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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:
innovative steps to ensure the attainment of the Sustainable Development
Goals in the Non-Self-Governing Territories**

**Bali, Indonesia
24 to 26 May 2023**

**STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE
OF ZIMBABWE**

ZIMBABWE'S STATEMENT ON THE QUESTION OF WESTERN SAHARA TO THE PACIFIC REGIONAL SEMINAR OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON DECOLONISATION (C-24) MAY 2023 IN BALI, INDONESIA

1. The issue of Western Sahara (the last colony in Africa) has been on the agenda of the Fourth Committee of the UN General Assembly since 1963. We also recognize that for three decades now, Morocco has been reneging on commitments it made under the UN-OAU Settlement Plan which both them, and POLISARIO Front accepted in 1988 and was approved by the UN Security Council in 1990 and 1991. Further to that, Morocco has not facilitated the holding of the referendum on self-determination for the Saharawi people, a process which was endorsed by the international community as a compromise solution to achieve a peaceful and lasting solution in Western Sahara.

2. Our principled position on this issue is to support the decolonization of Western Sahara and grant the Saharawi people their independence and inalienable right to self-determination. We take this position not because we are entirely against Morocco, but as a matter of principle and respect for Resolutions by the UN and AU. It is also because Zimbabwe understands the pain of being denied the right to self-determination as we were once colonized ourselves.

3. In this regard, we implore The Special Committee on the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (C-24) to uphold its position that Western Sahara remains a Non-Self-Governing Territory whose people have an inalienable and non-negotiable right to self-determination and independence that must be exercised without any constraints, through a free and fair referendum on self-determination. Please, let the People of Western Sahara hold a referendum on the issue and whatever they choose we will respect. We may recall that since the first and only visiting mission of the Special Committee on Decolonization (C-24) to Western Sahara that was conducted in 1975, no other tangible actions have been undertaken by the C 24 towards Western Sahara. We are further concerned with the silence from the Security Council on the issue as we fear this seriously threatens regional peace and security on a continent already contending with several other fragile conflict situations.

4. Lastly we want to register our support and to thank Venezuela for offering to host the 2024 Caribbean Regional Seminar in Caracas.

E-mail Address: miladzimny@yahoo.com