

Annex**Caribbean regional seminar on the implementation of the
Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism:
Challenges and opportunities in the process of decolonization
in today's world, held in Saint Kitts and Nevis, from 12 May to
14 May 2009****Contents**

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 55/146 of 8 December 2000, the General Assembly declared the period 2001-2010 the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, and called upon Member States to redouble their efforts to implement the plan of action set out in the annex to the report of the Secretary-General (A/46/634/Rev.1 and Corr.1), updated where necessary, to serve as the plan of action for the Second Decade. The report of the Secretary-General on the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (A/56/61) contains an updated plan of action.

2. In its resolution 63/110 of 5 December 2008, the General Assembly approved the programme of work 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 envisaged for 2009, including the holding of a seminar in the Caribbean region to be organized by the Special Committee and attended by the representatives of all the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

3. The objective of this seminar was to enable the Special Committee to hear the views of representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, experts, members of civil society, and other stakeholders in the process of decolonization. It assessed the situation in the Non-Self-Governing Territories, including follow-up to the 2008 Pacific regional seminar, and aimed at identifying policy approach and practical ways of dealing with the challenges and opportunities in the process of decolonization in a changing world. The seminar also assessed the constitutional evolution of the Non-Self-Governing Territories towards self-government and self-determination with a view to developing, in cooperation with the Administering Powers and representatives of the Territories, a constructive programme of work on a case-by-case basis for the decolonization of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. Furthermore, the seminar aimed to further identify areas in which the United Nations system and the international community at large could enhance programmes of assistance to territories within an integral framework, particularly to ensure the sustainable socio-economic development of the territories concerned.

4. The seminar also aimed to assess the progress achieved thus far in the implementation of the Plan of Action of the Second International Decade on the Eradication of Colonialism as it is coming to an end, and to identify priority actions for the remaining year of the decade as well as possible approaches and priorities beyond 2010.

5. The contributions of the participants would serve as a basis for further consideration of the Special Committee at its substantive session in June 2009, with a view to submitting proposals to the General Assembly concerning the fulfilment of the objectives of the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

II. Organization of the seminar

6. The seminar was held in Frigate Bay, Saint Kitts and Nevis, from 12 May to 14 May 2009. It held 5 meetings, in which representatives of States Members of the United Nations, Non-Self-Governing Territories, administering Powers, non-governmental, regional and other organizations and experts took part. (For the

list of participants, see appendix I to the present annex.) The seminar was organized to encourage an open and frank exchange of views.

7. The seminar was conducted by R. M. Marty M. Natalegawa, Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations and Chairman of the Special Committee, with the participation of the following members of the Special Committee: Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Chile, Cuba, Côte d'Ivoire, Indonesia, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis (host country), Sierra Leone, United Republic of Tanzania and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, administering Powers, participated as observers. Representatives of Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Morocco, Spain, Togo and the Permanent Observer of the Holy See also participated.

8. At the 1st meeting, on 12 May 2009, Javier Loayza Barea (Plurinational State of Bolivia) and Rupert Davies (Sierra Leone) were appointed Vice-Chairmen of the seminar. Albert V. Sitnikov (Russian Federation) was appointed Rapporteur of the seminar.

9. The agenda of the seminar was as follows:

1. Challenges and opportunities in today's world:
 - (a) Dynamics of a changing world;
 - (b) Strengthening cooperation with administering Powers;
 - (c) The role of the Special Committee in facilitating enhanced outreach to and participation of the people of Non-Self-Governing Territories in the United Nations decolonization process.
2. Challenges and opportunities for the decolonization process of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Caribbean region.
3. Challenges and opportunities for the decolonization process of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Pacific region and other Territories:
 - (a) Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Pacific region, including follow-up to the 2008 Pacific regional seminar;
 - (b) Other Non-Self-Governing Territories.
4. Role of the United Nations system in providing developmental assistance to Non-Self-Governing Territories:
 - (a) Presentations by the United Nations Development Programme and others;
 - (b) Perspective of the Special Committee, administering Powers, and territorial Governments, as well as views of experts.
5. The way forward:
 - (a) Priorities for the remainder of the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism;
 - (b) Possible approach and priorities beyond the Second International Decade.

