono may pass laws with regard to all local affairs, provided that they are not inconsistent with United States laws in force in the Territory or with United States treaties or international agreements.
- 7. Since 1981, American Samoa has elected by direct vote a delegate to the United States House of Representatives for a two-year term. The delegate may vote in committees and on the floor except on final passage. During the 2012 general election, Mr. Eni F. H. Faleomavaega was re-elected to serve his thirteenth term as American Samoa's delegate to the United States House of Representatives.
- 8. The judiciary system consists of a High Court, for which the Chief Justice and the Associate Justices are appointed by the United States Secretary of the Interior, and the local district and village courts, for which the judges are appointed by the Governor. The High Court is separated into Appellate, Trial, Land and Titles, and Family, Drug and Alcohol divisions. The United States Congress has granted limited federal jurisdiction to the High Court to hear certain cases involving federal statutory issues. Examples of federal judicial power delegated to the High Court include the authority to decide Occupational Safety and Health Administration issues and ship mortgage actions in American Samoa. Other matters of federal law arising in the Territory are adjudicated in the United States district courts, mainly the federal courts in Hawaii and Washington, D.C. Since American Samoa is not part of a United States federal judicial district or circuit, there are no statutory provisions for appealing decisions of the High Court to a federal district court.
- 9. In his statement at the Pacific regional seminar on the implementation of the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism: current realities and prospects, held in Quito from 30 May to 1 June 2012, the representative of the Governor of American Samoa, said that in the past, the Special Committee had been asked to remove American Samoa from the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. He further stated that while American Somoa did not advocate a change in its position of removal from the list of colonized States, it must continue to progress politically and economically, while respecting the concerns of the United States and the United Nations.
- 10. He stressed that one of the most challenging issues the Territory had to deal with in the relationship with the United States was the lack of understanding of American Samoa's unique circumstances and characteristics. He pointed out that because of a strictly political issue, the Territory's economy was forced to bear minimum wage increases regardless of the impact on the economy, a situation that could be replicated in other areas such as immigration and customs, two areas of control that would significantly hinder the Territory's self-determination efforts. Lack of understanding of the special and unique features of Samoa resulted in negative repercussions in relation to air passenger and cargo services. Also, in the case of some education programmes, there had been instances where the Territory had been categorically excluded.

11. In his view, a more structured approach to determine the will of the people would be better implemented and carried out over the future if there were a detailed workplan on how best to gauge the people's will regarding political status, complete with benchmarks for carrying that plan into action, such as periodic commissions and constitutional conventions. The territorial Government had also recommended a more active role for the administering Powers in the self-determination efforts of their territories.

II. Budget

- 12. The final version of the budget for the fiscal year 2013, which began on 1 October 2012, amounted to \$454.83 million, a reduction of about \$42.4 million from the original version submitted by the territorial Government. As in the fiscal year 2012, the American Samoa Power Authority (ASPA) received a budget only for the first quarter.
- 13. According to the Office of Insular Affairs of the United States Department of the Interior, grant funds are provided each year to American Samoa for the operation of the local government, including the judiciary, to fill the gap between budget needs and local revenues. The Office of Insular Affairs has designated American Samoa as a high-risk grantee; this designation allows the Office to require grantees from the Territory to comply with special conditions for future or existing grants. The Office's 2013 budget request for American Samoa operations is \$22.752 million, with 62.5 per cent allocated to basic operations and 33.6 per cent to the LBJ Hospital operations.

