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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

MESSAGE

FROM

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

**MESSAGE TO CARIBBEAN REGIONAL SEMINAR ON DECOLONIZATION
AND OBSERVANCE OF THE WEEK OF SOLIDARITY
WITH THE PEOPLES OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES
Frigate Bay, St. Kitts and Nevis, 12-14 May 2009**

*Delivered by Mr. Michael M. Streit, Senior Political Affairs Officer,
Decolonization Unit, Department of Political Affairs*

It gives me great pleasure to convey my greetings to all who have gathered in St. Kitts and Nevis for the 2009 Caribbean Regional Seminar on Decolonization. I thank the Government and people of St. Kitts and Nevis for hosting this event.

This seminar gives the Special Committee on decolonization an opportunity to examine the progress made in the implementation of the principles contained in the United Nations Charter relating to Non-Self-Governing Territories, and in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. The right to self-determination must be taken into proper account as we explore how to accelerate the decolonization process for the remaining 16 Territories under the Committee's purview.

I commend the Committee for deciding to look at the challenges and opportunities for the decolonization process within the dynamics of a changing world. The global economic crisis poses a direct threat to many economies in the Territories, including through its negative effect on tourism, a major source of income. The potentially devastating impact of climate change is also of urgent concern, particularly as many of the Non-Self-Governing Territories are small islands.

Progress in discharging the decolonization mandate of the Special Committee on Decolonization will require close cooperation between the Non-Self-Governing Territories, the administering Powers and the Special Committee. The interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories must be at the heart of our efforts. I count on the administering Powers in particular to discharge their obligations in a manner that promotes the well-being of the inhabitants of the territories within their responsibility. The United Nations system will continue to offer assistance to the Non-Self-Governing Territories as appropriate, in areas such as economic and social development, environmental sustainability, healthcare and good governance.

As we approach the end of the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, I urge you to continue working together to find solutions for the completion of the decolonization process, with the aim of de-listing additional territories. The UN Secretariat stands ready to assist. In that spirit of partnership, I wish you a productive and successful seminar.