III. Proceedings of the seminar

A. Opening of the seminar

10. On 12 May, R. M. Marty M. Natalegawa (Indonesia) opened the seminar in his capacity as the Chairman (see appendix III).

11. At the same meeting, Astona Browne, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of National Security, Immigration and Foreign Affairs of Saint Kitts and Nevis addressed the seminar.

12. Also at the same meeting, Michael M. Streitz, Senior Political Affairs Officer of the Decolonization Unit, Department of Political Affairs, United Nations Secretariat, read out a message from the Secretary-General (see appendix II).

B. Statements and —

13. At the 1st meeting, on 12 May, the Chairman made a statement (see appendix III). The representatives of Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Montserrat and the Turks and Caicos Islands made statements.

14. At the same meeting, the representatives of Anguilla, British Virgin Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands responded to the questions posed by the representatives of Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Cuba and Indonesia. The representatives of Côte d'Ivoire and Indonesia made statements.

15. At the 2nd meeting, on 12 May, the seminar heard presentations by experts: Jessica Byron, Carlyle Corbin and Sophia Harris on the recent developments in Anguilla, Montserrat, United States Virgin Islands and Cayman Islands. Lana Hoyoung (Anguilla National Council of Women) made a presentation on the role of women in the decolonization process. Representatives of Togo and Côte d'Ivoire made statements.

16. At the 3rd meeting, on 13 May, Tregenza A. Roach (United States Virgin Islands University) presented a comparative analysis of the constitutional convention process in American Samoa and the United States Virgin Islands. At the same meeting, representatives of Saint Helena, Frente Polisario, Argentina, Spain, Morocco and Algeria made statements. Representatives of Algeria, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire and Morocco made statements on a point of order. The representative of Morocco made a statement in the exercise of the right of reply. The observer of Gibraltar made a statement.

17. At the 4th meeting, on 13 May, the seminar heard a presentation by the representative of the subregional headquarters of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) on the role of the United Nations system in providing developmental assistance to Non-Self-Governing Territories. The representative of the World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization made a statement. Representatives of Morocco and Algeria made statements on a point of order. Representatives of ECLAC and WHO/PAHO responded to the questions posed by the representatives of Cuba, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bermuda, Brazil and Indonesia.

^a All statements and discussion papers of the seminar are available on the United Nations decolonization website, <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpi/decolonization>.

18. At its 5th meeting, on 14 May, the seminar held a general exchange of views on the way forward for the Special Committee, including priorities for the remainder of the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism and possible approaches and priorities beyond the Second International Decade.

C. Closing of the seminar

19. At the 5th meeting on 14 May, the Rapporteur of the seminar presented the draft report of the seminar proceedings.

20. At the same meeting, Delano Frank Bart, Permanent Representative of Saint Kitts and Nevis to the United Nations addressed the seminar, followed by closing remarks by the Chairman (see appendix IV).

21. Also at the same meeting, the participants adopted by acclamation a draft resolution expressing appreciation to the Government and the people of Saint Kitts and Nevis (see appendix V).

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

22. Members of the Special Committee participating in the seminar (henceforth referred to as “participating members”) recalled the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples contained in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and the role of the Special Committee to examine the application of the Declaration, to make suggestions and recommendations on the progress and extent of the implementation of the Declaration, and to report to the General Assembly.

23. Participating members reaffirmed the continued relevance of the conclusions and recommendations of the previous seminars.