III. Economic conditions

A. General

- 14. The review of the American Samoa's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, 2012 was released in August 2012 following a process of consultation engaging the American Samoa community. The document, prepared by the Territorial Planning Commission and the Department of Commerce of the American Samoa Government, was made available for public review and comment between 5 September and 5 October 2012. The purpose of the strategy is to provide for the proper identification of future development opportunities and the removal or mitigation conditions which prevent their full realization.
- 15. Regarding economic development opportunities, the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy identifies the Territory's main assets in relation to the fishing industry (proximity to fishing grounds, physical and human infrastructure, harbour and port facilities, conditional duty-free access to the United States, and special local and federal tax incentives) and the tourism industry (increasing cruise ship calls, regional transport connections, natural beauty, the National Park and the National Marine Sanctuary, eco and cultural tourism, the pristine Manu'a Islands and a robust Polynesian culture).
- 16. The strategy identifies three categories of economic development limitations, specifically federal, general and local government constraints. It notes that notwithstanding the federal economic development benefits, the federal Government

is also capable of inflicting great harm on American Samoa's economic development, as was made abundantly clear when the United States Congress imposed the United States minimum wage. The strategy further notes that without a formal political status, Congress tends to modify American Samoa's political status with ad hoc legislation. General constraints involve labour force education and training, land availability and cost, commercial finance availability and cost, physical infrastructure and economic uncertainty and instability. Local government constraints relate to prime areas for improvement of the business climate, including transparency, business licence practices, taxation and labour. The strategy also examines business practices, infrastructure, the legal system, land and financial infrastructure.

- 17. According to the United States Department of Labor, prior to 24 July 2007, the minimum wage rates for American Samoa were set by a special industry committee. As noted in the previous working paper (A/AC.109/2012/11, para. 15), in 2007, the United States Congress passed legislation authorizing a minimum wage increase in American Samoa of \$0.50 per hour each year until the wage reached the minimum wage generally applicable in the United States. On 30 September 2010, President Obama signed House of Representatives Bill No. 3940 into law, postponing the minimum wage increase for 2010 and 2011. On 26 July 2012, he signed the Insular Areas Act into law, postponing the minimum wage increase for 2012, 2013 and 2014. Annual wage increases of \$0.50 will recommence on 30 September 2015 and will continue every three years until all rates have reached the federal minimum. The wage rates are set for particular industries, not for an employee's particular occupation. The rates are minimum rates; an employer may choose to pay an employee at a rate higher than the rate(s) for its industry.
- 18. Since 2009, in collaboration with the Office of Insular Affairs of the Department of the Interior, under the Statistical Improvement Programme, the United States Bureau of Economic Analysis has produced GDP estimates for American Samoa and other United States territories, with the aim of providing a comprehensive and objective measure of economic activity for the territories to support economic and financial decisions. According to the Bureau, the long-term goal of its joint effort with the Office of Insular Affairs is to integrate American Samoa and the other United States territories into the estimates of national GDP and the national income and product accounts, which are essential to a better understanding of the territories' economies.
- 19. In September 2012, the United States Bureau of Economic Analysis released estimates for the Territory for 2010 and revised estimates for 2002 to 2009. For the first time, it also included estimates of GDP and compensation by industry, and detailed consumer spending. These estimates were developed under the Statistical Improvement Programme funded by the Office of Insular Affairs. Estimates for 2011 are planned to be released in 2013.
- 20. Real GDP grew 1.3 per cent in 2010, reflecting increases in territorial Government spending and private fixed investment, mainly owing to reconstruction of structures and homes damaged or destroyed by the 2009 earthquake and tsunami.
- 21. The Territory's largest trading partner is New Zealand, followed by the United States, Australia, India, Indonesia and Japan. American Samoa exports, as well as the manufacturing industry, including the tuna canning industry, declined in 2010. As previously reported, American Samoa imports some 90 per cent of goods and

products, including food and petroleum products, machine parts, building materials, textiles and clothing.

