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## Eightieth session

Item 58 of the preliminary list\*

### Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

## Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

The present report is submitted pursuant to the request of the General Assembly that the Secretary-General report at the eightieth session on the implementation of resolution [75/123](#) on the Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

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\* [A/80/50](#).



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## I. Introduction

1. On 10 December 2020, the General Assembly adopted resolution [75/123](#), entitled “Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism”, in which the Assembly, inter alia, declared the period 2021–2030 as the Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism and called upon Member States to intensify their efforts to continue to implement the plan of action for the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism ([A/56/61](#), annex).
2. Pursuant to the provisions contained in resolution [75/123](#) and the plan of action, the Secretary-General submits the present report on action taken to implement the above-mentioned resolution.

## II. Actions taken during the Decade by United Nations organs

### A. General Assembly

3. During the period under review, the General Assembly has annually considered, directly, in plenary meetings, or in the Fourth Committee, a number of questions relating to decolonization, and has adopted resolutions and decisions on them. By its resolution [79/115](#), entitled “Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples: eradicating colonialism in all its forms and manifestations”, adopted on 4 December 2024, the General Assembly decided to include in the provisional agenda of its eightieth session an item entitled “Eradicating colonialism in all its forms and manifestations”.
4. The General Assembly, by its resolutions [76/105](#), [77/149](#), [78/101](#) and [79/114](#), has called on the Special Committee to promote the implementation of the plan of action for the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

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

5. During the period under review, the Special Committee implemented its 2020 decision to adapt its working method by revising its programme for the substantive session in order to give priority to hearing from the Non-Self-Governing Territories before the consideration of the relevant resolutions, thereby gaining valuable insights from the information provided in hearings and ensuing discussions.
6. The Special Committee took decisions to continue to consider the question of Puerto Rico and adopted annual resolutions on the question without a vote.
7. The Special Committee has continued to hold annual regional seminars in the Caribbean and Pacific regions, which have provided a valuable platform for addressing issues relevant to the Non-Self-Governing Territories.
8. In 2024, the Special Committee dispatched a visiting mission to the British Virgin Islands with the cooperation and assistance of the administering Power (see [A/AC.109/2025/20](#)).
9. During the reporting period, the Chair and Bureau held informal consultations with the administering Powers and other stakeholders regarding the Non-Self-Governing Territories on the Committee’s agenda. The Bureau met annually with the Secretary-General, as requested in General Assembly resolutions, to explore innovative approaches to advance the decolonization agenda on a case-by-case basis.

## **B. Security Council**

10. During the period under review, the Security Council continued to consider reports of the Secretary-General and adopted resolutions on the situation concerning Western Sahara (resolutions [2602 \(2021\)](#), [2654 \(2022\)](#), [2703 \(2023\)](#) and [2756 \(2024\)](#)).

## **C. Economic and Social Council**

11. The Economic and Social Council has considered the question of the implementation of the Declaration by the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations, has adopted resolutions annually and has considered annually the reports of its President on the assistance provided by those organizations to Non-Self-Governing Territories. The Chair of the Committee participated in the Council's consideration of the relevant item on an annual basis.

## **D. Secretary-General**

12. During the period under review, the Secretary-General has continued to exercise his good offices. The Secretariat has also continued to provide substantive, technical, administrative and information services to the Special Committee in fulfilling its mandate.

13. The Department of Global Communications worked closely with the Decolonization Unit of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs to disseminate information on decolonization, including through meeting coverage, media services, United Nations websites and social media, United Nations news in 10 languages and visitor services in New York, Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi. These efforts also involved the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and United Nations information centres. A report on these activities is submitted annually to the Special Committee.

14. The Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs continued to update the United Nations and Decolonization website in the six official languages. The English video United Nations and Decolonization: Past to Present was translated into the five other official languages. A new section, Women in the Territories: Highlights, was added to showcase women's contributions to decolonization. In addition, an infographic entitled "UN decolonization in numbers" and an interactive timeline of regional seminars were created in the six official languages.

## **III. Action taken during the Decade by the specialized agencies**

15. Recent information on activities undertaken by the specialized agencies and international institutions associated with the United Nations with regard to the Fourth Decade can be found in annex II to the present report.

## **IV. Support for the Decade by Member States**

16. During the period under review, 21 Member States provided information on scholarships to students from the Territories, as reflected in the annual reports of the Secretary-General on the matter.

17. Specific replies from Member States on their activities in support of the work and mandate of the Special Committee during the Decade, provided in accordance with resolution 75/123, are reproduced as received in annex I to the present report.

## V. Conclusions

18. As we mark the first half of the Fourth Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, I emphasize once again the critical importance of fostering, on a case-by-case basis, transparent and constructive dialogue among Non-Self-Governing Territories, administering Powers, Member States and other stakeholders. Joint efforts are needed to ensure that decolonization processes are carried out by promoting dialogue and cooperation among all parties involved.

