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**FOURTH INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF COLONIALISM**

**Caribbean regional seminar on the implementation of the Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism: charting a dynamic course for decolonization in commencing the Fourth International Decade and in the light of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, through commitment to mandate, collaboration, pragmatism and agility**

**Parish of St. John, Dominica**

**25 to 27 August 2021**

**CLOSING STATEMENT BY**

**THE CHAIR OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF 24**

**Special Committee on the Situation with regard  
to the Implementation of the Declaration on the  
Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries  
and Peoples**

**Elements proposed for the closing statement for the 2021 Caribbean regional seminar**

**by**

**Her Excellency Ms. Keisha Aniya McGuire**

**Chair 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  
Parish of St. John, Dominica**

Dr. The Hon. Roosevelt Skerit, Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Resilience, Economic  
Affairs, Investment, Planning, Sustainable Development, Telecommunications and Broadcasting,

Hon. Dr. Kenneth Darroux, Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Business and Diaspora  
Relations,

Senator Nicholls Esprit,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

As we conclude the first seminar of the Fourth Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, I should like to extend on behalf of the Special Committee, our sincere thanks to the Government and people of Dominica for hosting this important event. And, to you, Hon. Prime Minister, for your steadfast support for the work of this Committee and ensuring we fulfill this most important mandate via the successful conduct of the 2021 Caribbean Regional Seminar, in a context marked by the difficulties and restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. A special note of profound gratitude is also owed to the distinguished Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Commonwealth of Dominica to the United Nations for her dedication to the work of the committee over the years as well as her invaluable contribution and support that were instrumental to the Seminar being held this year, which I would be remiss not to mention is the FIRST UN meeting held outside of UN Headquarters in NY and staffed from Headquarters. A Herculean effort that cannot be overstated. Many thanks and warmest congratulations to you, Madam Ambassador.

It is also important to highlight the participation of the Territories, administering Power, Member States, experts, and other participants, who despite the difficulties inherent to the situation we are living, made the effort to participate, thus contributing to and enriching the discussions.

We have a full room, despite this unprecedented period, with challenges we have not faced before. which is indeed notable and a testament to the commitment of all stakeholders to the decolonization agenda.

And in this context, we were able to move forward with the Committee's programme of work, thanks to everyone's strong support.

We have succeeded, with everyone's contribution, in making the work of the Committee productive, in spite of the uncertainties that characterize these times.

This is why holding this seminar is of even greater importance and has a strong significance.

Because it is a testimony to the strong commitment to the Committee's mandate, and above all, to the central role that the voices of the Territories have in its work.

Excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to highlight the importance of the wide-ranging deliberations we have had these days, covering such important aspects as the need to chart a dynamic course in the decolonization process.

We have discussed issues that are central to the implementation of our mandate, including cross-cutting and global issues faced by the Territories, particularly the COVID-19 pandemic.

We have also reviewed a number of developments specific to some Territories.

Such exchanges of ideas are particularly important in a year that marks the beginning of the Fourth Decade and the holding of the third referendum on self-determination in New Caledonia.

This new Decade, whose beginning has been characterized by the obstacles proper to a pandemic, must be a period of action and concrete results. We have proved that we are able to overcome all sorts of obstacles.

As I have stressed during the time that I have had the honour of steering the work of the Committee, the "commitment to mandate, collaboration, pragmatism and agility" are key to the success of our work.

At this point of time, it is also worth highlighting the importance of the historical moment that New Caledonia is going through, with the third referendum to be held in December.

I am grateful for the continued and useful collaboration of France. The Committee will closely follow the situation and developments in New Caledonia, in support for its decolonization process.

Finally, I would like to again thank everyone again for their contribution to the success of the seminar.

In this connection, I want to thank the interpreters for their professionalism in facilitating our discussions. I also would like to thank all the United Nations Secretariat staff in the Department of General Assembly and Conference Management; the Decolonization Unit of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs; and the Department of Global Communication, as well as staff from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs International Business and Diaspora Relations, sound technicians and others for their contributions to the organization and holding of the seminar.

I hereby declare the 2021 Caribbean regional seminar on decolonization closed.

Thank you.

27 August 2021