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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

SIERRA LEONE



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

STATEMENT

BY

H.E. DR. MICHAEL IMRAN KANU

AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

**AT THE OPENING SESSION OF THE PACIFIC REGIONAL
SEMINAR OF THE UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON
DECOLONIZATION (C24)**

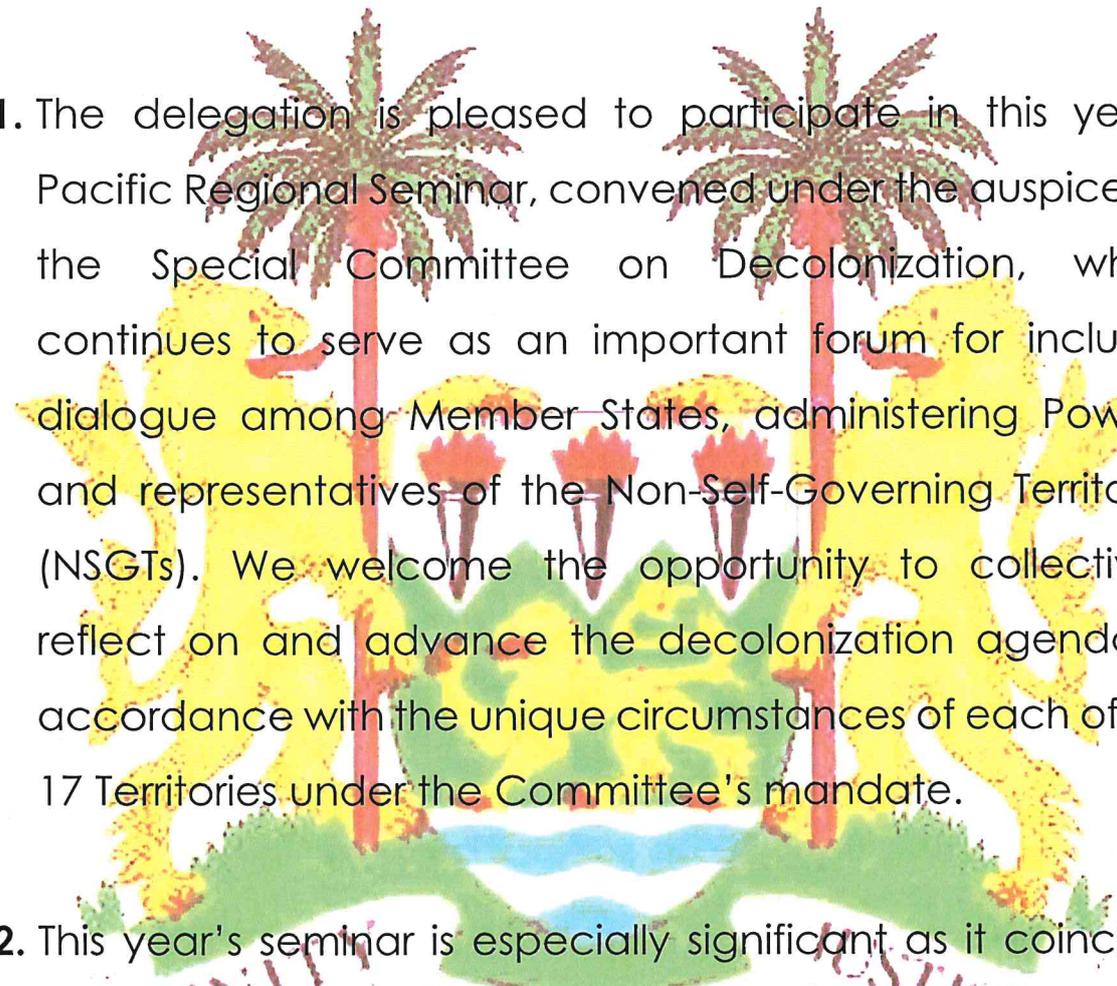
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**Madam Chair,
Excellencies,
Representatives of the Administering Powers,
Distinguished Delegates,**

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1. The delegation is pleased to participate in this year's Pacific Regional Seminar, convened under the auspices of the Special Committee on Decolonization, which continues to serve as an important forum for inclusive dialogue among Member States, administering Powers, and representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territories (NSGTs). We welcome the opportunity to collectively reflect on and advance the decolonization agenda in accordance with the unique circumstances of each of the 17 Territories under the Committee's mandate.
 2. This year's seminar is especially significant as it coincides with the 80th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. It is a moment for reflection on the Organization's foundational commitment to self-determination principle enshrined in the UN Charter and reaffirmed in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), the landmark Declaration

on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

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3. The decolonization process has yielded remarkable achievements over the past eight decades, but we are also reminded that the journey remains incomplete. The UN must continue to uphold its historic responsibility and ensure that its decolonization mandate remains responsive to the evolving realities and aspirations of the peoples of the NSGTs on a case-by-case basis.
4. The theme for this year's seminar, "***Pathways to a Sustainable Future: Advancing Socioeconomic and Cultural Development of the Non-Self-Governing Territories***", is both timely and relevant. As the world grapples with multiple and intersecting challenges, including climate change, geopolitical tensions, economic shocks, and technological disruption, it is imperative that we place the needs and priorities of the Territories at the heart of global and regional cooperation.

5. The Administering Powers, with support from the United Nations system and relevant regional organizations, must continue to strengthen targeted development assistance, capacity-building, and resilience measures tailored to the specific contexts of each Territory. These efforts should be designed to empower the peoples of the Territories to accelerate progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to exercise their right to self-determination in conditions of dignity and informed choice.

6. My delegation affirms that the seminar remains a uniquely important multilateral platform for reviewing progress, identifying challenges, and promoting pragmatic pathways forward. It is also a space for deepening partnerships and dialogue in the spirit of trust, transparency and mutual respect.

7. Sierra Leone reiterates its unwavering support for the work of the C-24. We believe that joint and coordinated action, grounded in international law and the voices of the Territories themselves, is essential to concluding this historic

and transformative process in a manner that is peaceful, people-centered, and principled.

8. Let me close, **Madam Chair**, by expressing, through you, our profound gratitude to the Government and People of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste for graciously hosting this important Seminar. As a nation that has emerged from the painful legacy of colonialism to assert its rightful place among the **comity of nations**, Timor-Leste stands as a testament to the enduring relevance of the United Nations' decolonization agenda.

9. Hosting this seminar in Dili during the "**Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (2021–2030)**" and in the context of the UN's 80th anniversary reminds us of both the progress made and the unfinished work that lies ahead. We are grateful for the warm hospitality extended to us and look forward to meaningful exchanges in this historic city.

I thank you.