19. The Special Committee revised its working methods to prioritize hearing from Territories before deliberating on resolutions, in order to enhance its effectiveness in advancing the decolonization agenda. In 2020, during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the Committee transitioned to virtual sessions, and it successfully resumed in-person sessions in 2021, demonstrating its commitment to its work despite the challenges. The Special Committee has utilized regional seminars as valuable platforms for the exchange of ideas and the sharing of accumulated experience to address both present and future challenges. To maximize their impact, it is essential to ensure that these seminars facilitate meaningful and inclusive engagement among all relevant actors.

20. Young people can and should play a crucial role in addressing challenges faced by Non-Self-Governing Territories. It is important to engage and inspire young people to participate and lead in the decolonization process, fostering their potential to transform challenges into opportunities for sustainable development, innovation, and inclusive governance. Their creativity drives awareness campaigns, fosters dialogue and develops solutions. Youth engagement can ensure that the decolonization agenda remains dynamic and forward-looking, cultivating future leaders. Such engagement aligns with the Pact for the Future, which contains an emphasis on intergenerational dialogue and empowering youth as agents of change.

21. Recognizing the vulnerability of Territories to climate change, I advocate for adequate and sustainable resources and support to build resilience and invest in their future.

22. I remain fully committed to supporting the Organization's efforts to achieve the total eradication of colonialism, which remains its priority. This unwavering partnership reflects a shared commitment to the advancement of the principle of self-determination, enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

## Annex I

### Replies received from Member States

#### Argentina

[Original: Spanish]

[28 February 2025]

The Argentine Republic reiterates its support for the decolonization process carried out by the United Nations through its relevant bodies, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles established in General Assembly resolution [1514 \(XV\)](#). The decolonization process is one of the most significant achievements of the United Nations, and Argentina, as a founding Member of the Organization, has been among the strongest supporters of the process since its inception. Argentina has actively participated in the work of the General Assembly in this area through that body's Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) and its Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. Argentina has also taken part in the regional seminars held under the current plan of action. As a party to the sovereignty dispute relating to the Malvinas Islands, Argentina has participated, since 2014, in the informal meetings convened each year by the Bureau of the Special Committee. It has also participated in the Committee's meetings with a large delegation led by its various Ministers for Foreign Affairs. Furthermore, the will of the Government of Argentina to achieve a peaceful, just and lasting resolution to the sovereignty dispute has been expressed repeatedly in the statements made by the country's Presidents during the general debate of the General Assembly.

Halfway into the Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, 17 colonial situations remain. To move ahead with the decolonization process, the Special Committee must continue its constructive programme of work, taking a case-by-case approach that factors in the political and legal particularities of each such situation and is in accordance with the purposes and principles invoked in General Assembly resolution [1514 \(XV\)](#), as noted in resolution [1654 \(XVI\)](#) of the Assembly establishing the Special Committee on decolonization.

Among the pending cases on the decolonization agenda, the question of the Malvinas Islands is of the utmost importance to Argentina, because the illegal occupation of the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is still ongoing. The year 2025 marks the sixtieth anniversary of General Assembly resolution [2065 \(XX\)](#), through which the Assembly established the path towards decolonizing the Malvinas Islands, namely, bilateral negotiations to reach a peaceful solution to the sovereignty dispute, taking into account the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and Assembly resolution [1514 \(XV\)](#), in addition to the interests of the inhabitants of the Islands. Throughout the Fourth Decade, the Special Committee on decolonization has annually adopted, by consensus, resolutions in which it: (a) defines the question of the Malvinas Islands as a special and particular colonial situation; (b) recognizes the existence of a sovereignty dispute between Argentina and the United Kingdom; (c) requests the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom to resume negotiations in order to find, as soon as possible, a peaceful, just and lasting solution to the dispute, in accordance with the provisions of the relevant General Assembly resolutions on the matter; and (d) reiterates its support for the mission of good offices of the Secretary-General in order to assist the parties in complying with the relevant General Assembly resolutions.

Over the course of the Fourth Decade, Argentina has requested the Secretary-General to redouble his efforts to help the parties to find a peaceful solution to the dispute as soon as possible within the framework of the mission of good offices entrusted to him by the General Assembly. The validity and importance of this mission has been recalled at the highest level at the summits of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), the Ibero-American Summits and in various statements of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) and the Group of 77 and China. In addition, numerous international bodies and regional and biregional forums have considered the question of the Malvinas Islands. CELAC, MERCOSUR and the Brasilia Consensus have expressed their support for the legitimate rights of Argentina in the sovereignty dispute over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas. Various forums, such as the Group of 77 and China, the Ibero-American Summit, the Organization of American States (OAS) and the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic, reaffirmed the need for Argentina and the United Kingdom to resume negotiations to find a peaceful solution. CELAC, MERCOSUR and the Brasilia Consensus reiterated the interest of the region in that regard. At the European Union-CELAC Summit, regarding the question of the Malvinas Islands, the European Union took note of the historical position of CELAC, based on the importance of dialogue and respect for international law in the peaceful solution of disputes. The Group of 77 and China and the Ibero-American Summit acknowledged the willingness of the Government of Argentina to conduct negotiations, and OAS welcomed the reaffirmation of the will of the Government to continue exploring all possible avenues towards a peaceful settlement of the dispute and its constructive approach towards the inhabitants of the Islands. The Group of 77 and China, MERCOSUR, the Ibero-American Summit and the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic reaffirmed the need to refrain from introducing unilateral modifications, referring to General Assembly resolution 31/49. In that context, the Group of 77 and China, MERCOSUR and the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic recognized the right of Argentina to take legal action against hydrocarbon exploration and exploitation activities in the disputed areas. The Ibero-American Summit and the Brasilia Consensus underlined that the military presence of the United Kingdom in the disputed area was contrary to the policy of finding a peaceful solution, and the zone of peace and cooperation in the South Atlantic expressed its concern about the reinforcement of that military presence.

