

United Nations  Nations Unies

HEADQUARTERS • SIEGE NEW YORK, NY 10017

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

Distr. RESTRICTED  
CRS/2007/CRP.14

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

SECOND INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF COLONIALISM

Caribbean Regional Seminar on the implementation of the Second  
International Decade for the Eradication of  
Colonialism: next steps in decolonization

St. George's, Grenada  
22 to 24 May 2007

Statement by the Hon. William Drabble

(Saint Helena)

Madam Chairperson,  
Honourable Members,  
Distinguished Guests

Firstly, I would like to repeat the words of previous speakers in expressing my thanks and appreciation to our hosts, the Government of Grenada and the organizers, the United Nations, for inviting me as a politician from St. Helena to address you.

Contrary to most of the previous speakers, we on St. Helena at this moment in time have no wish to be self governing. The reason being, we are Grant Aided and do not have the means to generate sufficient income to maintain the standard to which we have become accustomed.

With regard to decolonisation, hasn't Britain already complied to our wishes, since we are no longer colonies but Overseas Territories, hence the quotation "the pen is mightier than the sword". My friend from Montserrat appeared to take offence, rightly so, at being called a beggar, since St. Helena and Montserrat are the only two Grant Aided Overseas Territories Colonies, by seating us next to one another have you created beggars corner?

Personally, I do not mind being called a beggar, as long as I am a successful one. However, before the seminar is over, Montserrat and St. Helena will be coming around with the hat, please give generously. My begging and that of my colleagues must have worked, since Britain has agreed to finance the building of an airport, estimated cost of £100 Million. I have listened to the statement from the Argentine regarding the Malvenas (Falkland Island). I have to declare my interest on behalf of St. Helena because we have some 600 saints working there, which is beneficial to the Falklands and St. Helena. Once the airport is built, it should be easier for St. Helena to attend, we are not encouraged to by the FCO. However, during my 20 years as a politician I have always adopted the formula, that if the British Government disapproves of any action all the more reason you should do it.

Once again, may I express my thanks and appreciation for the invitation to be here and address you. It took me eight days to get here, but it is well worth it.

I will end by offering my commiserations to my West Indian colleagues on the performance of their cricket team in the World Cup, with one regret that I will not witness the pure genius of one Brian Charles Lara, with a

suggestion that he be offered the post of Governor on one of the islands, after all he would not be any worse than some of those we have had to serve with over the years.

Madam Chairperson, Honourable Members, this beggar from St. Helena thanks you all for the privilege of addressing you and wishes you well for your efforts in the future.