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

**Pacific regional seminar on the implementation of the Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism: pathways to a sustainable future – advancing socioeconomic and cultural development of the Non-Self-Governing Territories**

**Dili, Timor-Leste  
21 to 23 May 2025**

**STATEMENT BY**

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**Statement of the Frente POLISARIO (Western Sahara)**  
**C-24 Pacific Regional Seminar, Dili, Timor-Leste, 21-23 May 2025**  
**Ambassador Sidi M. Omar**

*Madam Chair,*

*Distinguished Representatives of Member States,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Thank you, Madam Chair, for giving me the floor to address the seminar, on behalf of the Frente POLISARIO, the legitimate and sole Representative of the people of the Non-Self-Governing Territory of Western Sahara in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

The delegation of the Frente POLISARIO wishes to express our most sincere gratitude to the Government and people of Timor-Leste for the warm welcome and hospitality and for the excellent preparations made for this seminar. In particular, we are immensely grateful to Timor-Leste for its principled position in support of the just cause of the Sahrawi people, which was reiterated strongly by the Prime Minister, H.E. Mr Xanana Gusmão, just three days ago.

*Madam Chair, Distinguished Representatives of Member States,*

This year, our people and our friends around the world remember 50 years of several political developments that have had a significant impact on the decolonisation of Western Sahara, the last colony in Africa on the agenda of this Committee since 1963. The bloodiest episode in this history is obviously the Moroccan illegal occupation and annexation of our country, which began in October 1975.

These days, we also remember the UN visiting Mission to Western Sahara. As you may recall, at the request of the General Assembly, this Committee sent a three-member Visiting Mission to Western Sahara in May 1975 with a view to securing first-hand information on the wishes and aspirations of the people of the Territory.

On 7<sup>th</sup> November 1975, this Committee adopted the report of the Visiting Mission and endorsed the observations and conclusions contained in the report, which include the following three important conclusions:

**First**, there was an overwhelming consensus among Sahrawis within the Territory in favour of independence and opposing any integration with Morocco and Mauritania.

**Second**, the Frente POLISARIO was the dominant political force in the Territory and enjoyed massive support from the population for its demand for independence.

**Third**, the General Assembly should take steps to enable the people of the Territory to decide their own future in complete freedom in accordance with resolution 1514 (XV) and other relevant resolutions of the General Assembly.

These conclusions are very much true today as they were fifty years ago.

The Sahrawi people have endured five decades of Morocco's brutal occupation and systematic violations of human rights. However, our people have never wavered in their struggle for freedom and independence.

This fact demonstrates very clearly that there is no alternative to the exercise by the Sahrawi people of their inalienable right to self-determination and independence in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and other relevant resolutions.

*Madam Chair, Distinguished Representatives of Member States,*

The colonialist "proposal" propagated by Morocco, the occupying state, and its apologists, including its sponsored "puppet entities", is no more than a travesty. Its aim is to "legitimise" the illegal occupation of the Non-Self-Governing Territory of Western Sahara and to deprive its people of their inalienable right to self-determination and independence.

Self-respecting countries that are genuinely committed to upholding the core principles of the UN Charter and international law can never accept, let alone endorse, this colonialist "proposal", which goes against everything that this Committee and the United Nations stand for.

To conceal its failure in obtaining international legitimacy for its illegal occupation of Western Sahara, the occupying state seeks support in the unilateral and transaction-based positions taken recently by some countries.

It is no coincidence that these countries were the same countries that openly supported the occupation of East Timor a few decades ago. However, the fact that we hold this seminar today in the free and independent Timor-Leste demonstrates that those countries were clearly on the wrong side of history. The liberation struggle of East Timor is a great inspiration to our people.

Morocco, the occupying state, and its apologists often claim that Occupied Western Sahara has been "miraculously" transformed into "a paradise on earth", which is obviously a typical colonial lie. But the only way to really know the situation in the

Territory is for this Committee to conduct a fact-finding mission to Occupied Western Sahara, as it did 50 years ago. If the occupying state has nothing to hide, it must let the Committee do its work and report back to relevant UN bodies.

*Madam Chair, Distinguished Representatives of Member States,*

In 1999, the United Nations supervised a successful decolonisation process in East Timor where its people were able to exercise their right to self-determination. It is time the United Nations fully assumes its responsibility and brings about a successful decolonisation of Western Sahara, the last colony in Africa.

The right of the Sahrawi people to self-determination and independence is inalienable and non-negotiable and can never be affected by the lapse of time or by the realities forcibly created by Morocco, the occupying state, in the Territory since 1975.

Therefore, achieving a peaceful, just, and lasting solution to the question of Western Sahara in line with the relevant principles of international law is not only urgent but also possible if there is a genuine political will to move away from unilaterally imposed solutions and work together to build a common future based on full respect for the core principles enshrined in the UN Charter and the Constitutive Act of the African Union.

We are fully committed to peace, and we have made tremendous sacrifices for achieving a just and lasting peace in our region. However, we will never accept the colonial fait accompli, and we will continue our legitimate resistance and struggle to achieve our national aspirations and defend our inalienable right to self-determination and independence.

Thank you for your attention.