However, despite the international community's firm mandate, expressed repeatedly through these various appeals, and the continued willingness of Argentina, the United Kingdom refuses to resume bilateral negotiations, repeatedly commits unilateral acts that are contrary to international law and claims the exercise of self-determination for the transplanted British population on the islands, an argument that has no basis in international law.

Decolonization and self-determination are not synonyms. Self-determination is one of the mechanisms for implementing decolonization, but it is not the only one. General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) contains another principle, namely the preservation of the national unity and territorial integrity of States. This principle prevails in the question of the Malvinas Islands, because the territorial integrity of Argentina is affected. The current composition of the population of the Islands is the result of the colonization initiated by the United Kingdom in 1833. That population, implanted by the United Kingdom, cannot be regarded as a people subject to or subjected to domination or subjugation by a colonial Power, nor does it constitute an ethnically and culturally distinct population from the occupying Power, as stipulated by General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV), and as has occurred in other colonial cases. In other words, what we have here is a colonial situation, but not

a colonized population, and thus there is no active subject with a right to self-determination.

The inhabitants of the Malvinas Islands have the right to full enjoyment of their fundamental human rights, and respect for their way of life is enshrined in the Constitution, but they cannot take upon themselves the power to decide the fate of a sovereignty dispute to which the United Kingdom (their country) is party. Therefore, the vote held in 2013 in the Malvinas Islands, which was not organized or conducted under the auspices of the United Nations, as in other cases of decolonization, is devoid of all validity and effect. No State or international organization sent official representatives to act as electoral observers during the vote, which was simply a unilateral action undertaken by the United Kingdom, devoid of any legal value; it therefore in no way changes the essence of the question of the Malvinas Islands, it does not resolve the sovereignty dispute and it has no effect on the legitimate rights of Argentina.

Indeed, as indicated by the International Court of Justice in its advisory opinion on the legal consequences of the separation of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius in 1965, it is for the General Assembly to decide on the modalities of free and authentic expression of a Non-Self-Governing Territory, where appropriate, including the formulation of questions submitted for consultation. Consequently, a so-called referendum without General Assembly approval lacks all validity.

On the basis of international law, the United Kingdom must honour the international community's call for the immediate resumption of negotiations with Argentina on the sovereignty of the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, in order to find a just and definitive solution to the dispute.

Argentina reiterates its full readiness to resume such negotiations and expects an equivalent attitude from the United Kingdom. In this context, it reiterates its readiness to cooperate with the United Kingdom, under the due legal safeguards, on practical matters arising from the de facto situation in the South Atlantic. However, Argentina reiterates its concern about the unilateral actions taken by the United Kingdom in the disputed area, contrary to General Assembly resolution 31/49, which calls upon both parties to refrain from taking unilateral decisions while the process recommended by the Assembly is pending resolution. In this context, the Argentine Republic will continue to take all the measures that it deems necessary, in full respect for international law, with regard to the unilateral and unauthorized exploration and exploitation of renewable and non-renewable natural resources in the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, which are an integral part of the national territory of Argentina.

This concern extends to the unjustified and disproportionate military presence of the United Kingdom in the South Atlantic. Such actions contravene General Assembly resolution 31/49, as well as resolution 41/11, on the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic, which, among other provisions, calls upon States of all other regions, in particular the militarily significant States, scrupulously to respect the region of the South Atlantic as a zone of peace and cooperation, especially through the reduction and eventual elimination of their military presence there.

Argentina trusts that the work of the Special Committee on decolonization will support the fulfilment of all the resolutions that it has adopted on the question of the Malvinas Islands. It also hopes that the United Kingdom will respond to the calls arising from the good offices mandate of the Secretary-General and assume the responsibility incumbent on it as a permanent member of the Security Council, by accepting its obligation to resolve this dispute peacefully in accordance with the



principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant General Assembly resolutions.

The joint statement by the Republic of Mauritius and the United Kingdom of 3 October 2024 was a milestone for those who fight to bring an end to colonialism in all its forms and manifestations, since it represents an important step forward in the peaceful resolution of international disputes, with the United Kingdom recognizing the sovereignty of Mauritius over the Chagos Archipelago after two years of negotiations. This historic achievement underscores the value of dialogue as a means of peaceful settlement of disputes.