B. Fisheries and agriculture

- 22. The report of the United States Government Accountability Office on the impact of the minimum wage increases (see A/AC.109/2012/11, para. 16) reflects concerns about American Samoa's loss of competitive advantage in the global tuna canning industry. The analysis presented shows that moving tuna processing plants to other tariff-free countries with lower labour costs would significantly cut operational costs in the industry. The competitive advantage of American Samoa is severely compromised by the duty-free treatment granted by the federal Government to other countries such as Canada and Mexico, which benefit from provisions under the North American Free Trade Agreement that lifted tariffs in January 2008. However, the study also points out that, the obvious advantages of moving operations to other countries notwithstanding, factors such as the remaining cannery's lease obligation up to and including 2013 and the cost of building new plants may hamper near-term relocation.
- 23. Almost 90 per cent of all farms in the Territory operate on a subsistence basis, and prospects for agricultural development continue to be limited since much of the land is volcanic and mountainous and there is only a small amount of level land suitable for cultivation. At the same time, farmers in American Samoa benefit from assistance provided by the Natural Resources Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture and its environmental quality incentives programme.

C. Tourism

24. The American Samoa Statistical Yearbook 2011, published by the American Samoa Department of Commerce, found that the United States continued to be the primary tourism market for the Territory, holding 56 per cent of the share. New Zealand followed with 29 per cent, Australia with 11 per cent and other countries with the remaining 4 per cent. In 2011, visitor arrivals dropped for the fourth year in a row.

D. Transport and communications

- 25. There are approximately 180 kilometres of public and primary paved roads and 235 kilometres of secondary village roads in American Samoa. Pago Pago harbour, an all-weather deep-draught harbour, is one of the best natural deep-water harbours in the South Pacific and is of strategic importance to the region. The main dock is 1,000 feet long, handling ships of up to a 32-foot draught. The harbour provides the full complement of equipment and facilities. The ship repair facility features a 3,000-ton marine railway.
- 26. The four airports in the Territory are situated on the islands of Tutuila, Ofu, Olosega and Ta'u respectively. Pago Pago International Airport is owned and operated by the territorial Government. The main airport is regularly served by a

number of airlines that link American Samoa with Hawaii and the continental United States as well as other countries in the South Pacific. Within the Territory, Inter Island Airways offers regular flights to Ofu, Olosega and Ta'u.

- 27. American Samoa's air transport service to and from the United States is severely restricted by United States cabotage laws that prohibit foreign carriers from transporting passengers between American Samoa and other parts of the United States, according to the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy document.
- 28. The Territory has three FM stations and three AM stations, serving approximately 57,000 radios. One Government-owned television station broadcasts over three channels to approximately 14,000 television sets. Internet access is provided by the American Samoa Telecommunications Authority, a semi-autonomous government agency.

E. Water, sanitation system and utilities

- 29. ASPA provides water, wastewater, solid-waste and electric services to customers on five of the seven islands. The Authority provides drinking water to 90 per cent of the Territory from wells, with the remaining 10 per cent being serviced by outer-village systems. According to a survey published in August 2010, the Authority loses up to 50 per cent of its water through leaky pipes. In some areas water has a high salt content. The survey also indicated that the design limitations of water pipes make their maintenance an extremely difficult task.
- 30. American Samoa depends entirely on diesel-generated power. Several projects have been launched to reduce this dependence and promote a healthy environment, such as a waste-to-energy project, and solar and wind technologies are being pursued. In September 2012, the fixed ground-mounted photovoltaic system was completed. The estimated photovoltaic system electricity production of 2.6 million kWh (kilowatt-hours)/year will offset ASPA's diesel consumption by more than 175,000 gallons and avoid releasing 3.9 million pounds of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Since waste management is recognized as a major public health and environmental concern for Pacific island countries and territories, American Samoa has joined the region's strategy for solid-waste management, which sets the strategic direction for the period 2010-2015.

IV. Social conditions

A. General

- 31. Known as "fa'asamoa", the Samoan way of life is based on the notion of mutual respect and sharing among the aiga (extended families), each featuring a common allegiance to a matai (chief), and it influences every aspect of the Territory's socioeconomic fabric. Since 2008, the Territory's legislature has been working to further strengthen the use of the Samoan language in public schools, in tandem with English.
- 32. In 2011, the Pacific office of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community published *The State of Pacific Youth* 2011: Opportunities and Obstacles, a report highlighting significant problems

13-25072 **9**

facing young people in the Pacific, including American Samoa, such as the high number of teenage pregnancies, the high proportion (26 per cent) of female teenage students physically forced to have sexual intercourse, and alcohol abuse.

