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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**

DISCUSSION PAPER

PRESENTATION

BY

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Intervention on Agenda Item on "Building a sustainable future in the Non Self-governing Territories"

Building a sustainable future in the NSGTs has been examined in recent seminars. It is to be considered that sustainable development for NSGTs should be seen in the context of preparation for the full measure of self-government. It should not be seen as a means to modernise existing dependency arrangements that might lend an unwarranted legitimacy to political status arrangements of political inequality. Internal reforms and modernisation are useful, but do not constitute decolonisation. The UN has provided programmes of support to newly-independent countries in the past. Accordingly, a National Sustainable Development Plan might be considered for territories in the immediate post-colonial period that can be supported by UN bodies such as UNDP which already provides services to many NSGTs. Those administering Powers which take seriously their obligations to advance the territories to the full measure of self-government under Chapter 11 of the UN Charter can also support this process. Those administering Powers which do not comply with their international legal obligations to advance the territories under their administration should be strongly encouraged to comply.

Intervention on the role of the UN System

The role of the specialised agencies and other UN bodies in the decolonisation process has been long recognised in resolutions of the UN General Assembly and ECOSOC. A number of UN agencies include the territories in their work programmes. ESCAP includes all small island NSGTs in the Pacific as associate members, whilst all small island NSGTs in the Caribbean are associate members of ECLAC. The BVI presently serves as vice chair of ECLAC whilst the USVI twice served as Chair of ECLAC's Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee. The ECLAC study entitled "*Assessing opportunities for enhanced integration of the associate members of ECLAC in the UN system*" has previously been presented to regional seminars of the Special Committee, and serves as a guide for increased participation by territories in the UN system. This ECLAC study should be cited in the C24 resolution on specialised agencies. The Special Committee should consider resuming the practice of permitting experts to speak on the

agenda items on specialised agencies, and on the agenda item on implementation of the Decolonisation Declaration when these items are considered at the regular session of the Committee each June. This was the practice in past years and was valuable for member States to gain a broader perspective on how the UN can assist the small island territories.

Finally, member states may wish to reconsider their abstentions on the agenda item on Implementation of the Decolonisation Declaration by the Specialised Agencies. As it has been expressed, concerns are raised by some delegations that “the rules of procedure of the agency must be respected.” In fact, the territories can only participate in the relevant agencies when the rules of procedure allow.