24. In addition, pursuant to rule 9 of the rules of procedure of the seminar (A/AC.109/2009/17, annex), participating members presented the following conclusions and recommendations at the substantive session of the Special Committee:

A. Challenges and opportunities in the process of decolonization in today’s world

25. As their concluding observations, participating members:

(a) Identified a number of cross-cutting issues in the process of decolonization in a changing world, including the impact of climate change, the global economic and financial crisis, the role of regional cooperation, education and public awareness, the role of women, the empowerment of vulnerable people, and the capacity for full self-governance towards self-determination;

(b) Acknowledged that climate change had exposed many of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, particularly the small island Territories, to even greater environmental and economic vulnerability, and that the ongoing global economic and financial crisis had highlighted the importance of the economic sustainability and diversification of the economic base in the Non-Self-Governing Territories;

(c) Welcomed the important role played by regional organizations and regional arrangements in assisting many Non-Self-Governing Territories in coping with various emerging challenges;

(d) Underscored the fact that education and public awareness remain crucial elements for decolonization, particularly to ensure that the peoples concerned would be in a position to make an informed decision regarding their future political status in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions and decisions;

(e) Stressed the important role of women in the process of decolonization, including in education, poverty eradication and community empowerment;

(f) Underscored the fact that status-related and/or constitutional review exercises in many of the Non-Self-Governing Territories were delicate processes that should meet certain expectations on a case-by-case basis;

(g) Recognized that enhanced interactions and cooperation between the Special Committee and the administering Powers remain crucial to the implementation of the United Nations decolonization mandate and would be beneficial to all stakeholders, including the administering Powers themselves, and in this connection welcomed the participation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America in the seminar;

(h) Recognized also the importance of active engagement from other States Members of the United Nations who are not members of the Special Committee in the work of the Special Committee, and in this connection welcomed the participation of Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Morocco, Spain, and Togo, as well as the Permanent Observer of the Holy See, in the seminar.

B. Challenges and opportunities in the process of decolonization of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Caribbean region

26. As their concluding observations, participating members:

(a) Welcomed the participation of the representatives of Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos Islands and the information they furnished to the seminar, and also welcomed the participation of experts as well as representatives of civil society who shared their views on the process of decolonization in Anguilla, Montserrat, the United States Virgin Islands, and the Cayman Islands;

(b) With regard to the current constitutional situation in the Turks and Caicos Islands, took note of the information furnished to the seminar by the Premier of the Territory, and called for full respect for the constitutional arrangement of the territorial Government of the Turks and Caicos Islands;

(c) With regard to the process of Constitutional review in Anguilla, stressed the need for taking into account the consent and wishes of the inhabitants of the Non-Self-Governing Territory in drafting the new constitution.

C. Challenges and opportunities in the process of decolonization of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Pacific region and other Territories, including follow-up to the 2008 Pacific Regional Seminar

27. As their concluding observations, participating members:

(a) Welcomed the participation of the representatives of St. Helena and Western Sahara as well as the observer of Gibraltar in the seminar and the information they furnished to the seminar, and also welcomed the participation of a civil society representative who shared his views on the process of decolonization in American Samoa;

(b) Expressed their appreciation for the written statements submitted by the Ulu-o-Tokelau and New Zealand as administering Power of Tokelau to the seminar;

(c) With regard to Western Sahara, the participants recalled the mandate of the Special Committee towards self-determination for the people of Western Sahara, reaffirmed all relevant General Assembly resolutions, including General Assembly resolution 63/105. They supported Security Council resolutions 1754 (2007), 1783 (2007), 1813 (2008) and 1871 (2009) and the commitment of the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy to a solution to the question of Western Sahara in this context. They called upon the parties to continue to show political will and work in an atmosphere propitious for dialogue in order to enter into a more intensive and substantive phase of negotiations, thus ensuring implementation of the above-mentioned resolutions and the success of the negotiations. They reiterated the call made at previous regional seminars on the parties to continue such negotiations under the auspices of the Secretary-General without preconditions and in good faith, taking into account efforts made since 2006 and subsequent developments, with a view to achieving a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara in the context of arrangements consistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations;

(d) With regard to the question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), recalled the relevant General Assembly and Special Committee resolutions and decisions on this question, which encouraged the resumption of negotiations between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom with the aim of finding a lasting solution to the sovereignty dispute, taking into account the interests of the population of the Islands, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations;

(e) With regard to the question of Gibraltar, welcomed the continuing work of the Forum of Dialogue on Gibraltar involving Spain, the United Kingdom and the territorial Government.

