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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: accelerating action**

**Denarau, Nadi, Fiji
21 to 23 May 2014**

WELCOME STATEMENT BY THE CHAIR

2014 Pacific Regional Seminar

Brief for the Chair

H.E. Ambassador Xavier Lasso Mendoza (Ecuador)

RESPONSE TO HOST COUNTRY'S WELCOME ADDRESS

BY

H. E. PRIME MINISTER FRANK BAINIMARAMA

Your Excellency,

On behalf of all members of C-24 and indeed all seminar participants who are here on my invitation, I would like to thank you most sincerely for your warm and gracious welcome to us and for the generous support which the Government and People of Fiji have extended to us in all stages of our preparations for this meeting. Let me also use this opportunity to welcome all delegations and participants who are here today.

As many of you are aware, the beautiful country of Fiji has hosted this seminar on three previous occasions in 1998, 2002 and 2006. Now hosting it for the fourth time, Fiji holds the record as the Committee Member that has opened its home the highest number of times for this biannual event of the Special Committee. This is an eloquent expression of Fiji's strong commitment and support for the Committee's work and the

cause of decolonization in general. On a light-hearted note, we can all agree that Fiji is indeed the "host with the most". I have no doubt that we will all have a great time working here.

This Seminar, as you know, is organized pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/119 of 10 December 2010, by which the Assembly declared the period 2011-2020 the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

This is the fourth seminar being held in this context, and as always, we will seize the opportunity to reinforce efforts in executing the mandate entrusted to us by the General Assembly, which is to monitor the implementation of the United Nations Declaration for the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and to make recommendations that will facilitate the decolonization agenda.

This year's Seminar also provides us with a good opportunity to reflect on the annual Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories, marked on 25 May every year, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 54/91 of 6 December 1999. This observance strengthens our commitment and resolve to strike down colonialism in all its aspects and take forward the decolonization process with a result-oriented vision.

Your Excellency, Mr. Prime Minister, I thank you once again for hosting us and making all of us feel welcome and at home in your wonderful country. On behalf of all C24 delegates and other seminar participants, I say to the Government and people of Fiji, a big VINAKA!