As the first half of the Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism draws to a close, and to mark the sixtieth anniversary of resolution 2065 (XX), it is imperative to recall that for the United Nations the continuation of colonial situations constitutes a grave violation of the Charter of the United Nations, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the principles of international law, as the General Assembly determined in its resolution 2621 (XXV). It is our responsibility to put an end to them.

## Azerbaijan

[Original: English]

[28 February 2025]

The Republic of Azerbaijan commends the United Nations for its continued commitment to the Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (2021–2030) and welcomes that the eradication of colonialism has been one of its priorities and continues to be an ongoing focus. We remain steadfast in supporting the decolonization efforts of the United Nations and call for the speeding up of this process towards the complete elimination of colonialism.

Azerbaijan has consistently advocated for the full realization of the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and relevant General Assembly resolutions concerning decolonization. During its 2019–2023 chairmanship of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Azerbaijan prioritized the issue of eradication of colonialism and mobilized Member States in advocating for its total elimination. Over those years, Azerbaijan placed particular emphasis on the issue of self-determination of peoples under colonial rule, ensuring that the Movement's collective voice strengthened the urgency of decolonization. Azerbaijan's chairmanship has been marked by an increased attention and reinforced activities by the Non-Aligned Movement in this direction. It is not a coincidence that, on the margins of the Ministerial Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement, the Baku Initiative Group was launched in 2023, serving as a platform for advocating for the rights of peoples striving for self-determination.

Furthermore, Azerbaijan has been actively involved and has contributed to international discussions on decolonization. In 2024, Azerbaijan, for the first time ever, partook in the Caribbean Regional Seminar on the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, on the theme "Pursuing goals and addressing needs of the Non-Self-Governing Territories", organized by the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples from 14 to 16 May 2024, in Caracas. This involvement serves as yet another demonstration of support by Azerbaijan for the eradication of colonialism.

In line with the objectives of the Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, Azerbaijan has consistently supported the people of French Polynesia

and New Caledonia towards the complete elimination of colonialism and has expressed its commitment to the fair and lasting resolution of their political status, without external interference and pressure, so that the people of these Territories can pursue their economic, social and cultural development, as well as their right to development. Azerbaijan has also expressed concern over the legacy of nuclear testing in these regions and other affected territories, particularly in French Polynesia, where such tests have had decades-long detrimental environmental and health impacts on local communities. Azerbaijan advocates for the right of the affected communities to fully address these consequences and to seek reparations and compensation, while promoting the empowerment of their territories' populations to determine their future free from colonialism.

Azerbaijan stands ready to continue its collaboration with the United Nations, the Special Committee, Member States and all other relevant United Nations bodies to take all steps necessary to bring about the complete and speedy eradication of colonialism. We reaffirm our full support for the implementation of the United Nations plan of action and stand ready to accelerate progress towards the eradication of colonialism in all its forms.

## Cuba

[Original: Spanish]  
[27 February 2025]

The Republic of Cuba defends multilateralism and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including respect for the sovereign equality of States, as well as the right to self-determination of all peoples under the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, resolution [1514 \(XV\)](#) of the United Nations.

The Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, proclaimed by the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session, brings momentum to the shared aspiration of States to bring about the complete eradication of colonialism. In that regard, Cuba has demonstrated its strong commitment to implementing the current plan of action by carrying out numerous activities at the national level as well as at the regional and international levels.

With respect to international and regional forums, Cuba has served as the Vice-Chair of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples continuously since 1983. That position has enabled Cuba to actively support the Committee's work and activities. In addition, Cuba has engaged constructively in the regional seminars on decolonization.

As a State member of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, Cuba has pledged to continue working within the framework of international law to ensure that the region of Latin America and the Caribbean is a territory free of colonialism and colonies. In that context, it has also reaffirmed that the colonial question of Puerto Rico is a matter of high interest for the Community, emphasizing the Latin American and Caribbean character of Puerto Rico, and it has supported the legitimate rights of Argentina over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas.

From the forum of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Cuba has defended the inalienable right of all peoples to self-determination, in particular the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories and of territories under foreign occupation or

colonial or foreign domination. In that context, Cuba has also reaffirmed the right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence.

As a State belonging to the Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations, the country has also supported the implementation of the plan of action for the Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. The Group introduced resolution 79/115, entitled “Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples: eradicating colonialism in all its forms and manifestations”, which was adopted by a majority on 4 December 2024, during the session of the Fourth Committee of the United Nations. That resolution is a step forward towards the collective goal of eradicating colonialism. Accordingly, Cuba calls upon all States to support the text when it is next considered by the General Assembly.

At the national level, Cuba has maintained an ongoing commitment to denouncing colonialism and its negative ramifications for the development and well-being of the countries and peoples subjected to that form of domination. The behaviour of Cuba is premised upon a defence of the importance of cooperation, solidarity with other peoples and committed political action in various multilateral forums in defence of those causes, including the just defence of the Sahrawi people.