D. Role of the United Nations system in providing assistance to the Non-Self-Governing Territories

28. As their concluding observations, participating members:

(a) Welcomed the participation of the representative of the United Nations-ECLAC and WHO/PAHO at the seminar and the information they furnished to the seminar;

(b) Encouraged the United Nations specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system to intensify their engagement with the work of the Special Committee, including possible participation at the forthcoming regional seminars on decolonization, upon the invitation of the Special Committee.

E. The way forward: priorities for the remainder of the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism and possible approaches and priorities beyond the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism

29. As their recommendations, participating members:

(a) Reaffirm that all peoples have the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development;

(b) Also reaffirm that any attempt aimed at the partial or total disruption of the national unity and the territorial integrity of a country is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations;

(c) Reconfirm that the United Nations has a valid ongoing role in the process of decolonization. The mandate of the Special Committee is a major programme of the Organization. United Nations support should be provided until all outstanding decolonization issues are resolved in a satisfactory manner;

(d) Reaffirm the role of the Special Committee as the primary vehicle for fostering the process of decolonization as well as for monitoring the situation in the Territories;

(e) Underline the importance for the Special Committee to develop, as a matter of urgency, a proactive and focused approach, in fulfilment of the goal of decolonization vis-à-vis the Non-Self-Governing Territories on the United Nations list. The Special Committee needs to approach each case with an open mind, to build on the available options and to bring about a results-oriented evolution of positions to help move the decolonization process forward. It also needs to look more thoroughly at how to further operationalize the United Nations decolonization mandate;

(f) In view of the cross-cutting nature of the challenges faced by many Non-Self-Governing Territories in the dynamics of today's world, underline that efforts must be made, through the involvement of relevant stakeholders and on a case-by-case basis, for the continued strengthening of administrative capacity, good governance and economic sustainability of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, which would allow the Territories to address the cross-cutting issues in a holistic manner;

(g) In view of the economic vulnerability brought about by climate change and the global economic and financial crisis, suggest that the relevant stakeholders, particularly the territorial Governments and the administering Powers, step up their attention to community-based sustainable development, including the development of small and medium businesses, the promotion of micro-financing and employment-generating activities, and the empowerment of vulnerable groups in the Non-Self-Governing Territories;

(h) In view of the contribution of various regional organizations and regional arrangements to the capacity-building of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in

coping with emerging challenges, advise that effective participation of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in relevant regional organizations and regional arrangements needs to be facilitated, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions and through the appropriate mechanisms, along with the strengthening of concrete regional functional cooperation in various areas, such as natural-disaster preparedness and community empowerment;

(i) Also in view of the important role of regional organizations and regional arrangements in providing assistance to the relevant Non-Self-Governing Territories in support of the process of decolonization, suggest that the Special Committee, in accordance with its mandate and the relevant United Nations resolutions and decisions, strengthen its interactions and collaboration with relevant regional and subregional organizations;

(j) On the issue of public outreach to the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories on decolonization issues, advise the Special Committee, in collaboration with the Department of Public Information, to actively engage and seek new and innovative ways to promote a public awareness campaign aimed at fostering an understanding among the people of the Territories of the options for self-determination in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions and decisions on decolonization, including to complement their ongoing efforts and ensuring that the information provided effectively reaches the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories;

(k) On the issue of education, suggest that the relevant territorial Governments and the administering Powers consider incorporating decolonization issues into the school curriculum of the Non-Self-Governing Territories;

(l) In view of the important role of women in the process of decolonization, underline the fact that gender equality must continue to be supported, which will contribute to good governance and enhanced capacity for self-governance through equal rights for all;

