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FORTH INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF COLONIALISM

Pacific regional seminar on the implementation of the Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism: advancement of the Non-Self-Governing Territories through the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and beyond

Castries, Saint Lucia

11 to 13 May 2022

STATEMENT BY THE SPECIAL ENVOY TO THE

PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**Statement read on behalf of H.E. Abdullah Shahid, President of the General Assembly of
the United Nations,
by H.E. Ambassador Thilmeeza Hussain, Special Envoy to the PGA and Permanent
Representative of the Republic of the Maldives to the United Nations
during the closing meeting of the Pacific Regional Seminar
Saint Lucia, 11-13 May 2022**

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

As this seminar concludes, I would like to express my appreciation to the "C-24" - the Special Committee on Decolonization – for organizing this seminar, as well as thank the Government and people of Saint Lucia for hosting it.

My special thanks to the Chair for her adept stewardship throughout this Seminar.

I would like to highlight the record turnout as cause for optimism, and point out the presence of all those who have attended this Seminar, despite the unprecedented times we are living in. It is a statement of your strong commitment to this agenda.

Excellencies,

Dear friends,

Decolonization is a process that must be guided by international law, including the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Since the establishment of the United Nations, 750 million people - almost a third of the world's population at that time - lived in territories that were non-self-governing, dependent on colonial Powers.

During the last 76 years, we have witnessed several milestones in the **decolonization** process. Under the leadership of the UN, more than 80 countries have become Members of the United Nations, standing shoulder to shoulder as sovereign and independent States.

Yet, our work remains unfinished.

17 Non-Self-Governing Territories, home to 2 million people, are yet to be decolonized.

The Special Committee has been given a clear mandate by the General Assembly “to continue to examine the political, economic and social situation in the Non-Self-Governing Territories.”

This seminar has consistently recognized the cross-cutting nature of the many challenges faced by Non-Self-Governing Territories. It has underlined those efforts that 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, while working towards the full eradication of colonialism.

Excellencies,

I welcome this year's theme on the COVID-19 pandemic. As I have stressed many times before: we have all suffered through the pandemic, but we have not all endured it the same; for many Non-Self-Governing Territories, the pandemic has only exacerbated pre-existing challenges, including climate change and the devastating effects of natural disasters.

This gathering has allowed stakeholders, from all fields and at all levels, to share views and to identify concrete actions to advance the decolonization agenda, particularly during the recovery from the pandemic.

Let's avail ourselves of this opportunity to identify ways to support these Territories on their recovery efforts as they emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Let's make this the beginning of a productive period of actions and results in support of the decolonization process.

Let us ensure that this Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, as mandated by the General Assembly in 2020, finally honors the fact that all peoples have the right to self-determination in accordance with the General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV).

I thank you.