

Annex

Caribbean regional seminar on the implementation of the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism: “Midterm review, follow-up and priorities for action”, held in Canouan, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, from 17 to 19 May 2005

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I. Introduction	

8. The seminar was conducted by Julian Robert Hunte, Permanent Representative of Saint Lucia to the United Nations and Chairman of the Special Committee, with the participation of the following members of the Special Committee: China, the Congo, Cuba, Dominica, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, the Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (host country) and Tunisia. France, an administering Power, participated in the seminar as observer. Algeria, Argentina, Morocco and Spain also participated.

9. At the 1st meeting, on 17 May 2005, the following members of the Special

administration are prepared to make an educated choice regarding constitutional status in order to finalize the decolonization process;

13. At the same meeting, the Chairman of the Special Committee made an opening statement (see appendix III).

14. At the same meeting, Maria Maldonado, Chief of Decolonization Unit, Department of Political Affairs, United Nations Secretariat, read out a message from the Secretary-General (see appendix IV).

15. At the same meeting, on the proposal of the Chairman, the members of the Special Committee attending the seminar decided to annex the statement of the Rapporteur of the Committee to the present report (see appendix V).

16. On 20 May, at the sixth meeting, the Chairman made a concluding statement.

17. At the same meeting, the participants adopted by acclamation a resolution expressing appreciation to the Government and the people of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (see appendix VI).

B. Summary of statements and discussions

Member States

18. The representative of Algeria stated that since 1965, the General Assembly had repeatedly called for the decolonization of Western Sahara, while confirming the inalienable right of the Saharawi people to self-determination. The people of Western Sahara had shown their confidence in the United Nations by accepting a referendum and settlement plan. Morocco had also accepted the plan but it had prevented the holding of a referendum for self-determination. The Security Council invited the two parties — Morocco and the Frente Polisario — to continue to

both Governments to negotiate a peaceful solution, taking into consideration the objectives of the Charter, resolution 1514 (XV) and the interests of the inhabitants of the Islands. The representative of Argentina said that the Special Committee should continue to encourage the resumption of the negotiations between the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom in order to find a solution to the question in accordance with the recent resolutions and decisions of the United Nations.

20. The representative of the Congo stated that the dissemination of information among the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories regarding their rights to self-determination was a crucial part of the decolonization process. Only the people who were well-informed could make the right choice and avoid being "abused". The special Committee should continue to bring attention to the responsibilities of the administering Powers, engaging them in a constructive dialogue with a view to implementing the mandate of the General Assembly. The active participation and engagement of the administering Powers was crucial in this process. The Special Committee should systematically review on an annual basis the implementation of the specific recommendations on decolonization and take into account the accurate needs expressed during this seminar by the representatives of the Non-Self Governing Territories.

21. The representative of Morocco underlined the unique position held by Morocco in the history of colonization as well as in the decolonization process, having been subject to three-fold colonization. Morocco, participated in good faith

of self-governance and was in the process of now calling for a constitutional review

upon the Special Committee to use its influence to encourage the Government of the United Kingdom to meet its responsibilities to their territories, which aspired to be decolonized and to assist them in doing so and not tell them, as they had done in the

assessment of the situation could bring both new momentum to the decolonization process and new hope to the Saharawi people.

United Nations Development Programme

28. The representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) stated that UNDP corporately and through its field offices has been consistent in its support of the United Nations decolonization mandate and resolutions with the provision of technical assistance inputs and expertise. In the case of the Caribbean, the Caribbean Non-Self Governing Territories received support for the implementation of in-country policy and public awareness processes. Earlier this year, UNDP Offices in the Caribbean had proposed providing support for a Regional Governance Programme which was seeking to build on and strengthen the robust governance traditions of the Caribbean. UNDP Barbados office would support programming strategies to strengthen participatory democracy and promote greater participation by civil society and all population groups withnCo 51969(r)-17.14(u)-16.-22.899c01(w)-17.1969(i)

(a) An expert from the United States Virgin Islands stated that in assessing the level of implementation of the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, he had examined the recommendations of the regional seminars and the resolutions during the first decade in comparison with those of the Second International Decade at midterm. He outlined the recurrent themes which emerged from the recommendations and resolutions in areas as political education, autonomy, legitimate political options, the UN role in the self-determination process and the human rights dimension of self-determination. He also noted the themes of

Non-governmental organizations

32. A representative of the Anguilla Constitutional and Electoral Reform Committee noted that many of the people of Anguilla believed that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office already had a special constitution prepared for Anguilla, although she hoped that was not the case. The constitutional process in Anguilla had stalled, but they were hoping to move forward very soon with renewed vigour. The people of Anguilla called upon the United Nations to assist them and to their view that constitutional provisions should no longer be imposed upon the people of the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

33. A representative of the Bermuda Independence Commission (Bermuda) stated that the Commission (BIC) was formed in December of 2004 by the Premier of Bermuda, the Honourable Alex Scott J.P.M.P. Commissioners represented a broad cross section of the community. The Commission was charged with cau(c)-17m

Committee recommend to the General Assembly that Puerto Rico be re-inscribed on the list of Non-Self Governing Territories. He expressed the hope that the Special Committee would promote an educational process in Puerto Rico, regarding all aspects of decolonization with emphasis on mechanisms such as the Constitutional Assembly on Status. He also proposed that as part of the educational process, the Special Committee should send a visiting mission to Puerto Rico.