(m) On the status-related and/or constitutional review exercises and the overall process of decolonization, stress that such processes should be approached on a case-by-case basis and in a way that is respectful of human rights, transparent, accountable, inclusive and participatory with the involvement of the people concerned, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions and decisions on decolonization and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations;

(n) On the relationship with administering Powers, advise that interactions and cooperation between the Special Committee and the administering Powers should continue to be nurtured and strengthened through various possible platforms and means, and reaffirm that all administering Powers, particularly those who have not done so, need to engage effectively with the Special Committee;

(o) In view of the valuable contribution of the representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the seminar, reiterate that the Special Committee, through the proper mechanism and with the assistance of the Secretariat, should continue to work towards full participation of the representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in future seminars. The administering Powers should facilitate the participation of the elected representatives of the Territories in the seminars in conformity with the relevant resolutions and decisions of the United Nations;

(p) On the role of the United Nations system in providing assistance to the Non-Self-Governing Territories, stress that the relevant United Nations bodies and specialized agencies need to engage with the work of the Special Committee and to strengthen their efforts, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions and through the appropriate mechanism, in providing assistance to the Non-Self-Governing Territories. In this regard, the Special Committee needs to develop ways and means to encourage the participation of those agencies and bodies;

(q) Advise the Special Committee that it needs to develop ways and means through which it can make a better assessment, on a case-by-case basis, of the current stage of decolonization and self-determination in each Non-Self-Governing Territory in accordance with the relevant resolutions and decisions of the United Nations, which could serve as a checklist or benchmark on the progress thus far and how much is left to be done;

(r) Reiterate that the Special Committee needs to continue working towards sending visiting missions to the Non-Self-Governing Territories, with the involvement of the relevant territorial Government and administering Power, on a case-by-case basis, and in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions. In this regard, notes the interest expressed at the seminar by representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories in such visiting and special missions;

(s) Suggest that the Special Committee needs to consider proposing to the General Assembly the possibility of launching a Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, reaffirming that the process of decolonization is incomplete until all the outstanding decolonization issues are resolved in a satisfactory manner.

Appendix I

List of participants

Members of the Special Committee

Indonesia	R. M. Marty M. Natalegawa (Chairman)* Mohamed Hery Saripudin Hari Prabowo
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Javier Loayza Barea* (Vice-Chairperson)
Chile	José Antonio Cousiño
Côte d'Ivoire	Ennio Maes
Cuba	Rebeca Hernández Toledano*
Fiji	Murray Isimeli*
Russian Federation	Albert V. Sitnikov* (Rapporteur)
Saint Kitts and Nevis (host country)	Astona Browne Delano Frank Bart Kaye Bass Carlisle Richardson Shelly Ross-Chaderton Sheila Morris Angelica Elliott
Sierra Leone	Rupert Davies* (Vice-Chairperson) Victoria Sulimani
United Republic of Tanzania	Ellen Azaria Maduhu*
Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela	Cruz de Jesus Bello Wilma James Soriyul Alvarado Rodriguez

States Members of the United Nations

Algeria	Mohamed Sofiane Berrah
Argentina	Gerardo Abel Diaz Bartolomé Cinthia Echavarria
Brazil	Christiano Sávio Barros Figueirôa
Morocco	Redouane Houssaini Sidi Khaddad el Moussaoui Moulay Ahmed Mghizlat
Spain	Alberto Virella
Togo	Kouméalo Anaté Balli

* Member of the official delegation of the Special Committee.