One example of this is its cooperation with the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, which has been maintained primarily in the education and health sectors in recent years, as evidenced by the presence of a Cuban medical team in the Tindouf camps and of a Cuban education brigade at Simón Bolívar School. Simón Bolívar School is the fruit of a project initiated by Cuba and Venezuela, where some 400 Sahrawi students receive secondary education and from which some 20 students graduate each year, who benefit from an annual scholarship awarded by the Government of Cuba. Hundreds of young people from Western Sahara have studied at Cuban schools and universities.

In the context of the public health crisis during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, Cuba spared no effort in extending its solidarity to peoples around the world, and it donated a batch of 458,000 doses of Cuban vaccines to the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic. In addition, Cuba sent various “Henry Reeve” brigades to the British Virgin Islands, Anguilla, the Turks and Caicos Islands and Montserrat.

With respect to cooperation in the education sector, for example, at year-end 2024, Cuba had recorded more than 2,100 graduates from various parts of the world affected by colonialism.

Cuba reiterates its willingness to continue offering its support to those peoples, cognizant that cooperation with the inhabitants of the Non-Self-Governing Territories is essential for their economic and social development. We urge all Member States to contribute to this important endeavour.

Cuba would like to reaffirm its full support for the decolonization process carried out by the United Nations, and it maintains a clear commitment to the self-determination and independence of the Non-Self-Governing Territories and of the brotherly people of Puerto Rico.

## Mexico

[Original: Spanish]  
[3 March 2025]

The self-determination of peoples is a fundamental principle of the foreign policy of Mexico, enshrined in the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States. This principle upholds the dignity of peoples and respect for their cultural identity.

Mexico reaffirms its commitment to continue to promote and support initiatives aimed at strengthening the right to self-determination of peoples, prioritizing the use of peaceful means for the resolution of outstanding decolonization issues.

As part of the work of the seventy-ninth session of the General Assembly, Mexico voted in favour of the following resolutions:

- Resolution [79/96](#), entitled “Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations”
- Resolution [79/114](#), entitled “Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples”
- Resolution [79/115](#), entitled “Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples: eradicating colonialism in all its forms and manifestations”

Mexico has historically joined consensus in the adoption of the resolutions introduced in the Fourth Committee on the issue of the decolonization of the 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories.

As part of the work of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), and with the support of the States members of CELAC, including Mexico, the Declaration of Kingstown was signed on 1 March 2024, which addresses the matter of the eradication of colonialism in paragraphs 83 and 97.

As part of the consultations for the statement of the ninth Summit of the Heads of State and Government of CELAC, Mexico proposed the strengthening of the text of the statement entitled “Commitment to peace, dialogue and Latin American and Caribbean unity”, in particular to express support for General Assembly resolution [75/123](#), adopted on 10 December 2020, establishing the Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (2021–2030), and to urge the States members of CELAC to continue implementing the plan of action for the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism

## Namibia

[Original: English]  
[6 March 2025]

### Introduction and background

Western Sahara (also referred to as the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic) is an occupied and partially recognized territory in the Maghreb region of North Africa. It has a long history of territorial dispute, primarily with Morocco, which claims the region as part of its territory, and the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, which is supported by the indigenous Sahrawi people and their independence movement, the Polisario Front. Relations between Namibia and Western Sahara are rooted in their

quest for freedom and independence. Since Namibia attained its independence in 1990, the two countries have maintained cordial bilateral relations.

Namibia's historical struggle for independence resonates deeply with the plight of the Sahrawi people. Our country's unwavering solidarity with the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic is grounded in the principles of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the Constitutive Act of the African Union, which underscore the right of all peoples to self-determination and the rejection of colonialism. The Polisario Front stood shoulder by shoulder with Namibia as tested comrades. Namibia and Western Sahara have common aspirations and commitment to shared prosperity, which has always been at the centre of the two countries' long-standing friendship. Namibia will continue to support Western Sahara in its efforts at self-determination and its pursuit to exercise its inalienable rights, determine its own future and establish an independent State.

### **Namibia's contributions towards Western Sahara**

Namibia's advocacy for the right to self-determination and independence of the people of Western Sahara is consistent, particularly through statements delivered at regional, continental and international forums. Namibia is a founding and active member of a cross-regional Geneva support group for Western Sahara, which is a pressure group advocating for the right of the Sahrawi People to self-determination, in the Human Rights Council.

Namibia and South Africa co-hosted the Southern African Development Community Solidarity Conference with Western Sahara, which was held on 25 and 26 March 2019. Hage G. Geingob, the then President of the Republic of Namibia, stressed the importance of international solidarity to sustain the struggle for freedom and independence for Western Sahara. The President also reiterated that United Nations resolutions and African Union decisions pertaining to Western Sahara should be implemented without further delays. The final declaration of the Conference raised a number of important issues, as has been the case in documents of the African Union in the past, describing Western Sahara as the only territory in Africa under colonial rule, which is not good for the continent of Africa, and expressed support for the self-determination and decolonization of the region, while urging Morocco to respect colonial borders as they existed at the time of independence and as enshrined in the Constitutive Act of the African Union.