33. According to the American Samoa Statistical Yearbook 2011, in 2000, about 62 per cent of all persons, or 50 per cent of families, were below the national poverty level. Out of every 10 families, one was headed by a single female householder with children. Of the 3,889 grandparents reported to have lived with their grandchildren, 71 per cent were responsible for childcare.

B. Labour and immigration

- 34. Further to the employment situation reported in the previous working paper (A/AC.109/2012/11, section B), the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy document states that, according to more recent estimates, employment began to rebound in 2010 and 2011, owing to United States economic and disaster recovery programmes, through substantial and extraordinary federal expenditure increases in American Samoa in 2009 and 2010. The strategy document notes that the federal funding impact on jobs must be regarded as temporary since United States recovery programmes are by definition intended to be short-term responses to short-term problems and, as a consequence, American Samoa's downward employment spiral could resume.
- 35. American Samoa has its own immigration laws and entry conditions into the Territory, which are not the same as those applicable to the United States. As previously reported, a new immigration law for American Samoa has entered into force, giving the Attorney-General, rather than a Government-appointed board, full authority over the granting of permanent resident status. The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy document found that local control of immigration is an important advantage to American Samoa especially in view of its limited labour force skill range and the need to bring in skilled workers and management for many industries. It further recommended revising the immigration law, policy and procedures to better accommodate business labour requirements and expressed concern that local immigration and customs control in American Samoa could be federalized, a scenario that could have very severe adverse effects on the local labour market.

C. Education

- 36. Education in American Samoa is compulsory from 6 to 18 years of age. The education system is broadly based on that of the United States. According to the American Samoa Department of Education, there are 22 early childhood education centres, 23 elementary schools and 6 high schools in the Territory. The Department serves over 14,150 students in grades kindergarten to 12.
- 37. American Samoa has a literacy rate of approximately 97 per cent. There are five school districts, each centred on a high school together with lower-level elementary or "feeder schools". The Department has 563 teachers in elementary education, 248 teaching personnel in secondary education, 18 in vocational education, 202 in special education and 118 in early childhood education.

- 38. The American Samoa Community College offers two-year degree courses in the arts and sciences and certificate programmes of proficiency in vocational and clerical skills, business and nursing.
- 39. In 2012, Aunuu, Tutuila and the Manu'a Islands were designated teacher shortage areas by the United States Department of Education in response to a request submitted by the American Samoa Department of Education.

D. Public health

- 40. According to the 2013-2017 World Health Organization (WHO) Country Cooperation Strategy for American Samoa, the most serious health issues are related to the increase in chronic and non-communicable diseases owing to improper nutrition and physical inactivity. Significant increases have been seen in obesity, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, cerebrovascular diseases, diabetes mellitus and its complications, arthritis and some forms of cancer.
- 41. Some 16 per cent of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Tropical Medical Center budget comes from the federal Government; most of the funds are used to purchase medical supplies. Vaccines and pharmaceuticals are purchased in the United States, as the Food and Drug Administration prohibits the purchase of medicines elsewhere. Logistical and financial factors cause frequent scarcity problems.
- 42. According to WHO, the morbidity pattern has fundamentally changed over the past three decades, with an increase in non-communicable diseases stemming from modernization and lifestyle changes. Inappropriate nutrition and physical inactivity are the leading cause of significant increases in obesity in both sexes and, especially, young people.

E. Crime and public safety

- 43. The Territory continued to enhance cooperation with the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police organization and the United States Department of Justice through its newly established Office of Territorial and International Criminal Intelligence and Drug Enforcement.
- 44. In 2012, it was announced that all Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) operations and investigative efforts in American Samoa would be handled by the FBI office in Honolulu, Hawaii. The decision for this consolidation was made by the United States Congress for budgetary reasons.