Administering Powers

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (observer)	Simon Hosking
United States of America (observer)	Basil C. Ottley

Permanent observer

Holy See	Rev. Simón Bolívar Sánchez Carrión Michael James
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Intergovernmental organizations

African Union	Ahmed Elobeid
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Non-Self-Governing Territories

Anguilla	Lolita Davis-Richardson
Bermuda	Walton Brown Jr. Judith Hall-Bean
British Virgin Islands	Vernon Malone
Montserrat	Lowell Lewis Elijah Silcott
Saint Helena	Tony Green
Turks and Caicos	Galmo W. Williams Mark A. Fulford
Western Sahara	Ahmed Boukhari

Organizations of the United Nations system

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean	Ronald Williams
World Health Organization/ Pan American Health Organization	Anneke Wilson

Non-governmental organizations

Anguilla National Council of Women (Anguilla)	Lana Connor Hoyoung
University of the United States Virgin Islands (United States Virgin Islands)	Tregenza A. Roach

Experts

Jessica Byron (Saint Kitts and Nevis)
Carlyle Corbin (United States Virgin Islands)
Sophia Harris (Cayman Islands)

Observer

Joseph Bossano (Gibraltar)

Appendix II

Message from the Secretary-General

It gives me great pleasure to convey my greetings to all who have gathered in St. Kitts and Nevis for the 2009 Caribbean Regional seminar on decolonization. I thank the Government and people of St. Kitts and Nevis for hosting this event.

This seminar gives the Special Committee on decolonization an opportunity to examine the progress made in the implementation of the principles contained in the United Nations Charter relating to Non-Self-Governing Territories, and in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. The right to self-determination must be taken into proper account as we explore how to accelerate the decolonization process for the remaining 16 Territories under the Committee's purview.

I commend the Committee for deciding to look at the challenges and opportunities for the decolonization process within the dynamics of a changing world. The global economic crisis poses a direct threat to many economies in the Territories, including through its negative effect on tourism, a major source of income. The potentially devastating impact of climate change is also of urgent concern, particularly as many of the Non-Self-Governing Territories are small islands.

Progress in discharging the decolonization mandate of the Special Committee on Decolonization will require close cooperation between the Non-Self-Governing Territories, the administering Powers and the Special Committee. The interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories must be at the heart of our efforts. I count on the administering Powers in particular to discharge their obligations in a manner that promotes the well-being of the inhabitants of the territories within their responsibility. The United Nations system will continue to offer assistance to the Non-Self-Governing Territories as appropriate, in areas such as economic and social development, environmental sustainability, health care and good governance.

As we approach the end of the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, I urge you to continue working together to find solutions for the completion of the decolonization process, with the aim of de-listing additional territories. The United Nations Secretariat stands ready to assist. In that spirit of partnership, I wish you a productive and successful seminar.

Appendix III

Opening statement by the Chair

I would like to welcome all participants to the 2009 United Nations Caribbean regional seminar on decolonization in Frigate Bay, Saint Kitts and Nevis, convened under the auspices of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

On behalf of the Special Committee, I would also like to extend our sincere thanks to the Government and people of Saint Kitts and Nevis for hosting the seminar.

We are delighted that this year's seminar is taking place in a country and region that have undertaken tireless efforts to eradicate colonialism, with a good measure of success.

Our host country, Saint Kitts and Nevis, along with other Caribbean States, has always played an active and much appreciated role in the work of the Special Committee.

The seminar is an essential part of the work of the Special Committee as well as the implementation of the Second International Decade. It has a strong symbolic significance as it is held in the month during which the Special Committee observes the week of solidarity with the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories. It has a clear deliberative value, as a forum where views are exchanged in an informal and interactive manner on how to make progress in the area of decolonization.

As we are approaching the very end of the Second Decade, this seminar has a further fundamental importance for the Special Committee to seek fresh and innovative ideas and recommendations to implement the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly.

This year's theme topic, "Challenges and opportunities in the process of decolonization in today's world", bears an important message: we need to contemplate on how to meet contemporary challenges, consistent with the United Nations and the Special Committee's core principles and resolutions on decolonization.

This theme was chosen as a logical follow-up to last year's seminar.

Last year, at the 2008 Pacific regional seminar in Bandung, Indonesia, in addition to the topical focus on the decolonization process in the Pacific region, we sought to find ways and means to improve cooperation with administering Powers, provide better information to the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories about their status, and identify practical steps to implement the United Nations decolonization mandate on a case-by-case basis.