In 2012, Namibia donated vehicles to the Sahrawi Embassies in Angola, Zimbabwe and Ethiopia, as well as some office equipment to the Sahrawi Embassy based in Addis Ababa, to enhance their operational activities. Furthermore, the Government of Namibia continues to offer financial support to the Sahrawi Government, as appropriate.

In August 2024, through the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation, Namibia issued a media release condemning the Government of France's decision endorsing Morocco's sovereignty over Western Sahara. Namibia has described the decision as blatant disregard of the principles of international law, particularly the right to self-determination, a long-standing aspiration of the Sahrawi people.

On 11 December 2024, Namibia participated in a conference organized by the Geneva Support Group for Western Sahara and made a strong call for the international community to fully respect the inalienable rights of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination and independence, while calling for the implementation of the United Nations resolutions on Western Sahara, particularly the holding of a referendum to allow the Sahrawi people to determine their political future, and for the

Kingdom of Morocco to end its occupation without any further delays and hindrance. The event commemorated the historic General Assembly resolution [1514 \(XV\)](#), adopted on 14 December 1960.

At the African Union level, Namibia, through its Mission in Addis Ababa, has actively participated in Peace and Security Council meetings addressing the Sahrawi issue. We have consistently called for the immediate and full implementation of relevant decisions of the African Union and the United Nations, including the holding of a referendum to allow the Sahrawi people to determine their political future. Namibia has also emphasized the need for continued African Union support for the United Nations-led peace process as a member of the African Union, and further reiterated its support for a United Nations plan for a referendum in which the people of Western Sahara will choose between independence and integration with Morocco.

At the thirty-sixth ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union and at other high-level meetings, Namibia reiterated its steadfast commitment to the independence of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic. Namibia delivered statements that highlighted the urgency of resolving the prolonged occupation of Western Sahara and called for stronger African Union action to hold the occupying Power accountable for violations of international law.

Furthermore, the Namibian Mission in Addis Ababa maintained close working relations with the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic delegation in Addis Ababa and provided diplomatic and moral support, ensuring that their voices are amplified within African Union deliberations and decision-making processes. In addition, Namibia has collaborated with other African Union member States that share a common vision for the liberation of Western Sahara. Through strategic alliances, we have collectively worked to ensure that the Sahrawi question remains a priority on the African Union's agenda.

Namibia has been vocal in condemning human rights abuses in the occupied territories of Western Sahara, and our Mission has called for investigations and international action to protect the rights and dignity of the Sahrawi people, while expressing concern about the absence of the human rights monitoring component in the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO).

At both the United Nations and the African Union levels, Namibia continues to support the call for solidarity with the colonized people of Western Sahara and continues to vote in favour of all United Nations resolutions and African Union decisions pertaining to Western Sahara.

### **Conclusion: observation**

While progress has been made, challenges from limited international political will have hindered the resolution of the conflict. Furthermore, despite the various resolutions of the United Nations passed on the inalienable right of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination and independence, the people of Western Sahara are still denied their right to exist as a State, the right to freely determine their political status and the right to sovereignty over their wealth and natural resources.

United Nations resolutions, such as General Assembly resolution [2229 \(XXI\)](#) and Assembly resolution [690 \(1991\)](#) establishing MINURSO; resolution [1495 \(2003\)](#) expressing concern that the lack of progress continues to cause suffering for the people of Western Sahara and remains a source of potential instability, hindering economic development; and resolution [1541 \(2004\)](#) reaffirming support for the Peace Plan for Self-Determination of the People of Western Sahara as the optimal political

solution to the issue of Western Sahara, lack implementation, which perpetuates the continual suffering of the Sahrawi people.

## **Qatar**

[Original: Arabic]

[27 February 2025]

Qatar, by contributing to efforts and activities in line with and in support of the objectives of the Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, seeks to support the efforts of the international community with respect to decolonization, the achievement of the right to self-determination of colonized peoples and promotion of respect for human rights. In this regard, we note that Qatar has made ongoing efforts at the national, regional and international levels aimed at support for and solidarity with colonized peoples, and at pressing for positive political and diplomatic change in the international arena with a view to eradicating colonialism. Below, we highlight efforts and activities undertaken by Qatar in the framework of the Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism 2021–2030.

### **Efforts and activities of Qatar contributing to the Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism**

- The State of Qatar has continued to participate in the meetings of the Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), delivering statements in support of the rights of colonized peoples that reflect its principled support for the elimination of colonialism and for solidarity with colonized peoples in achieving that established humanitarian and legal objective.
- Qatar reaffirms its principled commitment to decolonization and the promotion of justice and human rights and emphasizes that collective action and international cooperation are key to the achievement of the goals of colonized peoples.
- Qatar has partnered with organizations to raise awareness of and to support human rights issues in conflict zones.
- Qatar, in order to assist colonized peoples, has funded development projects in the fields of education and health, including the building of schools and health centres in underserved areas.
- Qatar has played an active role in advocating for colonized peoples in international forums, using its position at the United Nations to emphasize the rights of self-determination and decolonization.
- It has launched training programmes for young people in colonized countries to enhance their leadership capabilities and enable them to engage effectively in their communities.
- Qatar is represented at international human rights conferences, where it has shared successful experiences and models regarding support and assistance for decolonization.
- It has launched global initiatives focused on the role of international cooperation in supporting the right of peoples to self-determination and victory over colonialism.

