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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**

**STATEMENTS BY  
THE REPRESENTATIVE OF SIERRA LEONE**



# **PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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GENERAL STATEMENT

*BY*

**H. E. MRS. VICTORIA M. SULIMANI**  
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE TO THE UNITED NATIONS

AT

**THE CARIBBEAN REGIONAL SEMINAR OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF 24 (C24)**

IN THE

COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA, 25<sup>TH</sup> – 27<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2021

*CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY*

The delegation of Sierra Leone is pleased to be here today. Seeing all of you, members of the C24, Administering Powers, Representatives of the Non-self-Governing Territories (NSGTs) and all the distinguished participants is quite refreshing; especially when the restrictions of the COVID 19 pandemic could not permit the convening of our Pacific Regional Seminar that was to be held in Bali, Indonesia last year. We commend you Madam Chair, for the excellent manner in which you have continued to run the affairs of this Committee. I assure you of my delegation's fullest support and cooperation.

Permit me also, on behalf of the delegation of Sierra Leone, to express our profound thanks, through you, to the Government and People of the Commonwealth of Dominica for hosting this seminar and for the warm hospitality and excellent facilities placed at our disposal since our arrival here in this beautiful city of the Parish of St. John.

Last year was pivotal in the decolonization mandate, as it marked the sixtieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples; and also, the end of a Third International Decade on the Eradication of Colonialism. Regrettably, we lost the opportunity to meet and evaluate our work thus far. The timeliness of this seminar can therefore not be overstated, especially when it is the first to be held since the declaration by the General Assembly in its resolution A/75/123 of December, 2020 of the period 2021-2030 as the Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

**Madam Chair, Distinguished Participants,**

As stated earlier, a Third International Decade on the Eradication of Colonialism just ended last year. We have begun a fourth one, yet we still have not accomplished the decolonization agenda of the United Nations. Our question here is, how many more International Decades do we have to declare for colonialism in all its forms and manifestations to end? This is why we see this Seminar as strategic. In line with this year's theme "Charting a dynamic course for decolonization in

commencing the Fourth International Decade and in the light of the COVID 19 pandemic, through commitment to mandate, collaboration pragmatism and agility”; we MUST map out fresh and creative approaches for the advancement of the decolonization agenda, in line with our mandate contained in Resolution 1514.

**Madam Chair,**

The achievements attained in the past three decades may not have been substantial, but the decolonization process did evolve. We so say because all of us, as stakeholders, have collectively taken commendable strides during the course of time. In 2002, for instance, during the Second Decade, Timor Leste was de-listed. The inhabitants of Tokelau were assisted to exercise their right to self-determination in two elections. Additionally, we as a Committee, have continued, unabated, to provide advisory services to the inhabitants of the NSGTs by engaging them on the options available to them in the exercise of their rights to self-determination. All these efforts have added up to build a solid foundation for the fulfillment of our mandate. The question now is, how do we ensure we achieve our goal? – putting **an end to colonialism in all its forms and manifestations**”.

There is still room for enhanced cooperation and constructive engagements among all the parties concerned. There is absolute need for us to redouble our steps. Let’s continue to encourage frank and constructive discussions on several matters concerning the peoples of the NSGTs. We MUST find a better way to implement this important agenda. Resolution A/75/123 has mandated us to continue implementing the Plan of Action for the Second International Decade. Which implies, we are not re-inventing the wheel this time around. We only need to update the existing Plan of Action with clear benchmarks to guide us as a Committee on how to make our work more effective this time around.

**Madam Chair,**

If this Committee could recall, my delegation has reiterated at previous meetings both in the 4<sup>th</sup> Committee and at our regional seminars that the interest of the inhabitants of the NSGTs is an important element in our quest for decolonization, which no one should ignore. In that connection, we need to, especially when the

pandemic is said to have reversed and even threatens to halt most of the gains accrued on various development agendas we have collectively adopted in the past; re-strategize on the following:

1. Collaborate constructively in order to assist the territories achieve political maturity, administrative capacity, and economic sustainability.
2. Mainstream gender perspective into the process by encouraging the UN to offer assistance that can enhance the effective participation of women especially in human rights dialogue on peace processes and good governance.
3. Institute a working method that will ensure each of the NSGTs are handled on a case-by-case-basis as prescribed by the relevant resolutions.
4. Encourage the Administering Powers to ensure the health and development needs in their respective territories are adequately met, especially the availability of COVID 19 vaccine to all eligible inhabitants.

We are encouraged by the Secretary General's expression of continued support during the organizational meeting held in February this year for our work as a Committee. We commend his efforts at ensuring parties concern work towards a peaceful, just, and lasting solution to the sovereignty disputes in their territories.

