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TEL.: 1 (212) 963.1234 • FAX: 1 (212) 963.4879

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SECOND INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF COLONIALISM

Caribbean regional seminar on the implementation of the Second International Decade  
for the Eradication of Colonialism: challenges and opportunities in the process of  
decolonization in today's world

Frigate Bay, Saint Kitts and Nevis  
12 to 14 May 2009

**CLOSING STATEMENT**

**BY**

**H.E. R.M. MARTY M. NATALEGAWA,**

**PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF INDONESIA**

**TO THE UNITED NATIONS,**

**CHAIRMAN OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE**

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Special Committee on the  
Situation with regard to the  
Implementation of the Declaration  
on the Granting of Independence  
to Colonial Countries and Peoples

**2009 Caribbean Regional Seminar**

**Frigate Bay, Saint Kitts and Nevis, 12-14 May 2009**

**Closing of the seminar by**

**H.E. R.M. Marty M. Natalegawa,  
Permanent Representative of Indonesia,  
Chairman of the Special Committee**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Special Committee, I should like to, again, express our sincere thanks to the Government and the people of Saint Kitts and Nevis for hosting the 2009 Regional Seminar on decolonization.

I would also like to thank all the participants for making valuable contributions, in written and oral presentations, including from the territorial Governments, the administering Powers, experts and civil society representatives. As in the past, written presentations that are made available to the Secretariat will be posted on the United Nations decolonization website.

We have had good, constructive discussions on a number of important issues on how to move the decolonization process forward for the Non-Self-Governing Territories, on a case-by-case basis and in the context of a changing world.

We discussed various emerging challenges which could affect the Non-Self-Governing Territories in their path towards decolonization.

Not least, we discussed the opportunities that might be available in responding to these challenges.

Along this line, we discussed, among others, issues related to the impact of climate change, the global economic and financial crisis; as well as the role of regional cooperation, education and public awareness, the role of women, the empowerment of vulnerable people, and the capacity for full self-governance towards self determination.

Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Without seeking to summarize the wealth of the discussions that we had, I would like to recall a number of salient points, especially those of cross-cutting nature. These include the following:

In fostering a better understanding of decolonization issues and status-related questions, we should not overlook the value of comparative analysis. Notwithstanding the fact that decolonization needs to be approached on a case-by-case basis, comparative assessment could help us in drawing valuable lessons-learned for our common benefits.

Political maturity, economic sustainability, enhanced administrative capacity and strengthened regional cooperation are important elements for the Non-Self-Governing Territories in responding to the challenges of today's world. The cross-cutting nature of such challenges requires these elements to be approached in a holistic and mutually reinforcing manner.

For example, in response to the challenges of climate change, which have exposed many of the Non-Self-Governing Territories to even greater environmental and economic vulnerability, regional cooperation can play a crucial role through various forms of functional and technical cooperation, such as in the field of disaster preparedness. This, in turn, may also contribute to enhancing the capacity of the Non-Self-Governing Territories for full self-governance.

Indeed, regional cooperation and regional arrangements have offered and should continue to offer important opportunities for many Non-Self-Governing Territories in coping with various emerging challenges. They contribute to the development of a strong regional identity and the strengthening of concrete functional cooperation in various areas of mutual interests.

We recognize the important role that the United Nations Regional Commissions such as ECLAC and other regional organizations such as CARICOM and OECS could play in facilitating sustainable development in many Non-Self-Governing Territories. The importance of enhanced engagement and role of the United Nations specialized agencies was underscored.

We also discussed the impacts of the global economic and financial crisis to the Non-Self-Governing Territories. The crisis has further highlighted the importance of economic sustainability and diversification of economic base in the Non-Self-Governing Territories. The relevant territorial Government and administering Power may approach this by stepping up their attention to some areas of community-based development, including the development of small and medium enterprises, the promotion of micro-financing and employment-generating activities, and the empowerment of vulnerable groups.

Education and public outreach remains a crucial element for decolonization. This is particularly relevant to enable the people concerned to make an informed decision regarding their future political status. In this context it is also worth noting that various deliberations on decolonization and status-related exercises in the Territories should connect, in a meaningful way, to the reality on the ground and to the people concerned themselves.

There was recognition of the important role played by women in the process of decolonization, including through their active involvement in education, poverty eradication, and community empowerment. Gender equality contributes significantly to good governance and enhanced capacity for self-governance through equal rights for all.

We had illuminating discussions, structured on a case-by-case basis, about the situation of self-governance and self-determination in the Non-Self-Governing Territories. We also had extensive exchange of views on the status-related exercises in various Non-Self-Governing Territories.

Status-related and constitution exercise is a delicate issue that needs to meet certain expectations. It needs to be approached in a transparent, accountable, inclusive and participatory manner, with the involvement of the people concerned. It needs to be in line with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as relevant United Nations resolutions and decisions on decolonization. It needs to adhere to human rights standards and the principles of good governance and democracy. It needs to build upon the identity, cultural norms, and local values of the Non-Self-Governing Territory concerned. Again, education and public outreach can be crucial for this.

We also had frank exchange of views about how the Special Committee could enhance its capacity to better understand the situation on the ground in each of the Non-Self-Governing Territories and also for the Special Committee to be more proactive in its approach. We need to look into the ways and means in making better assessment, on a case-by-case basis, the current stage of decolonization and self-determination in each Non-Self-Governing Territory and how much left is to be done. We need to look more thoroughly on how to further operationalize the United Nations decolonization mandate. We also need to continue working towards the possibility of sending visiting missions to the Non-Self-Governing Territories, on a case-by-case basis and with the involvement of the relevant territorial Government and administering Power.

Indeed, enhanced interactions and cooperation between the Special Committee and the administering Powers remains crucial to the implementation of the United Nations decolonization mandate. This will be beneficial to all parties, particularly the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. In this context, we may need to explore the possibility of creating frameworks for talks, be they informal or formal in nature, be they bilateral or multi-stakeholders in nature, involving the Non-Self-Governing Territories, the administering Powers, and the Special Committee.

We had valuable discussions on the way forward, of which several ideas were presented. It is worth noting that, in any case, the underlying principle for the way forward is how to enhance the Special Committee's relevance to the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

Indeed, this is also the main purpose of this seminar: how to enhance the Special Committee's relevance to the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. I believe it is fair for me to say that we have had productive discussions on this. I believe it is fair for me to conclude that we have managed to organize a comparatively more interactive seminar this year.

This is not the end, nevertheless. Members of the Special Committee who are participating at this seminar will need to provide the Special Committee with their conclusions and recommendations. Let us, members of the Special Committee who are participating at the seminar, make the most of this opportunity to come up with sound conclusions and recommendations.

Thank you.

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