## Timor-Leste

[Original: English]  
[28 February 2025]

### Commitment to decolonization

Timor-Leste's commitment to the implementation of the plan of action for the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism reflects its own historical struggle for self-determination. Having emerged from a prolonged fight for independence, Timor-Leste emphasizes the importance of decolonization globally, advocating for the rights of peoples under colonial rule.

### Constitutional foundation

Timor-Leste's Constitution provides a strong foundation for its international relations and actions in supporting the Fourth International Decade. Articles 8,<sup>1</sup> 9,<sup>2</sup> and 10<sup>3</sup> not only outline foundational ideals, but also inspire concrete actions that contribute to the United Nations' leading of global decolonization efforts.

Article 8 emphasizes the right of peoples to self-determination, a core objective of the Fourth International Decade. It reflects its own struggle and commitment to advocate for the rights of other colonized peoples, while principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and non-interference guide its international relations.

Article 9 illustrates the commitment to uphold international law, including customary laws relating to decolonization and human rights. This legal framework underpins its actions to promote a rules-based world order oriented towards self-determination efforts within the United Nations system.

Article 10 explicitly states the solidarity of Timor-Leste with all peoples fighting for national liberation, demonstrating understanding of shared struggles against colonialism and the importance of international support.

### Advocacy and solidarity

Timor-Leste emphasizes the significance of the decolonization process, guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international human rights and humanitarian laws. Timor-Leste continues to advocate for the rights of the 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories striving for self-determination. Through diplomatic engagement and advocacy, Timor-Leste embodies the principles enshrined in the Constitution, promoting a global commitment to decolonization.

### Support for the Saharawi cause

Timor-Leste shares deep solidarity with the Saharawi struggle, and it actively engages through United Nations mechanisms, advocating for the Saharawi people's rights in international forums. For example, Timor-Leste has chaired and actively participated in the Geneva Support Group for Western Sahara. Timor-Leste also

<sup>1</sup> On matters of international relations, the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste shall govern itself by the principles of national independence, the right of the Peoples to self-determination and independence, the permanent sovereignty of the peoples over their wealth and natural resources, the protection of human rights, the mutual respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and equality among States and the non-interference in domestic affairs of other States.

<sup>2</sup> Article 9 (1) states that the legal system of Timor-Leste shall adopt the general or customary principles of international law.

<sup>3</sup> Article 10 (1) states that the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste shall extend its solidarity to the struggle of all peoples for national liberation.



coordinates the Group of Friends on Western Sahara, which is based in Canberra, Australia.

Additionally, after establishing diplomatic relations in 2002, Timor-Leste has been providing annual financial contributions since 2011 to support the Embassy of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, which underpins the functioning of its diplomatic work in Dili, Timor-Leste.

#### **Active participation at the regional seminar on decolonization**

Timor-Leste's active participation in the regional seminars of the Special Committee on Decolonization, through sharing of experiences, advocating for solidarity and promoting human rights and the rule of law, contributes meaningfully to the global efforts aimed at eradicating colonialism.

From 21 to 23 May 2025, Timor-Leste will host the Pacific regional seminar in Dili, as decided by the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples during its meeting on 13 February 2025. This gesture not only recognizes the nation's resilience and dedication to the principles of self-determination and decolonization, but also reinforces the collaborative spirit that binds the international community. As a nation that has navigated the path to sovereignty through the Special Committee's political process, Timor-Leste stands ready to provide a nurturing and inspiring environment for dialogue, reflection and strategic planning that the seminar warrants.

## Annex II

### **Replies received from United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and international institutions associated with the United Nations**

#### **A. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean**

During the first half of the Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) has enhanced its advocacy for Caribbean Non-Self-Governing Territories, focusing on supporting their development efforts within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the small island developing States framework. This support is crucial for Caribbean Territories that face significant development challenges, which were exacerbated by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

#### **Support in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and the Small Island Developing States Action Platform**

The first two years of the Decade were particularly challenging for the Territories due to the severe economic impact of COVID-19, which included unemployment and small business closures, in particular in the more tourism-dependent Territories. The efforts of ECLAC were focused on addressing the pandemic's effects and developing recovery road maps.

In February 2021, ECLAC released several specific projections for the Territories forecasting the economic impact of COVID-19 on the health sector, publications on online learning during the pandemic and strategies for strengthening the 2030 Agenda. From 2022 to 2024, support for the Territories was focused on inclusion in research related to the 2030 Agenda and the small island developing States agenda. Montserrat published census microdata online with technical assistance from ECLAC. In 2022, the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee adopted resolution 111 (XXIX), calling for enhanced support, expanded data collection and technical assistance for associate members. Representatives from the British Virgin Islands, Montserrat and the Turks and Caicos Islands contributed to establishing the Parliamentary Observatory on Climate Change and Just Transition.

