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ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

THIRD INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF COLONIALISM

Pacific regional seminar on the implementation of the Third International Decade for
the Eradication of Colonialism: accelerating action

Denarau, Nadi, Fiji
21 to 23 May 2014

STATEMENT BY
THE REPRESENTATIVE OF
PAPUA NEW GUINEA



Statement by the Representative of the Papua New Guinea Permanent Mission to the United Nations at the Special Committee on Decolonisation (C-24) Pacific Regional Seminar, Nadi, Fiji, 21 May 2014

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Mr Chairman;
Excellencies;
Distinguished Delegates and Guests; and
Ladies and Gentlemen.

- I. Thank you for giving me the floor. Firstly, I convey my delegation's warmest appreciation to the Government and the hospitable people of Nadi, Fiji for being a generous and excellent host, as always, and on behalf of our Melanesian sub-region and the Pacific region, to the Special Committee on Decolonisation's Pacific Regional Seminar. Vinaka vakalevu!
- II. I also thank the C-24 and, in particular, you, Mr Chairman and the Bureau members for your decision to convene this important meeting in Fiji. I am sure the amiable setting will contribute to a constructive meeting, which will only confirm that your decision was indeed a wise one.

Mr Chairman,

- III. This meeting, today, again reminds us and the international community of the mandate bestowed upon us by the people of the world to ensure that the remaining vestiges of colonialism are eliminated in the remaining 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories on the UN list that continue to bear the yoke of colonialism.
- IV. Let us not forget the UN Deputy Secretary-General Jan Ellison's timely message in February 2014 given to the C-24 in particular and the international community that "colonialism is a historic aberration." This was echoed this morning by the Prime Minister of Fiji. We must therefore make strident efforts to the challenge of eradicating colonialism. This however, must be done in accordance with the principles of the UN Charter, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and peoples and relevant UN resolutions.

- V. We can be proud that the C-24 has come a long way and done a commendable job since its inception, where over more than 80 countries, constituting some 750 million people have been emancipated. However, our work remains unfinished and the pace of decolonization has waned. Today, nearly two million people in the 17 remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories on the UN list look to us to facilitate their aspirations for self-determination and liberty from colonialism.

Mr Chairman,

- VI. It is however, pleasing to note that under the stewardship of the distinguished delegation of Ecuador, as the C-24 Chair, especially in the last year and half, we have sensed a level of engagement that has breathed a new lease of life to the work of the C-24. This we warmly welcome and fully support.
- VII. Whilst we are encouraged by the positive overtures and engagements by the various Administering Powers in recent years to address specific cases, we believe there is room for further improvement for direct dialogue and constructive cooperation that should be inclusive and broad-based involving all relevant stakeholders and on a case-by-case basis.
- VIII. As we move into the middle of the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, we have to ask ourselves important questions as to what we must do to be more effective and resourceful in trying to achieve more positive outcomes. So we would agree with recent proposals made by a number of delegations for us to think outside-of-the-box and deploy mutually agreeable new strategic mechanisms that could help expedite the self-determination process.
- IX. This could include informal dialogues involving all relevant stakeholders and high-level panel discussions under the "good offices" of the Secretary-General or the General Assembly President to renew global leaders focused attention on this human rights issue and to explore practical pathways to rid the scourge of colonialism in our midst.
- X. In closing, and in this regard, I would commend you, Mr Chairman, and your predecessor and other colleagues at the Mission of Ecuador for the various initiatives that have been initiated such as the holding of informal meetings including "outreach" meetings with the Administering Powers. We therefore commend you for this process and encourage consolidation of this pathway.

I thank you.

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WITH REGARD TO NEW CALEDONIA



**Statement by the Representative of Papua New Guinea Permanent Mission
to the United Nations at the Special Committee on Decolonisation (C-24)
Pacific Regional Seminar, Nadi, Fiji, 21 May 2014**

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Mr Chairman;
Excellencies; and
Distinguished Delegates and Guests.