36. A representative of Free Montserrat United Movement stated that the administering Power had used its power, influence and finances to keep Montserrat in a state of colonial dependency. He added that the administering Power had used the volcanic activity on Montserrat, to further its own agenda for holding on to Montserrat and to thwart the hopes and aspirations of the people to see some progressive move forward out of their colonial state. Montserrat had requested that the Associated Statehood option be revisited. He pointed out that this development was a clear indication that the people of Montserrat were not in favour of maintaining the status quo and that they wanted to see some indication of a process that would eventually lead to their own national identity and nationhood. For its part, the administering Power contended that Montserrat had only two options: to remain tied to it in a perpetual state of dependency and control or to achieve independence. That was the stated position that the administering Power had maintained for many years. The administering Power appeared to have no problems spending money to keep Montserrat dependent. However, the administering Power had yet to suggest a modality by which it would assist the Territory to move out of its colonial state, and eventually achieve independence.

37. A representative of the United Nations Association of the Virgin Islands stated that the Committee's recent experiences of direct contact on the ground in non-self-governing territories had illustrated the need for, and usefulness of, accurate and authoritative information on self-determination being provided to the governments and people of the Non-Self-Governing Territories by the United Nations. Recent events in the United States Virgin Islands revealed a profound lack of information and understanding of the issues of decolonization, self-determination and political status within the political directorate and the population, and a disinclination to accept correct information from local persons. There was an urgent need for the Committee to facilitate the provision of information and education on political status issues to the Territories.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

38. At its 6th meeting, held on 19 May 2005, the Chairman presented to the participants the following conclusions and recommendations:

Eradicating colonialism, role of the Special Committee and plan of action

1. The United Nations has a valid ongoing role in the process of decolonization. The mandate of the Special Committee is a major political programme of the United Nations.
2. After carrying out a midterm review, the seminar recommended that the Special Committee, the administering Powers and the Non-Self-Governing Territories engage in constructive discussions and innovative ways to expedite the implementation of the goals of the Second International Decade and its

Plan of Action for the Eradication of Colonialism as contained in General Assembly resolution 55/146 of 8 December 2000.

11. In the process of decolonization, and where there are no disputes over sovereignty, there is no alternative to the principle of self-determination, which is also a fundamental human right. All available options for self-determination are valid as long as they are in accordance with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned and in conformity with the clearly defined principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations, and as enunciated in General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960 and 1541 (XV) of 15 December 1960 and other relevant resolutions and decisions.

12. The participants expressed the view that, as long as there are Non-Self-Governing Territories, the inalienable rights of the peoples of those Territories must be guaranteed by the United Nations and the Special Committee in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV).

Public awareness and information campaigns

13. Continued examination of the spectrum of options for self-determination by all parties concerned and dissemination of relevant information among the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories are important elements in achieving the goals of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the plan of action.

14. The participants affirmed the need for the Special Committee to actively embark on a public awareness campaign aimed at fostering an understanding among the people of the Territories of the options for self-determination included in the relevant United Nations resolutions on decolonization, especially within the context of developing programmes of work for specific Territories.

15. The seminar recommended that the Special Committee, in conjunction with the Department of Public Information and other relevant United Nations bodies, develop a programme to disseminate information and raise public awareness in the Territories in order to heighten people's understanding of the legitimate political status options available to them in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions, including the 1960 Declaration, and bearing in mind the successful programmes in this vein undertaken for the former Trust Territories.

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18. The participants encouraged the United Nations to assist those Non-Self-Governing Territories that are granted observer status at United Nations world summits and conferences and special sessions of the General Assembly by facilitating the dissemination of information to them regarding the conferences and sessions.

Visiting missions

19. The participants confirmed the need to dispatch periodic visiting missions to the Non-Self-Governing Territories with the aim of raising public awareness of decolonization issues and possible options available for self-determination, while assessing the situation in those Territories and of ascertaining the wishes and aspirations of the peoples thereof regarding their future status, and called on the administering Powers to cooperate in facilitating such visiting missions. They noted the

25. The seminar reiterated its support for the current participation of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the relevant regional commissions of the United Nations and in specialized agencies of the United Nations. It called for the increased involvement of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in programmes and activities of the United Nations system in furtherance of the decolonization process, subject to the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions and

which run counter to the rights and interests of the people concerned and

Appendix I

List of participants

Members of the Special Committee

Saint Lucia*	Julian Robert Hunte Chairman of the Special Committee
	Michelle Joseph Member of the Special Committee
China*	Xie Yunliang Member of the Special Committee
Congo*	Luc Joseph Okio Vice-Chairman of the Special Committee
Cuba*	Orlando Requeijo Gual Vice-Chairman of the Special Committee
Dominica*	Crispin Gregoire Member of the Special Committee
Ethiopia*	Birhanemeskel Abebe Segni Member of the Special Committee
Indonesia*	Muhammad Anshor Member of the Special Committee
Papua New Guinea	Jimmy Ovia Member of the Special Committee
Russian Federation*	Albert Sitnikov Member of the Special Committee
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (host country)	Michael Browne Margaret Hughes Ferrari Suenel Fraser
Tunisia*	Kais Kabtaani Member of the Special Committee

