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FORTH INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF COLONIALISM

Pacific regional seminar on the implementation of the Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism: advancement of the Non-Self-Governing Territories through the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and beyond

Castries, Saint Lucia

11 to 13 May 2022

**STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE
OF BELIZE**

Belize Statement At Decolonization Seminar

Madam Chair, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

As I am taking the floor for the first time, I wish to thank the government and people of Saint Lucia for hosting us this week. I congratulate them on the excellent logistical arrangements made for the conduct of this seminar. I also wish to extend my appreciation to the people of Saint Lucia for the warmth and hospitality they have demonstrated since our arrival on Tuesday including for the hospitality demonstrated to us at last night's reception. I have been travelling to Saint Lucia for many years and this never ceases to amaze me.

Madam Chair,

I also wish to commend you for the very disciplined but fair manner in which you have been conducting the seminar. This has enabled a frank exchange of views and has resulted in a most informative and enriching event.

Madam Chair,

We are very concerned that the legitimate aspirations of the Sahwari people for self-determination and independence has been thwarted and obstructed for almost 50 years. The UN OAU Settlement Plan was accepted by all Parties and approved by the UN Security Council. However, instead of implementing the Plan, conflict has flared up once again in the region. This will only hinder the process of decolonization and exacerbate anger and resentment that will take longer and longer to heal. We therefore call upon the Special Committee on Decolonization to initiate action that would result in the decolonization of Western Sahara, including the cessation of hostilities and enabling the conduct of a free and fair referendum.

Madam Chair the legitimate aspirations of the Sahwari people for self-determination and control of their natural resources has been thwarted for too long.

Finally Madam Chair let me take this opportunity to join my CARICOM colleagues who yesterday expressed support to the legitimate elected government and the people of the British Virgin Islands for their right to self-rule. We maintain that any action to impose direct rule from London would be inconsistent with the UN Declaration of Human Rights. We would like to remind the United Kingdom of its international obligations under UN Resolution 1514 of 1960 – the United Nations Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

Thank you.