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SECOND INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF COLONIALISM

Caribbean Regional Seminar on the Implementation of the Second

International Decade for the Eradication of

Colonialism: next steps in decolonization

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Dr. Dessima Williams

Grenada Education and Development Department

DISCUSSION PAPER

dwilliam@brandeis.edu

Madam Chair,

I am happy to join with others, in my capacity of a representative of a civil society organization, the Grenada Education and Development Organization (GRENEDE), to offer you warm congratulations. We are proud of you as a diplomat, a Caribbean diplomat and a Caribbean woman diplomat.

St. Vincent
- to be
you:

GRENEDE also thanks you and all others associated with the invitation to us. We are two. My colleague is Gloria Payne-Banfield, a former Cabinet Secretary from Grenada and a woman who served as a delegate to the United Nations, 1982 - 1989, working in the Third Committee. I myself also served at the United Nations and attended the seminar on the Commission on the Status of Women. We bring some knowledge and contribution to the meeting and we are pleased to be participants every success over the next two days. We and we are pleased to be participants with our Government of Grenada at this Seminar.

Myself and Gloria Dickson, distinguished colleagues of self-governing states, continue to accept responsibility for decolonization, moral, political solidarity and of course the letter and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations. Grenada, a self-governing state within the Caribbean and the United Nations system, accepts this responsibility on all of the above ground. The opening statement of Grenada's Foreign Minister, Hon. Elvin Nimrod, affirmed that this morning and we associate ourselves with the people of South Africa and East Timor to mention two now self-determining states. Now, Western Sahara and of course, non-self-determining states right here in the Caribbean we expect our work to continue.

continues to face challenges to our political independence, many of them economic. We
with the fact that our decolonization is ongoing, CPENED keeps a keen eye on the
called civil society because NGOs come from and belong to a civil society. A rich
foundation of ideas and actions abound in civil society and it enjoys freedoms that may
not exist in the more constrained arena of highly regulated political parties or
government. We Civil Society and NGOs give ourselves the discipline of thinking
disparate sectors of society.

Madam Chair, we posit the following:

That the next steps on the work of this committee must include efforts to vigorously re-
conceptualise and re-define decolonization to include economic consideration and with
education and people's participation with partnerships from NGOs, academia and the
wider Civil society.

↑

Why is this conceptualisation necessary? The passage of five decades since the United
Nations first conceived the Committee's work of decolonization (1946) and at least four
decade since Resolution 1514 (1960), what constitutes decolonization and decolonization
have changed, for indeed the world has changed. The changes include the impact of
many evolving economic forces. To name a few: the emergence of an economically and
politically powerful Caribbean Diaspora whose participate actively in the affairs of their
Caribbean territories, from the metropolitan and from the territories, the actions of
the continuing independence of many territories on global trade even as it becomes less
hospitable to national and political interests of the least powerful members of the

forms, have risen to the fore.

Climate change is literally wreaking havoc on the entire range of human activity and the very concepts of territory, security and independence are being redefined.

Madame Chair, from the conversation of the last few days, we have heard evidence of a trend that is becoming more common is the quest for decolonization. For example, we heard that some territories are seeking to end the presence of the administering power.

Madame Chair,

with an eye to attracting and pleasing the supposed hordes of international guests many regional governments were forced to compromise our Caribbean Cricket culture. In the end this presumed foreign external economic bonanza did not occur so and some stayed away.

There are just a few of the examples of the dominance of economic factors, many externally controlled. I might add, to the life of societies facing decolonization or who may already enjoy formal political independence.

This reminds us, Madam Chair, that political independence does not complete decolonization.

Political independence still remains the hallmark of decolonization. How wonderful it

us and some testimony have illuminated, that formal political independence is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for decolonization.

So we raise these question, Madam Chair, from the perspective of pursuing decolonization. We have heard before and at this seminar, that some (Caribbean) non-self-governing territories seem reluctant to pursue decolonization as political

independence¹ because of the fear of economic loss. So we ask: is economic viability possible or even enhanced by continuing colonial status? Conversely is economic

also heard that some non-self governing territories are persuaded that they should remain under colonial rule because they believe that real or preserved benefits from the administering power will be lost.

For self governing states: is their political independence compromised by economic factors outside their national (domestic) control?

What then is decolonisation if at least one valid option — political independence — and

these questions and reflections will influence us all and so we offer three concrete suggestions.

Three recommendations:

That the C-24 publish a status report of the 16 territories, including recent constitutional developments and up-coming actions.

That given the repetitive references by representatives of non governing states, experts and other invited guest such as non governmental organizations, to the varied and fundamental and appropriate United Nations bodies (include the transnational

¹ We do not presume that independence is decolonisation. Rather we recognized the full range of three independence.

beginning with references to this topic made at this seminar.

It will be done in collaboration with the relevant IDN agencies and other partners, expand public education on decolonization, especially within the 16 territories as well as within the regions of Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific and to engage grass roots community organizations and non-governmental organizations.

I thank you, Madame Chair.