

Distr. RESTRICTED  
CRS/2007/CRP.18

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

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

St. George's, Grenada  
22 to 24 May, 2007

Closing Statement by H.E. Margaret Hughes Ferrari,  
Chairperson of the Special Committee

**Special Committee on Decolonisation  
2007 Caribbean Regional Seminar**

**St. George's, Grenada, 22-24 May 2007**

**Closing statement by H.E. Margaret Hughes Ferrari,  
Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the  
United Nations, Chair of the Special Committee**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

The Caribbean Regional Seminar has now drawn to a close. On behalf of the Special Committee, I would like to offer my sincere thanks to all participants for their presence here, and for their contributions to the deliberations of the Seminar. I am especially pleased that we have had a lively exchange of views fuelled by the inputs of the Caribbean representatives, since this region has after all been the focus of this seminar.

We, as the Special Committee, have a special responsibility towards the people of the Non-Self-Governing Territories within our purview, and it is indeed a privilege to have had the opportunity to hear directly from you over these past days. I am confident that the Special Committee's work will have been greatly enriched by this encounter. We have listened carefully to your concerns and opinions and I can assure you that it is my intention that they will be taken into account by the Special Committee in the future.

Our special thanks also go to the other distinguished speakers, who kindly accepted the Special Committee's invitation despite the limited time available for the preparation of the Seminar, and who shared with us their valuable expertise and enlightening insights.

During the three days of deliberations, we have heard from representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, competent experts and non-governmental organizations, a representative of an administering Power, Members of the Special Committee, and other Member States. Time does not permit me to encapsulate the richness of the debate we have had. But all of you here in the room have been privy to this exchange and I wish to thank those of you who made a constructive contribution to our discussions.

What has been made abundantly clear to us during these past days is that different Territories have different needs, different expectations and different concerns. It is obvious that some Territories are quite satisfied with the present arrangements that exist between them and their administering Power, while others expressed dissatisfaction or a need for further progress. It is incumbent upon the Special Committee to recognize this

spectrum, and it is its duty to find ways forward to deal with this reality on a case-by-case basis, always keeping as our paramount consideration the wishes and wellbeing of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

Before I conclude, I would like once again to express our sincere appreciation to the Government of Grenada for hosting and organizing this seminar. Foreign Minister Nimrod's presence at our opening ceremony was greatly appreciated, as were the tireless efforts of Ambassador Friday, Grenada's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, and his deputy, Ms. Margot Saint John.

We are also grateful to the staff of the Grenadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as the staff at the Rex Grenadian Resort for the efficient and generous support given to the United Nations Secretariat. Lastly, our thanks go to the UN staff from the Decolonization Unit of the Department of Political Affairs, the Conference Services team from the Department of General Assembly and Conference Services, and the press officers from the Department of Public Information. I cannot name all of the many other people who worked with us on this seminar, and contributed to the success of the event. But you have our sincere gratitude.

Again, best wishes to all – particularly those of you who came here from the Non-Self-Governing Territories. I wish you all a safe journey back home.

I now declare closed this 2007 Caribbean Regional Seminar.

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