States Members of the United Nations

Argentina	Jose Luis Vignolo
Algeria	Larbi Djacta

Administering Power

France (observer) Genevieve Pouquet-El Chami

Non-Self-Governing Territories

American Samoa	Lelei Peau
British Virgin Islands	Kedrick Pickering
Saint Helena	Eric George
Turks and Caicos Islands	Michael Misick Osvald Skippings Jeffrey Hall Norman Hamilton
United States Virgin Islands	Carlyle Corbin
Western Sahara	Ahmed Boukhari

Non-governmental organizations

Anguilla Constitutional and Electoral Reform Committee (Anguilla) Lolita Davis Richardson

Regional organization

Africa Union

Omotayo Olaniyan

Organization of American States

Melene Glynn

Observer

Joseph Bossano (Gibraltar)

Appendix II

visit some of the neighbouring Islands. Just to the South are the world famous Tobago Cays. It would be a shame if you failed to enrich your life experience by seeing these national treasures first hand.

I now formally declare open the 2005 Caribbean Regional Seminar on the implementation of the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

- The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
- The Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Arising from this extensive mandate is the consistent reaffirmation by all United Nations Member States to develop programmes of political education in the territories on the options of political equality, to provide assistance to the territories from United Nations agencies, to conduct visiting missions, to operationalize the human rights dimension of self-determination, and to promote the repatriation of natural resources to the territories, among other directives. We are aware of the annual re-affirmation by the General Assembly for a transfer of powers to the peoples of the territories, consistent with sustained requests for such devolution of power resonating in many of these territories.

We are also aware of the many forward-thinking recommendations advanced before the Special Committee by the peoples of the territories themselves, including

governance programme for the Eastern Caribbean. The role of UNDP in providing support for the constitutional reform process in Anguilla several years ago was an important step in advancing the critical role that UNDP can play in modernizing the governance models in the remaining territories. The present assistance provided by

determination process of the small island territories, if we are to avoid the spectre of “colonies in perpetuity” where the unilateral authority of the administering powers remains the determining factor in the decision-making process.

Appendix IV

Message from the Secretary-General

It gives me pleasure to send my greetings to all the participants in this Caribbean Regional Seminar on Decolonization, which takes place during the week of solidarity with the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. The people and Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines merit our gratitude for hosting this event and for their ongoing support of the United Nations.

This gathering of representatives of the Territories, the administering Powers, and civil society provides a valuable opportunity to take stock of the progress that has been made in decolonization, and more importantly to formulate strategies for achieving the objective of eradicating colonialism before the end of this decade. I urge you to have an open, frank and constructive exchange of views.

The successes of the United Nations in decolonization should inspire and encourage us in our efforts to ensure that the people of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories can exercise their right to self-determination, in accordance with the 1960 Declaration regarding colonial countries and peoples. Toward that end, it is essential that they understand the options regarding their political status and their right to choose their future freely. It is also impatthhhtttt5TJ 201.66 0J 201.66 0J 20 olet

The Plan of Action calls for the international community to enable the peoples of the Territories to exercise their right to self-determination and decide on their future political status with complete knowledge and awareness of the full range of political options available to them. It specially c

informal discussions to advance the cause of decolonization. We hope that in this spirit, we can resume informal consultations with the administering Powers.

The Plan of Action also contains specific requests of the Special Committee. For instance, it states that the Special Committee should continue to seek, as a matter of priority the full cooperation of administering Powers with regard to the dispatch of visiting missions to the Non-Self-Governing Territories. The Committee has sought such cooperation convinced of the usefulness of such activities. I mentioned earlier that a special mission visited Bermuda in March. The Mission's report has not yet been published as a document, but in informal discussions with the members of the Special Mission that visited Bermuda, it becomes evident that a great wealth of information has been gained as a result of the visit, by both the people in the Territory and the members of the Special Committee. Obviously, it would be desirable that the visiting missions or special missions could take place in the framework of a plan for the decolonization of specific Territories agreed to with the administering Power and the representatives of the Territories on a case-by case basis. The political impact of such visits is also important in that it reassures the Non Self Governing Territories of the fact that their situation is monitored and followed at the United Nations and that their cause can count on the support of the international community.

The Committee has been asked to prepare periodic analyses of the progress and extent of the implementation of the Declaration. This matter has been brought up in previous seminars and meetings of the Special Committee. The reports of the Committee, the statements of its Chairman and the recommendations it submits to the General Assembly on individual Territories and on issues such as international assistance and economic interests are parts of such analysis.

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Appendix VI

Resolution on expression of appreciation to the Government and the people of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

The participants in the Caribbean regional seminar,

Having met from 17 to 19 May 2005 in Canouan, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, for the purpose of carrying out a midterm review of the progress achieved in the implementation of the plan of action of the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism,

Having heard