- I. I thank the Ulu of Tokelau and the distinguished representative of New Zealand for their respective useful briefings on the situation in Tokelau. Papua New Guinea remains committed to work within the ambit of C-24 with Tokelau and New Zealand, which in our view, is a role model in the decolonization process. Likewise, I thank distinguished Ambassador of France to Fiji and the other respective interlocutors on New Caledonia's self-determination. I also note the presentations from the delegations from American Samoa and Guam.
- II. I will however, confine my intervention to New Caledonia's self-determination process and provide some observations of my delegation. Firstly, we want to thank the people and recent past Territorial Government of New Caledonia for welcoming and hosting the C-24 Visiting Mission last March as well as for the thought-provoking, insightful and useful engagements we had with various segments of the community and government.

- III. Secondly, let me congratulate the people of New Caledonia for peacefully conducting the Provincial Election on 11 May 2014 under the Noumea Accord. We also convey our felicitations to the new members of the Territorial Congress, provincial assemblies and municipal offices and wish them well as they prepare their administration in the lead up to the implementation of the Referendum under the Noumea Accord.
- IV. We would however, remind all the new high office bearers in New Caledonia of their responsibilities to their people and their future destiny which is in their hands and to use their mandate wisely for the common good future of New Caledonia.
- V. Whilst we note the genuine concerns of many New Caledonians over the complexities regarding the electoral system, we would note that this is a very important issue that all stakeholders in New Caledonia as well as the Administering Power need to jointly address under the existing Noumea Accord for the Territory's peaceful future.
- VI. This is an issue that neither the UN nor Papua New Guinea and other parties outside of the Territory will dictate to New Caledonians because ultimately New Caledonians themselves will have to decide. We will be willing to help where we can, only if and when officially requested by the relevant authorities of New Caledonia and the Administering Power.

Mr Chairman,

- VII. Thirdly, but not the least, we are pleased with the ongoing level of constructive cooperation and engagement of the Government of France as Administering Power of the Territory, particularly for permitting the first-ever C-24 Visiting Mission to New Caledonia last March. We register our gratitude for the generous hospitality and for the valuable programme both in New Caledonia and in Paris. We also commend the France Permanent Mission to the UN for the useful support and continuing cooperative engagement on the self-determination process in New Caledonia. We would also note here the efforts of Mr Roch Wamytan and the FLNKS for bringing the idea of the Visiting Mission to C-24. Furthermore, we also acknowledge their involvement and efforts during the visit.

- VIII. Whilst we welcome the progressive efforts been made by the Administering Power to rebalance the level of development across New Caledonia and to transfer powers and authority on functionalities to the Territory, under the Noumea Accord, we also believe that more efforts are required to ensure the timeliness of transfer of agreed powers and for adequate capacity building of indigenous people of New Caledonia so that they can be meaningfully involved in determining their future destiny.
- IX. Another area, which in our view, that the Administering Power could strengthen is the reporting on developments taking place in New Caledonia, as required under Article 73 e of the UN Charter..There are many positive developments taking place that are either under-reported or modestly reported and thus not being reflected properly in the annual report and resolution. Thus, more detailed information on both positive and other challenges provided to C-24 members could facilitate C-24 members with a better perspective on developments in New Caledonia. We welcome the undertaking made by the Administering Power to provide further details on developments in New Caledonia.
- X. It is also important to draw to the attention of this meeting that as part and parcel of the self-determination process, the Administering Power is mandated under the UN Charter Article 73 e to ensure that the migration of other people into New Caledonia is controlled and managed in a way that ensures the indigenous people are not undermined. This is an area of growing concern that needs to be addressed appropriately as it has direct implication for the self-determination process of New Caledonia.

Mr Chairman,

- XI. I should also draw to the attention of this meeting that the period between 2014 and 2018 is highly critical for New Caledonia. This is the window under the Noumea Accord for the holding of a Referendum or Referenda to decide on New Caledonia's future status. This will of course require two-thirds majority of Congress members in the Territory agreeing to the conduct of a Referendum. This is a delicate and sensitive process and issue that necessitates close monitoring. We would urge all stakeholders in New Caledonia and the Administering Power to exercise peaceful dialogue, restraint and full respect and implementation of the Noumea Accord.
- XII. Finally, my delegation would therefore note the importance of ensuring that the electoral concerns of all parties are addressed for a fair and just Referendum outcome. Whilst noting that registration for elections including for the Referendum are not mandatory, the Territorial Government should ensure all voters are adequately informed in a timely manner and on a regular basis. This is a area of concern drawn to our attention in the just concluded provincial election. This should also mean that political parties take on a more added responsibility of doing better by assisting voters enrolled for the Referendum vote.

Thank you.