



CARICOM



**PERMANENT MISSION OF JAMAICA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

STATEMENT BY

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**ON BEHALF OF
THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM)**

**DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL
DECOLONISATION AGENDA ITEMS**

IN THE

**4TH COMMITTEE OF THE 65TH SESSION
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

NEW YORK, 11TH OCTOBER 2010

FINAL TEXT

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the fourteen Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). We congratulate you and your colleague members of the bureau on your election to lead the work of this Committee. CARICOM offers you its full support as we deal collectively with the special political and decolonisation questions before us.

CARICOM associates itself with the statement delivered by the delegation of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

At the outset, CARICOM wishes to underscore the principle of the inalienable right of all peoples to self determination. The continued existence of colonialism in any form is an impediment to the social, cultural, and economic development of dependent peoples and militates against the United Nations ideal of universal peace. These words, adopted in landmark General Assembly resolution 1514 in December 1960, remain as poignant today as they were fifty years ago.

Mr. Chairman,

2010 is a hallmark year for the global decolonisation movement. In December we will mark fifty years since the adoption of resolution 1514 on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. This resolution laid the foundation for the independence of territories across Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific. The resolution allowed colonized peoples to be free of the shackles of colonialism and take responsibility for their own destinies and their own development.

It was not so long ago that each of the fourteen CARICOM Member States, and numerous other States present here today were listed as non self-governing territories. Many of us only achieved decolonisation through the active support and vigilance of the United Nations. We are not prepared to celebrate our independence without due regard for the peoples and countries that remain colonized. Six of these territories are in the Caribbean, and are full or associate members of CARICOM and its affiliated institutions. The issue, therefore, is of special importance to us as their status as non-self-governing territories continues to present an obstacle to regional integration.

As we celebrate fifty years of the adoption of resolution 1514, we should not forget that our task is not yet complete. Sixteen non-self-governing territories do not have a voice in deciding their own future, and the United Nations family has not had the privilege of experiencing their input into the multilateral process. The UN and its Member States have a responsibility to these Territories and their Peoples, a responsibility from which we cannot hide away. The fiftieth anniversary of resolution 1514 should serve to renew our commitment to the noble cause of decolonisation and once again, make it a priority goal.

Mr. Chairman,

2010 is also important because it marks the end of the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. CARICOM is deeply concerned that whilst certain internal reforms have been enacted in several non-self-governing territories, little progress has been made in actual decolonization, consistent with the recognised legitimate political status options of independence, free association and integration throughout this second decade. CARICOM welcomes the designation of a Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, and we remain committed to playing our part to ensuring that there are tangible achievements in the goal to eradicate colonialism during this period.

For CARICOM however, the designation of a Third International Decade, is not cause for celebration, as it demonstrates that the work of the United Nations on the contemporary decolonisation process remains in a state of virtual inertia. Decolonisation has moved from the 'unfinished agenda' of the United Nations to the 'un-attended agenda.'

Looking ahead to the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism we must take stock of activities during the previous International Decades, and identify what has prevented the UN from achieving the established targets. CARICOM has in the past, consistently highlighted a number of challenges affecting the achievement of the goal of eradication of colonialism, including the information deficit on decolonisation which is compounded by the lack of analysis on the constitutional, political and economic situation in the non-self-governing territories; and limited high-level focus to the decolonisation agenda.

The United Nations is at an historical crossroads. As Member States we consistently reaffirm support for the principles of self-determination and decolonisation in our statements, and in the annual adoption of resolutions on this issue. But these endorsements are not sufficient if the corresponding mandates are not operationalised. We must decide if we are going to remain true to the relevant provisions of the United Nations Charter governing self-determination and decolonization. This Third Decade presents us with the opportunity to correct the inertia that has plagued the decolonisation agenda over the past two decades and take concrete steps toward the eradication of colonialism. Full implementation of all relevant resolutions is therefore critical.

Mr. Chairman,

CARICOM fully recognizes that it is only the peoples of the non-self-governing territories that can determine their future. We welcome the progress that has been made in a number of non-self-governing territories. However, we note with deep regret

the regressive steps that have been recently undertaken in the Caribbean territory of the Turks and Caicos Islands.

CARICOM remains concerned over the decision of the Administering Authority to dissolve the Government and legislature of the territory, as well as to suspend the right to trial by jury, and to replace the elected government with direct rule by the Administering power over the Territory of the Turks and Caicos Islands.

CARICOM has taken note with great concern of the recently announced decision by the Administering Authority to postpone elections previously scheduled to be held in July 2011. In a statement issued on September 30 2010, CARICOM stated "...that this development reinforces the view of the Community that the imposition of direct rule is totally at odds with the development of good governance, including improved fiscal and administrative management in the Turks and Caicos Islands, the professed aim of the British Government. That objective cannot be met by the continued disenfranchisement of the Turks and Caicos Islanders, by the denial of their inalienable right to shape their own future nor by the artificial widening of the voter base. Good political and fiscal governance cannot be handed down. Its nature and contours **must** be molded by the people of Turks and Caicos. We reiterate the call for direct rule to be replaced by self rule and for a return to democracy for the people of Turks and Caicos Islands, an Associate Member of the Caribbean Community."

Mr. Chairman,

CARICOM maintains its principled support for the right of the people of Western Sahara, as with all peoples in non-self governing territories, to self-determination. CARICOM commends the efforts being undertaken by the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General, Mr. Christopher Ross since his appointment, which has resulted in the re-establishment of mutual respect and dialogue between the main parties. We have taken note with concern of the suspension of family visits by air and urge their quick resumption, as well as the commencement of family visits by land.

We take note of the political process launched since April 2007 with its four rounds of negotiations and two informal meetings which took place in Austria and Westchester, New York. We encourage the parties to continue negotiating in a spirit of compromise and sincere commitment. We hope that the upcoming informal talks will pave the way to more substantive negotiations between all the parties with the objective of reaching a just, lasting and mutually acceptable solution to this protracted conflict.

CARICOM also supports the call in Security Council resolution 1920 for the continuation of negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations without preconditions and in good faith, which will provide for the self-determination of the

people of Western Sahara in the context of arrangements consistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Chairman,

In closing, let me take this opportunity to urge all Member States to work toward achieving the long outstanding goal of the eradication of colonialism. Let us extend ourselves beyond the academic exercise of receiving petitioners and adopting resolutions on the various aspects of the decolonization agenda.

It is often the case that the price of staying the same is far greater than the price of change. We cannot afford to continue to pay the price of constant repetition without concrete results in treating with the decolonisation process. Let us challenge ourselves to ensure that the third international decade for the elimination of colonialism is a successful one for the colonized countries and peoples.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

S/UNGAS/CAR on decolonization Stmt -

