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THIRD INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF COLONIALISM

Caribbean regional seminar on the implementation of the Third International Decade  
for the Eradication of Colonialism: goals and expected accomplishments

Kingstown, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines  
31 May to 2 June 2011

STATEMENT

BY

the Representative of

Sierra Leone



**Permanent Mission of the Republic of Sierra Leone  
To the United Nations**

**Statement**

By:

**Counsellor Victoria M. Sulimani,**

Delegate of Sierra Leone to:

**The Caribbean Regional Seminar on the implementation of The Third  
International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism: goals and expected  
accomplishment**

Kingstown, Saint Vincent And The Grenadines, Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2011

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**Mr. Chairman,**

Sierra Leon is delighted to participate in this Caribbean Regional Seminar, particularly when it is the first to be held after the declaration by the UN General Assembly in December, 2010 of the period 2011- 2020 as the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. I thank you for giving my delegation the opportunity to proffer its candid assessment of the decolonization process, including the contribution, goals and expected accomplishment by the Special Committee.

Permit me to express my sincere thanks to the government and people of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for hosting this Seminar and for the warm hospitality and the excellent facilities placed at our disposal since our arrival in this beautiful city of Kingstown.

**Mr. Chairman, distinguished participants,**

The adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples otherwise known as Resolution 1514 by the UN General Assembly on 14<sup>th</sup> December 1960 was a milestone in the process of decolonization. It called among others things for "the speedy and unconditional end to colonialism in all its forms and manifestations". The purpose of the Special Committee on Decolonization (C24), as we are all aware, is to ensure the full realization of the spirit of that Declaration.

As an active member of the C 24, the intergovernmental body mandated to advance the decolonization agenda of the United Nations, we should be worried that even after 50 years of the adoption of that groundbreaking resolution and the end of two International Decades devoted to the Eradication of Colonialism, we have only succeed in de-listing one out of the 17 UN-listed Non-Self Governing Territories (NSGTs), following the attainment of independence by Timor Leste in 2002. However, my delegation is of the view that we should not be demoralized or tempted to believe we have failed or we are failing in attainment of the objectives of resolution 1514. Rather, we should commend ourselves for the level of commitment and devotion we have demonstrated over years towards the implementation of the mandate entrusted to us by the General Assembly in 1961. My delegation believes the process of decolonization has evolved and that we have laid a solid foundation for the implementation of resolution 1514, which only needs to be built upon.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Our goal as members of this noble Committee is clear: the speedy and unconditional **"end to colonialism in all its forms and manifestations"**. We cannot therefore agree more with Secretary-General of the UN when he said at the opening session of the Special Committee in February this year that Colonialism is "outdated and must be

addressed with renewed vigour and creativity". We have taken initiatives over the years, which if actively pursued during the course of this Third Decade, will no doubt accelerate the pace of the decolonization process.

In addition to the de-listing of Timor Leste from the list of UN-listed NSGTs and assisting the people of Tokelau to exercise their right to self-determination in two elections, we have consistently rendered advisory services to the peoples of the remaining 16 NSGTs by educating them on the options available to them in the exercise of their rights to self-determination. Furthermore, we have given the territories the opportunity, on a case-by-case basis, to exercise their right to self-determination with a view to fully taking the interests of their respective populations into account. More importantly, we have established dialogue with the Administering Powers, which we believe will improve cooperation between us and them for the benefit the peoples of the NSGTs.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Laudable though our commitment and devotion to the decolonization process may sound, we must bear in mind that there is still much to be done. We are yet to get 16 territories de-listed from the UN-listed NSGTs. In the words of the Secretary-General, "the road indeed is long, beset by new challenges". But with concerted efforts and perseverance, we will get there. My delegation therefore wishes to submit, for consideration by the Committee, the following proposals, which we believe will not only help with moving the decolonization process forward but could be useful in the attainment of our overall objective of eradicating colonialism:

- Regular assessment of our past works and achievements in seminars of this nature with a view to identifying problems encountered in past and finding possible solutions to them;
- Work speedily to complete the Action Plan for the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (2011-2020), which we have been mandated to develop. The Action Plan, in our view, should contain a clear timeline with achievable indicators for the full implementation of the Declaration on Colonialism before the close of the decade;
- Enhance the participation of Members of the Special Committee in Regional Seminars. The UN should consider increasing the number of funded participants per region in order to encourage the participation of more members;

- Establish programmes that could assist the territories achieve political maturity; administrative capacity and economic sustainability in line with OP3 of the Declaration which clearly states "Inadequacy of political, economic, social or educational preparedness should never serve as a pretext for delaying independence;
- The last but not the least should be mainstreaming gender perspectives into the process by encouraging the UN to offer assistance that can enhance the effective participation of women especially in human rights dialogue, peace processes and dialogue on good governance.

Before I close Mr. Chairman, I wish to acknowledge the fact that the achievements attained during the past two decades would not have been possible without the active involvement of all the stakeholders, particularly the UN and its relevant specialized Agencies, the Non-Self Governing Territories (NSGTs) and their respective Administering Powers. It will also be a remise if I fail to commend the civil society, the media and the press for their promotion and support of the civil, and political rights of the peoples of the NSGTs in the exercise of their rights to self-determination.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Let me end by reminding us members of this Committee as well as all participants present here today that our mandate to completely eradicate colonialism is far from over. Sierra Leone on its part will remain committed to the noble ideals enshrined in Articles 73 and 74 of the UN Charter and to the Decolonization Declaration as we join forces with you distinguished members of this Committee and the wider international community to engage in more constructive, result-oriented initiatives geared towards the immediate and complete eradication of colonialism in all its forms and manifestations. It is our sincere hope that we will be able to bring this sad chapter of colonial system to a close before the end of this Third International Decade in 2020.

I thank you for your attention.