



# **ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES**

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Commerce and Trade of St. Vincent and the Grenadines

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## **Closing Statement**

By

**Ms. Nedra Miguel**

Deputy Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Mission to the United Nations

At the

**2017 Caribbean Regional Seminar of the Special Committee on the  
Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the  
Granting of independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples**

16<sup>th</sup> May, 2017

Kingstown, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

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His Excellency Rafael Darío Ramírez Carreño, Chairman of the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonisation and other members of the Special Committee on Decolonisation, distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen.

Please permit me to say a few words on behalf of my Government. I wish to extend sincere regrets concerning the incident transpired here today. I do trust that it would not have taken away the positive atmosphere with which we have been able to conduct discussions over the past few days.

We wish to express our sincere appreciation for your presence in our beloved land over these last several days as you deliberated on the important and sometimes contentious issues of contemporary decolonization in all of its intricacies and complexities.

It is a great honour for me to deliver these brief remarks to you on behalf of my Foreign Minister, Honourable Sir Louis Straker, who is currently on overseas engagement. The importance of this meeting cannot be sufficiently underscored; my Government embraces this great opportunity to host the 2017 Regional Seminar on Decolonization. Decolonization and colonialism are uncompleted

journies with real effects and many challenges. The former Prime Minister of Jamaica, the late Michael Manley once wrote: "in order to get out of a trap, you must first recognise that we are in fact, in a trap, " colonialism is a trap.

From all indications, you have made significant progress on the way forward in determining how to implement the decolonization mandate more effectively. In so doing, you have identified many obstacles to the implementation of decolonization resolutions which have delayed the decolonization process. In this connection, we must endeavor to ensure that the path is properly prepared, and the requisite resources provided, to facilitate a more proactive approach in carrying out these responsibilities set forth in the United Nations Charter. Mr. Vice President, Excellences, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, It is encouraging that your discussions during the course of this meeting have addressed these critical issues with the aim of accelerating the process.

However, I urge you to let the words of my Prime Minister during the opening of this Seminar on Tuesday be your guide; "a negotiated way towards decolonization is the preferred way, therefore let us be optimistic and put aside our personal issues and move towards peace and dialogue." I encourage the Committee to continue to

advance the decolonization agenda, to become a platform for dialogue and not to dissuade or dismiss the voices that are knocking on the door. I encourage us to be realistic and seek to address the real issues that are before us. I invite you to ponder on the words of the African Poet and Anti colonialist Amilcar Cabral: "National Liberation, the struggle against colonialism, the construction of peace, progress and independence are hollow winds devoid of any significance unless they can be translated into a real important event of living conditions."

In closing, I wish to extend sincere gratitude to the Secretariat staff from New York, to you the participants and also the hardworking staff at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who went beyond to ensure the facilitation of arrangements for this Seminar.

I hope you will remember with fondness your visit to our beloved island Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and hope that you have had an opportunity to enjoy the beauty of our country and our people.

Please have a safe return home and we look forward to welcoming you back.

I Thank you.