V. Environmental protection and disaster preparedness

- 45. The American Samoa Environmental Protection Agency, funded by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, is mandated to protect human health and to safeguard the natural environment: air, water and land.
- 46. Just as all South Pacific countries, American Samoa faces the problem of safe disposal of solid and liquid waste, particularly as a result of urbanization. According to the United Nations Environment Programme, point source pollution from industrial waste and sewage, inappropriately sited and poorly managed garbage

dumps, and disposal of toxic chemicals is a significant contributor to marine pollution and coastal degradation. Concern is also growing that toxic and hazardous waste may be brought to the region from developed countries for disposal.

VI. Relations with international organizations and partners

- 47. American Samoa has been an associate member of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific since 1988. International labour conventions and recommendations are applicable to it. The Territory belongs to various regional bodies of the United Nations system, including WHO, for which it falls under the Regional Office for the Western Pacific and the Western Pacific Regional Centre for the Promotion of Environmental Planning and Applied Studies.
- 48. American Samoa is a member of several regional organizations, including the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, the Pacific Basin Development Council, the Pacific Tuna Development Foundation, the Pacific Islands Association of Non-governmental Organizations, the Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education, the Pacific Asia Travel Association and the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme. The Territory participates in the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission and the Pacific Community Coastal Fisheries Programme. American Samoa also belongs to United States organizations, such as the National and Western Governors' Associations. The Government of American Samoa has signed memorandums of understanding with the Governments of Samoa and Tonga on mutual economic cooperation and has sent trade missions to a number of countries in the Pacific region.
- 49. At the forty-second Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' meeting, held in September 2011 in Auckland, New Zealand, American Samoa was accorded observer status. The Territory also holds observer status with the Alliance of Small Island States.

VII. Future status of the Territory

A. Position of territorial Government

50. Section I of the present working paper reflects recent developments in American Samoa concerning its future political status.

B. Position of administering Power

51. In a letter dated 2 November 2006 addressed to Congressman Faleomavaega, the United States Assistant Secretary of State for Legislative Affairs set forth the position of the Government of the United States on the status of American Samoa and other United States insular areas. In his letter, the Assistant Secretary indicated that the status of the insular areas regarding their political relations with the federal Government was an internal United States issue, and not one that came under the purview of the Special Committee. He also stated that the Special Committee had no authority to alter in any way the relationship between the United States and those territories and no mandate to engage the United States in negotiations on their status. He further stated that, at the same time, in accordance with its obligations

under the Charter of the United Nations to provide regularly to the United Nations statistical and other information of a technical nature relating to the economic, social and educational conditions, the federal Government did submit annual updates on United States territories to the Special Committee as a demonstration of United States cooperation as an administering Power and to correct any errors in information that the Special Committee might have received from other sources.

C. Action by the General Assembly

- 52. On 18 December 2012, the General Assembly adopted without a vote resolutions 67/132 A and B, based on the report of the Special Committee transmitted to the General Assembly (A/67/23) and its subsequent consideration by the Fourth Committee. Section I of resolution 67/132 B concerns American Samoa. Under the operative paragraphs of that section, the General Assembly:
 - 1. Welcomes the work of the territorial Government with respect to moving forward on political status, local autonomy and self-governance issues with a view to making political and economic progress;
 - 2. Expresses once again its appreciation for the invitation extended in 2011 by the Governor of American Samoa to the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples to send a visiting mission to the Territory, calls upon the administering Power to facilitate such a mission if the territorial Government so desires, and requests the Chair of the Special Committee to take all the steps necessary to that end;
 - 3. Requests the administering Power to assist the Territory by facilitating its work concerning a public awareness programme, consistent with Article 73 b of the Charter of the United Nations, and in that regard calls upon the relevant United Nations organizations to provide assistance to the Territory, if requested;
 - 4. *Calls upon* the administering Power to assist the territorial Government in the diversification and sustainability of the economy of the Territory and to address employment and cost-of-living issues.