Resolution No. 49-BOD-02, CD1

“To respectfully inform the President of the United States that the members of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures expresses its strong opposition to the creation of a Northern Islands National Monument.”

WHEREAS, a Northern Islands National Monument encompassing the 200-mile EEZ surrounding Uracas, Maug, and the Asuncion Islands is under consideration to be designated as a marine sanctuary or monument; and

WHEREAS, a similar designation was given to the islands north of Hawaii which is now designated as Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument that was created by President George W. Bush on June 15, 2006, under the 1906 Antiquities Act; and

WHEREAS, as expressed under the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Senate Joint Resolution No. 16-4, the designation of a CNMI marine monument would be a permanent and nearly irrevocable federal action that rightfully should require the consideration of the needs and opinions of the People of the CNMI and the potential of lost opportunities for the economic benefit to the CNMI; and

WHEREAS, the designation of the CNMI marine monument will limit access to these islands to researchers, tourists, or whoever else as determined by a federal agency, which will serve to exclude a majority of the People of the CNMI and their descendants from access to this area in perpetuity; and

WHEREAS, the issue of creating a CNMI national monument is highly controversial, sensitive, and has been a source of divisiveness in our community as is evident in our local and regional news media; and

WHEREAS, it is the sense of members of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures that the majority of citizens of the CNMI do not endorse this proposal; and

WHEREAS, the Governor of the CNMI has already responded to the Pew Charitable Trust in a letter dated March 19, 2008 and in a letter dated April 29, 2008 addressed directly to the President of the United States respectfully declining the suggestion of designating any marine sanctuary or monument in the Northern Marianas Islands; and
WHEREAS, the CNMI has already specifically identified the islands of Uracas, Maug, and
Asuncion as wildlife conservation areas with the waters surrounding them already acting as de-facto
Marine Protected Areas, accessible only upon satisfaction of conditions determined by the People of the
CNMI; and

WHEREAS, the islands of Uracas, Maug, and Asuncion are already in pristine condition and their
surrounding waters support a healthy and vibrant ecosystem without needing the “full protection” of a
federal designation; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Association of the Pacific Island Legislatures affirm that the
People of the CNMI have a strong affinity to these islands and their surrounding waters, and have a deep
sense of their connection to the culture, traditions, and the unique identity of the people; and

WHEREAS, on November 18, 2008, the 29th Guam Legislature adopted Resolution No. 196,
relative to supporting the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the Carolinian Affairs
Advisory Committee Resolution No. 2008-0001 in opposition to the proposal of the United States Federal
Government to recognize the Marianas Trench as a National Marine Monument; and

WHEREAS, a unilateral designation of this area as a marine monument under the Antiquities Act
without the consent of the People of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands would be an
affront and an insult to the People, especially to the indigenous people of the CNMI; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures,
49th Meeting, December 4-5, 2008, Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands, that the members of the
Association of Pacific Island Legislatures on behalf of the People of the CNMI respectfully inform the
President of the United States, its strong opposition to the creation of a Northern Islands National
Monument; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the President of the Association of Pacific Island
Legislatures certifies, and the Secretary of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures attests to the
adoption hereof and that copies of the same shall be thereafter transmitted to the President of the United
States; the President-Elect of the United States and to the Presiding Legislative Officers and Chief
Executives of each of the APIL member jurisdictions.

DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED ON THE 5TH DAY OF DECEMBER, 2008.

J. KALANI ENGLISH
PRESIDENT

JUDITH T. WON PAT, Ed. D.
SECRETARY