We reaffirm the need, where applicable, for the Committee to undertake at least one visiting mission yearly to the NSGTs to ascertain the situation in the territories.

Sierra Leone shares the view that the administering powers, in accordance with their Charter obligations, should regularly transmit information relating to their territories and issues bordering on the well-being of the inhabitants of their territories. We acknowledge the progress made in the past decades and further call for the active involvement of all stakeholders, particularly the NSGTs and their respective Administering powers.

We welcome the support from the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations System, international and regional organizations to NSGTs to accelerate progress in the economic and social sectors of those territories, on a case-by-case basis and to review the conditions of the well-being of the inhabitants taking into the threats pose by the covid-19 pandemic and other climate related issues.

In conclusion, Sierra Leone reaffirms its commitment to the noble ideals enshrined in the Declaration contained in resolution 1514. As we embark upon this Fourth International Decade, my delegation believes we **MUST** go into action effectively immediately, to chart a more dynamic course for decolonization, especially when the pandemic has compelled all of us to redouble our efforts, through international cooperation, so we can assist these territories recover from the pandemic stronger and better than they were before.

I thank you.

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY H.E. AMB. MRS. VICTORIA SULAMANI, DEPUTY  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE-POLITICAL AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA  
LEONE AT THE C24 CARIBBEAN REGIONAL SEMINAR HELD IN DOMINICA “ON THE  
QUESTION OF WESTERN SAHARA” 26 AUGUST 2021**

Madam Chair,

Thank you for giving me the floor. The delegation of Sierra Leone is taking the floor to deliver the following statement on the issue of the Western Sahara.

Let me start by expressing my delegation's commendation of the Secretary General's support to the ongoing political process, working within the framework of the Security Council's recommendations since 2007, which aims at achieving a mutually accepted and negotiated political settlement to the long-standing regional dispute over the Western Sahara. My delegation fully supports the UN exclusive political process, aimed at reaching a realistic, practicable, enduring political solution based on compromise, as stipulated in OP2 of Security Council resolution 2548 adopted on October 30, 2020.

The Sierra Leone delegation shares the view that a new momentum has indeed been created, namely by the two Geneva roundtable meetings with the participation of Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania and the *Frente Polisario* and in particular (and I quote) “the commitment by Morocco, the *Frente Polisario*, Algeria and Mauritania to engage in the UN political process on Western Sahara in a serious and respectful manner. It is worth stating that, resolution 2548 also asks the next SG's Personal Envoy to resume where the former Personal Envoy, Mr. Horst Köhler left off, through the resumption of consultations to build on the progress achieved.

Sierra Leone would like to stress that through its resolution 2548, OP3, the Security Council also requests the four (4) participants to remain engaged throughout the duration of the political process, in a spirit of realism and compromise, to ensure a successful outcome. Security Council resolution 2548 further reiterates that enhanced cooperation between member States of the Arab Maghreb Union will go a long way in trying to achieve a peaceful settlement of this long-standing dispute. We commend this proposal and hope the stakeholders will work towards cooperation in the interest of peace.

My Delegation supports the Moroccan autonomy initiative-which is in compliance with applicable international law especially the devolution of authority to the local population. In this regard, it should be recalled that the Security Council, in all its

successive resolutions since 2007, including 2548, welcomed the serious and credible efforts of Morocco to move the process forward towards resolution.

We welcome the full participation since 2018 of the Vice Presidents of the Sahara regions in the Persons of Mr. Mhamed Abba and Ms. Ghalla Bahiya at all the regional seminars of the Committee of 24, as well as all the June sessions of the Committee.

**Mme. Chair,**

Sierra Leone commends Morocco's human rights action as noted in the various Security Council resolutions including resolution 2548, bringing out clearly the role of the National Council on Human Rights Commissions in the cities of Laayoune and Dakhla as well as its cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) since 2011. We also welcome the efforts of Morocco towards socio-economic and infrastructural development in the Sahara region.

We commend Morocco's respect of the ceasefire in the Sahara, as well as the action it undertook on November 13, 2020 to ensure free movement in the passage of the Guergarate. My delegation calls upon all other parties to fully respect the ceasefire, as the security and stability of the entire region is at stake. My delegation subscribes to the need to improve the human right situation in the Tindouf refugee camps. We therefore appeal for the proper registration of all refugees in conformity with International Law and the mandate of the UNHCR and the recommendations of the Secretary General as well as Security Council resolutions since 2011.

Finally, **Madam. Chair**, you will agree with me on the urgent need to find a practicable solution to this long-standing dispute. With the efforts made by all the stakeholders and in conformity with the various resolutions of the Security, my delegation remains hopeful that with the continued support of the international community, a viable solution will be reached.

I thank you **Madam Chair**.