Several Territories were included in research conducted or published in 2024, including studies on the development profile of the associate members, on international migration and sustainable development and on artificial intelligence readiness.

At its thirtieth meeting, the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee adopted resolution 116 (XXX) on support for the associate members, which built on resolution 111 (XXIX) of 2022. The Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee decided to review associate members' statistical data biennially and urged the Commission to implement General Assembly resolutions, expand data collection and form a working group to facilitate United Nations collaboration on assistance to associate members.

## **B. Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States**

The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) remains committed to furthering the aims of the Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, in keeping with the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and relevant General Assembly resolutions. OECS supports Non-Self-Governing Territories by focusing on economic diversification, social development and environmental management. Key initiatives include strengthening small and medium-sized enterprises, promoting climate-resilient agriculture, pooling healthcare procurement, training teachers and providing social protection for vulnerable groups. OECS also facilitates regional cooperation on fisheries and disaster risk reduction and offers technical assistance for national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

Mindful of the resolutions of the General Assembly and the overarching Sustainable Development Goals, OECS has implemented gender-responsive budgeting and has supported women's entrepreneurship, coupled with the collection of gender-disaggregated data. These measures sharpen the assessment of development outcomes, specifically in relation to Goals 5 (gender equality) and 8 (decent work and economic growth).

OECS has collaborated with several international organizations to enhance governance frameworks, drive improvements in social welfare and promote climate-smart agricultural practices. In addition, it has engaged with international agencies to refine survey methodologies, improve data dissemination and elevate regional development assessments. Looking ahead, the Organisation intends to intensify dialogue with the Decolonization Unit (of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs) and specialized agencies of the United Nations, seeking increased resource mobilization and deeper integration of the Goals into the development plans of the Territories.

To reinforce these efforts, OECS recommends broadening partnerships with United Nations agencies, international financial institutions and philanthropic groups to support infrastructure, education and climate resilience. It advocates for joint missions and training programmes on legislative reform, digital governance and gender audits, based on inclusive, rights-based frameworks. In addition, OECS sees potential in strengthening knowledge exchange platforms to improve socioeconomic outcomes in Anguilla, Montserrat and the British Virgin Islands.

By safeguarding the principles of self-determination, OECS aligns with the aims of the Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. The Organisation is committed to balanced, sustainable development through economic diversification, social inclusion and environmental stewardship, consistent with the Charter of the United Nations and relevant General Assembly resolutions.

## **C. United Nations Environment Programme**

### **Marine plastics**

The Prevention of Marine Litter in the Caribbean Sea project is currently in the implementation phase in the British Virgin Islands (2024–2026). The broader project includes activities on mapping waste streams, implementing circular economy solutions and strengthening policy capacities.

### **Blue economy**

The secretariat of the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region provided support to Montserrat,

the British Virgin Islands and Anguilla to attend the fourth Blue Economy Roundtable, organized by the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States, along with the auxiliary events, which took place on 15 and 16 October 2024.

## **D. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime**

Efforts of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to support Non-Self-Governing Territories in the domains of anti-corruption, crime prevention and criminal justice are outlined below.

### **Anti-corruption**

*Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the analysis of Non-Self-Governing Territories' legal frameworks*

The peer-reviewed Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption evaluates strengths and gaps in anti-corruption frameworks. The legal frameworks of Non-Self-Governing Territories can be reviewed subject to official communication from the administering Powers. As at January 2025, several Non-Self-Governing Territories are under review, including Bermuda.

*Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*

The Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities has open membership to Non-Self-Governing Territories, and the Cayman Islands has joined through its anti-corruption commission.

*Addressing corruption risks in times of emergencies and in crisis response and recovery*

Non-Self-Governing Territories face corruption risks during crises such as natural disasters. To strengthen crisis response, 13 non-binding guidelines were presented at the tenth Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption in 2023 and welcomed in resolution 10/11. In September 2024, a panel organized by the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on the Prevention of Corruption discussed the enhancement of international cooperation during crises.

## **E. Universal Postal Union**

As an intergovernmental organization of a technical character and specialized agency of the United Nations, the Universal Postal Union (UPU) is currently composed of 190 sovereign States.

For a number of Non-Self-Governing Territories, the relevant provisions of the Acts of UPU apply in full, particularly with regard to the operation and regulation of international postal services and due fulfilment of the obligations arising from the Acts of the UPU. Some of these Territories may also benefit, on a regular basis, from technical cooperation and other UPU projects. In addition, a number of Territories currently benefit from a number of information technology solutions and associated services provided by UPU.

UPU conducted a number of training workshops in the Caribbean region, including on electronic advanced data, operational efficiency and e-commerce development. In May 2024, it organized a disaster risk management expert workshop, attended by representatives from Bermuda, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat and the Turks and Caicos Islands, which was aimed at enhancing environmental protection in these Territories. In addition, UPU launched pilot projects for certification in disaster risk management to help its members improve security and assess compliance with UPU security standards. Bermuda has already successfully completed one of these projects.

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