



# General Assembly

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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

### Summary record of the 9th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 24 June 2011, at 10 a.m.

*Chairman:* Mr. Nuñez Mosquera (Vice-Chairman) . . . . . (Cuba)

## Contents

Adoption of the agenda

Question of Tokelau

*Hearing of representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territory*

Report of the Special Committee on decisions concerning organizational matters

Organization of work

Closure of the session

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*In the absence of Mr. Carrión-Mena (Ecuador), Mr. Núñez Mosquera (Cuba), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

### **Question of Tokelau** (A/AC.109/2011/3 and A/AC.109/2011/L.15)

2. **The Chairman** drew attention to a working paper on Tokelau prepared by the Secretariat (A/AC.109/2011/3).

#### *Hearing of representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territory*

3. *At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Toloa (Ulu-o-Tokelau) and Mr. Kings (Administrator of Tokelau) took places at the Committee table.*

4. **Mr. Toloa** (Ulu-o-Tokelau), titular head of the Territory, said that Tokelau remained intensely focused on building infrastructure and enhancing human resources as an important step toward self-determination. Those efforts had been guided by a new, five-year National Strategic Plan, which had been approved by the General Fono in March 2010. An important nation-building initiative, the Plan had improved management of relationships between Tokelau and its donor partners.

5. As the administering Power, New Zealand demonstrated a commitment to its constitutional responsibilities and provided the Territory with a substantial degree of autonomy. Infrastructure projects were funded primarily by New Zealand. While many such projects, such as the construction of schools and a hospital, had been previously stalled, they were now well under way, owing in part to the Strategic Plan and the transfer of project management from external contractors to local contractors. Other significant infrastructure projects planned included a long-term transport solution, including an air service, as well as a renewable energy project aimed at increasing use of solar energy and biofuel.

6. Under a new joint commitment for development, New Zealand had also agreed to provide budget support for key priorities identified by Tokelau in its National Strategic Plan. They included reviewing the legal framework concerning fisheries in order to allow the Territory to manage its own exclusive economic

zone; developing small businesses in villages; improving literacy and numeracy; and providing training on good governance at all levels of government. The enhancement of human resource capacity, including monitoring of the quality of public service, had also been prioritized in order to support infrastructure efforts. A review of the decentralization of public service provision to the village level, first implemented in 2004, would be conducted later in 2011.

7. Never before had Tokelau had such opportunities to define its own infrastructure needs using a self-management approach. With the nation's development priorities clearly defined in its Strategic Plan, the respective needs had to be articulated to donor partners. Tokelau relied primarily on its partnership with New Zealand to survive. As a territory, it was ironic that Tokelau was not eligible for many of the United Nations funds for development available, as those conditions only made it more difficult for Tokelau to become independent. While the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) had provided support for some village development projects, Tokelau's leadership wished to establish more commitments with UNDP and other partners.

8. The problem of climate change underscored the difficulty of Tokelau's funding situation. Tokelau stood to lose not only its land and sources of livelihood, but also its culture and traditions from the impacts of climate change, yet under the framework of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund, it was not eligible for relevant assistance. Furthermore, New Zealand could not be expected to forego its responsibilities to its own citizens in terms of funding climate change mitigation in order to advocate on Tokelau's behalf.

9. Tokelau needed more support in achieving the development required to become self-determined. Most urgently, Tokelau needed to be able to stand together with the other, similar Pacific island nations, without prejudice to its constitutional status. He urged the Committee to provide concrete support in helping Tokelau attain membership in the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) and to help to amend relevant policies in order to make the Territory eligible for more United Nations-derived funds. Tokelau's leadership was committed to ensuring appropriate development to create a strong position when the decision for self-determination came.

10. **Mr. Kings** (Administrator of Tokelau) said that, in line with the decision taken in 2008 by the leaders of

Tokelau and New Zealand, little attention had been given to issues of decolonization during the past year, with efforts and resources instead being directed to addressing Tokelau's development. The National Strategic Plan, which set out the cultural, economic and social aspirations of Tokelau's people, had served as the basis for a joint agreement by which New Zealand had made funding commitments to Tokelau through 2012.

11. Over the past year, substantive progress had been made on the construction of schools, advancing the generation of sustainable electricity and meeting transport requirements. The incidence of non-communicable diseases remained a challenge that required strong leadership. In terms of education, the General Fono had supported investment in the professional development of teachers, thus addressing a critical need.

12. The Government of New Zealand was committed to maintaining a strong relationship with Tokelau's leaders and would continue to follow the three pillars of its approach to the implementation of independence for colonial countries and peoples: encouraging the Territory along the path to greater political self-reliance; allowing the people of Tokelau to determine the direction and pace of their political evolution; and cooperating fully with the mechanisms of the United Nations in discharging its responsibilities as the administering Power. He was grateful in particular to the UNDP regional office in Samoa for their support to Tokelau. While the formal constitutional relationship was paused for the time being, New Zealand's flexible approach would help achieve Tokelau's most important objective: healthy and safe communities for all of its people.

13. *Mr. Toloa (Ulu-o-Tokelau) and Mr. Kings (Administrator of Tokelau) withdrew.*

*Draft resolution A/AC.109/2011/L.15*

14. **Mr. Aisi** (Papua New Guinea), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of his country and Fiji, said that the text contained mostly technical updates to General Assembly resolution 65/114, adopted in December 2010. The draft resolution underscored the close cooperation between Tokelau and New Zealand in its quest for self-determination, which could serve as a model for other decolonization processes. He hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted without a vote.

15. **Mr. Daunivalu** (Fiji) said that Tokelau's economic development was just as important as its political independence. In that connection, the development assistance provided to the Territory by New Zealand, the United Nations and other international and regional organizations was commendable. He hoped that the Committee would play a more active role in helping Tokelau obtain more assistance from the international community.

16. **Mr. Saint Aimée** (Saint Lucia) said that his delegation supported the draft resolution because it highlighted the spirit of collaboration between Tokelau and its administering Power, which could set the standard for other decolonization situations.

17. *Draft resolution A/AC.109/2011/L.15 was adopted.*

#### **Report of the Special Committee on decisions concerning organizational matters** (A/AC.109/2011/L.14)

18. **The Chairman** said he took it that the Special Committee wished to adopt the draft report on decisions concerning organizational matters (A/AC.109/2011/L.14), which followed the same general pattern as the reports of previous years.

19. *It was so decided.*

#### **Organization of work**

20. **The Chairman** said he took it that, in order to facilitate the timely submission of the report of the Special Committee to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session, the Special Committee wished to authorize the Rapporteur to submit the report directly to the Assembly.

21. *It was so decided.*

#### **Closure of the session**

22. **The Chairman**, after reviewing the work accomplished by the Special Committee during the past session, observed that, in the coming year, the Committee would need to continue working toward reducing the number of Non-Self-Governing Territories. The Special Committee must remain engaged in the process of decolonization with the active participation of the United Nations system and the Territories themselves, and with enhanced cooperation from the administering Powers. He declared the session closed.

*The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.*