This year, in addition to taking a closer look at the decolonization process in the Caribbean region, we seek ways to enhance the Special Committee's relevance to the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, within the dynamics of a changing world.

We look forward to hear your views on how current global challenges, such as climate change, global economic crisis, and global food crisis, may have affected the path towards decolonization.

We are keen to hear your views about how improved access to education and information technology, as well as improved understanding of constitutional rights, may have brought up new opportunities in the process of decolonization.

We are delighted to see a large turnout at this year's seminar. On behalf of the Special Committee, I would like to welcome the representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, administering Powers, other United Nations Member States, as well as experts and representatives of civil society, at this seminar. We look forward to having fruitful and constructive discussions with all of you.

This is where the seminar has an essential, deliberative role: the more creative and innovative we are in the next few days, the more the seminar's deliberations hold promise to identify opportunities for the effective implementation of the United Nations decolonization mandate. This includes improved cooperation of administering Powers in the work of the Special Committee; and the promotion of tangible support and assistance to Non-Self-Governing Territories to help them face the numerous challenges in today's world.

In this spirit, let us deliberate, even debate, and work together towards a fruitful outcome of the seminar.

It is therefore a great honour for me to declare the 2009 Caribbean Regional seminar on decolonization open.

Appendix IV

Closing statement by the Chair

On behalf of the Special Committee, I should like to, again, express our sincere thanks to the Government and people of Saint Kitts and Nevis for hosting the 2009 regional seminar on decolonization.

I would also like to thank all the participants for making valuable contributions, in written and oral presentations, including from the territorial Governments, the administering Powers, experts and civil society representatives. As in the past, written presentations that are made available to the Secretariat will be posted on the United Nations decolonization website.

We have had good, constructive discussions on a number of important issues on how to move the decolonization process forward for the Non-Self-Governing Territories, on a case-by-case basis and in the context of a changing world.

We discussed various emerging challenges which could affect the Non-Self-Governing Territories in their path towards decolonization.

Not least, we discussed the opportunities that might be available in responding to these challenges.

Along this line, we discussed, among others, issues related to the impact of climate change, the global economic and financial crisis; as well as the role of regional cooperation, education and public awareness, the role of women, the empowerment of vulnerable people, and the capacity for full self-governance towards self-determination.

Without seeking to summarize the wealth of the discussions that we had, I would like to recall a number of salient points, especially those of a cross-cutting nature. They include the following:

In fostering a better understanding of decolonization issues and status-related questions, we should not overlook the value of comparative analysis. Notwithstanding the fact that decolonization needs to be approached on a case-by-case basis, comparative assessment could help us in drawing valuable lessons-learned for our common benefits.

Political maturity, economic sustainability, enhanced administrative capacity and strengthened regional cooperation are important elements for the Non-Self-Governing Territories in responding to the challenges of today's world. The cross-cutting nature of such challenges requires that these elements be approached in a holistic and mutually reinforcing manner.

For example, in response to the challenges of climate change, which have exposed many of the Non-Self-Governing Territories to even greater environmental and economic vulnerability, regional cooperation can play a crucial role through various forms of functional and technical cooperation, such as in the field of disaster preparedness. This, in turn, may also contribute to enhancing the capacity of the Non-Self-Governing Territories for full self-governance.

Indeed, regional cooperation and regional arrangements have offered and should continue to offer important opportunities for many Non-Self-Governing Territories in coping with various emerging challenges. They contribute to the

development of a strong regional identity and the strengthening of concrete functional cooperation in various areas of mutual interests.

We recognize the important role that the United Nations regional commissions such as ECLAC and other regional organizations such as CARICOM and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States can play in facilitating sustainable development in many Non-Self-Governing Territories. The importance of enhanced engagement and role of the United Nations specialized agencies was underscored.

