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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 THE REPRESENTATIVE OF  
BELIZE**

**Belize Statement on Western Sahara at Decolonization Seminar**

**May 2025**

Madam Chair, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

I wish to commence my intervention by thanking the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Timor Leste for the wonderful dinner, reception and entertainment last night. As we join the people of Timor Leste in celebrating their 23<sup>rd</sup> anniversary on the restoration of their independence, we wonder what about the Sahwari people? Their legitimate aspirations for self-determination and independence have been thwarted and obstructed for 50 years.

Therefore, we need to accelerate the process leading to the decolonization of the last colony of Africa, the Non-Self-Governing Territory of Western Sahara. This must be based on the rights of the Sahwari people to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence in accordance with resolution 1514 of the UN General Assembly which many of the delegates have referred to during this Seminar. Belize would view any proposal that would aim to override the right of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination to be totally unacceptable. In addition, the natural resources of the Non-Self-Governing Territory of Western Sahara must be protected against exploitation by the occupying power. These resources are the property of the Sahwari people for their benefit and use. This is in keeping with the theme of this year's seminar, "Pathways to a sustainable future – advancing socioeconomic and cultural development of Western Sahara".

Madam Chair the legitimate aspirations of the Sahwari people for self-determination and control of their natural resources has been thwarted for far too long. Let us not wait another 50 years for their aspirations to come to fruition.

I thank you.