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THIRD INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF COLONIALISM

**Pacific regional seminar on the implementation of the Third International
Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism: commitments and actions for
decolonization in the Non-Self-Governing Territories**

**Managua, Nicaragua
31 May to 2 June 2016**

STATEMENT BY

THE REPRESENTATIVE OF

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

The Security Council has been calling, since 2004, for a negotiated and mutually acceptable political solution to the “Western Sahara” dispute and requested the States of the region to fully cooperate to reach it.

Antigua and Barbuda firmly supports the political process launched by the Security Council since 2007, under the exclusive auspices of the United Nations, “with a view to achieving a just, lasting, and mutually acceptable political solution” to this dispute. This process has also the strong support of the General Assembly in all its resolutions since 2007, including resolution 70/98 adopted on 9 December 2015.

Antigua Barbuda also supports the Security Council’s “endorsement of the recommendation in the report of 14 April 2008 (S/2008/251) that a spirit of compromise by the parties is essential to achieve progress in negotiations”.

We note that within the framework of this political process, four formal negotiating rounds and nine informal meetings were held under the exclusive auspices of the United Nations.

We also note with satisfaction that the Personal Envoy of the Secretary General, Mr. Christopher Ross undertook, since last year, six visits to the region as well as consultations with all the parties in the margins of the General debate of the 70th session of the General Assembly including his most recent regional visit which took place 16 to 25 February 2016.

We express the hope that the efforts of the Personal Envoy of the Secretary General will lead to a political solution.

Antigua and Barbuda supports the Initiative presented by Morocco on 11 April 2007, which constitutes a serious proposal to put an end to this dispute. This Initiative of Morocco is in conformity with international legal practice, and resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

Mr. Chairman, Antigua Barbuda was glad to note in the special representative’s to the Secretary General and head of MINURSO’s briefing to the Security Council on December 8th, 2015, where she indicated that the local election held in “Western Sahara” “went by without incidents and in calm atmosphere insofar as MINURSO could observe”. This indication was reiterated by the Secretary General in his report to the Security Council S/2016/355, dated 19 April 2016, para 8.

We note with some satisfaction that two local leaders were elected as Presidents of the 2 regions of the Sahara and that the Presidents and Members of the regional and communal Councils are all from this region. This will allow these elected men and women, as representatives of the population, to effectively manage the affairs of the region.

Mr. Chairman,

With regards to economic and social development, I would like to refer to the new development model in the Sahara, launched, recently by the Kingdom of Morocco.

This new model forecasted to create over a 120 000 jobs, will have a positive impact on the Sahara and the population of the region.

This model encompasses sustainable development as an important aspect of the development of the region, including: The development of renewable energy, responsible governance and is a step towards reinforcing the national and international connectivity of the Sahara.

Mr. President,

With regards to human rights, we note the Security Council's latest resolution 2285, adopted on 29 April 2016. In this regard, the recent steps and initiatives taken by Morocco, and the role played by the National Council on Human Rights Commissions operating in Dakhla and Laayoune, and Morocco's interaction with Special Procedures of the United Nations Human Rights Council" was acknowledged including the cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

Antigua Barbuda remains concerned with the situation of refugees in the camps and invite all to address the situation. A registration formula of refugees might be most helpful in the protection of life and human safety.

I Thank you.