We also discussed the impacts of the global economic and financial crisis on the Non-Self-Governing Territories. The crisis has further highlighted the importance of economic sustainability and diversification of the economic base in the Non-Self-Governing Territories. The relevant territorial Government and administering Power may approach this by stepping up their attention to some areas of community-based development, including the development of small and medium-size enterprises, the promotion of micro-financing and employment-generating activities, and the empowerment of vulnerable groups.

Education and public outreach remains a crucial element for decolonization. This is particularly relevant to enable the people concerned to make an informed decision regarding their future political status. In this context it is also worth noting that various deliberations on decolonization and status-related exercises in the Territories should connect, in a meaningful way, to the reality on the ground and to the people concerned themselves.

There was recognition of the important role played by women in the process of decolonization, including through their active involvement in education, poverty eradication, and community empowerment. Gender equality contributes significantly to good governance and enhanced capacity for self-governance through equal rights for all.

We had illuminating discussions, structured on a case-by-case basis, about the situation of self-governance and self-determination in the Non-Self-Governing Territories. We also had an extensive exchange of views on the status-related exercises in various Non-Self-Governing Territories.

Status-related and constitution exercises is a delicate issue that needs to meet certain expectations. It needs to be approached in a transparent, accountable, inclusive and participatory manner, with the involvement of the people concerned. It needs to be in line with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as relevant United Nations resolutions and decisions on decolonization. It needs to adhere to human rights standards and the principles of good governance and democracy. It needs to build upon the identity, cultural norms, and local values of the Non-Self-Governing Territory concerned. Again, education and public outreach can be crucial for this.

We also had a frank exchange of views about how the Special Committee could enhance its capacity to better understand the situation on the ground in each of the Non-Self-Governing Territories and also for the Special Committee to be more proactive in its approach. We need to look into ways and means of better assessing, on a case-by-case basis, the current stage of decolonization and self-determination in each Non-Self-Governing Territory and how much is left to be done. We need to look more thoroughly at how to further operationalize the United Nations decolonization mandate. We also need to continue working towards the

possibility of sending visiting missions to the Non-Self-Governing Territories, on a case-by-case basis and with the involvement of the relevant territorial Government and administering Power.

Indeed, enhanced interaction and cooperation between the Special Committee and the administering Powers remain crucial to the implementation of the United Nations decolonization mandate. This will be beneficial to all parties, particularly the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. In this context, we may need to explore the possibility of creating frameworks for talks, whether informal or formal in nature, bilateral or multi-stakeholders in nature, involving the Non-Self-Governing Territories, the administering Powers, and the Special Committee.

We had valuable discussions on the way forward, about which several ideas were presented. It is worth noting that, in any case, the underlying principle for the way forward is how to enhance the Special Committee's relevance to the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

Indeed, that is also the main purpose of this seminar: how to enhance the Special Committee's relevance to the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. I believe it is fair for me to say that we have had productive discussions on this. I believe it is fair for me to conclude that we have managed to organize a comparatively more interactive seminar this year.

This is not the end, nevertheless. Members of the Special Committee who are participating at this seminar will need to provide the Special Committee with their conclusions and recommendations. Let us, members of the Special Committee who are participating at the seminar, make the most of this opportunity to come up with sound conclusions and recommendations.

Appendix V

Resolution expressing appreciation to the Government and the people of Saint Christopher and

The participants in the Caribbean regional seminar,

Having met from 12 to 14 May 2009 in Frigate Bay, Saint Christopher and Nevis, to consider the challenges and opportunities in the process of decolonization in today's world,

Having heard an important statement by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of National Security, Immigration and Foreign Affairs of Saint Kitts and Nevis,

Taking note of the important statements by the representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territories,

Express their profound gratitude to the Government and the people of Saint Kitts and Nevis for providing the Special Committee with the necessary facilities for its seminar, for the outstanding contribution they have made to the success of the seminar and, in particular, for the very generous and kind hospitality and the warm and cordial reception accorded to the participants throughout their stay in Saint Kitts and Nevis.

^a The official name of the country is used interchangeably as Saint Christopher and Nevis and Saint Kitts and Nevis.