



# General Assembly

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## Seventy-fifth session

Item 60 of the provisional agenda\*

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

## Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [65/119](#), in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its seventy-fifth session on the implementation of the resolution. It provides an overview of the major activities undertaken by stakeholders during the Decade. It also provides replies received from Member States and United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and international institutions associated with the United Nations.

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\* [A/75/150](#).



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## I. Introduction

1. On 10 December 2010, the General Assembly adopted resolution [65/119](#), entitled “Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism”, in which the Assembly, *inter alia*, declared the period 2011–2020 as the Third 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 Decade (see [A/56/61](#), annex). The Assembly invited Member States, the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, and other governmental and non-governmental organizations, to actively support and participate in the implementation of the plan of action during the Third International Decade.

2. In 2015, at the midpoint of the Third Decade, the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly a report on the implementation of resolution [65/119](#) (see [A/70/73](#) and [A/70/73/Add.1](#)).

3. The present report, submitted pursuant to resolution [65/119](#), provides information on actions taken to implement the resolution. Replies received from Member States are contained in annex I to the present report, and those from United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and international institutions associated with the United Nations in connection with the Third Decade are contained in annex II.

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

### A. General Assembly

4. During the Third Decade, 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. The Assembly has considered the following items:

- (a) Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples;
- (b) The question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas);<sup>1</sup>
- (c) Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations;
- (d) Economic and other activities that affect the interests of the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories;
- (e) Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and international institutions associated with the United Nations;
- (f) Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories.

5. During the period under review, the General Assembly has considered the report of the Special Committee under the item entitled “Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples”. The Committee has monitored developments in all Non-Self-Governing Territories and has reported on them to the Assembly, making recommendations on each Territory – American

<sup>1</sup> In accordance with paragraph 4 (b) of the annex to resolution [58/316](#), adopted by the General Assembly on 1 July 2004, this item remains on the agenda for consideration upon notification by a Member State.

Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Falkland Islands (Malvinas),<sup>2</sup> French Polynesia (since 2013),<sup>3</sup> Gibraltar, Guam, Montserrat, New Caledonia, Pitcairn, Saint Helena, Tokelau, the Turks and Caicos Islands, the United States Virgin Islands and Western Sahara – as well as on the issue of the dissemination of information on decolonization.

6. During the period under review, the General Assembly has continued to issue directives to the Special Committee regarding its mandate.<sup>4</sup> By its resolution 74/113, the Assembly requested the Committee to continue to seek suitable means for the immediate and full implementation of the Declaration and to carry out the actions approved by the Assembly regarding the Second and Third International Decades in all Territories that had not yet exercised their right to self-determination, including independence.

7. Since 2015, the General Assembly has reaffirmed that visiting missions to the Non-Self-Governing Territories, where applicable, were an effective means of ascertaining the situation of the peoples of the Territories, in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions on specific Territories, and has therefore requested the Special Committee to undertake at least one visiting mission a year.<sup>5</sup>

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

8. As the policymaking organ of the General Assembly on decolonization, the Special Committee has been at the forefront of United Nations efforts to implement the plan of action for the Decade. Information on its activities may be found in the annual reports of the Committee to the General Assembly.<sup>6</sup> During the reporting period, the Committee continued to comprise 29 members and, as from 2014, the Bureau of the Committee consisted of a Chair, three Vice-Chairs and a Rapporteur.

9. Since 2016, pursuant to its decision of 23 June 2015 (see A/70/23, para. 124), the Special Committee has decided to address the Territories under individual resolutions instead of one consolidated resolution (omnibus) in order to ensure that adequate time was devoted to each Territory.

10. In February 2020, upon the suggestions of its Bureau, the Special Committee approved its tentative programme of work and timetable based on a new format. The tentative programme of work and timetable was adjusted to take into account the concerns shared by the representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. The Committee streamlined the practice whereby the consideration of the draft resolutions would take place following its discussion on the related agenda items in order to enable it to consider the information provided by the participants prior to the adoption of related proposals and recommendations.

11. As requested by the General Assembly, the Special Committee has carried out periodic reviews of the situation in each Territory, analysing progress made in the implementation of the Declaration. Such analysis has been based on information

<sup>2</sup> A dispute exists between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) (see [ST/CS/SER.A/42](#)).

<sup>3</sup> At its sixty-seventh session, the General Assembly, by its resolution 67/265, inter alia, recognized that French Polynesia remained a Non-Self-Governing Territory within the meaning of the Charter of the United Nations.

<sup>4</sup> See para. 7 in resolutions 66/91, 67/134, 68/97 and 69/107; and para. 8 in resolutions 70/231, 71/122, 72/111, 73/123 and 74/113.

<sup>5</sup> See para. 10 in resolutions 70/231, 71/122, 72/111, 73/123 and 74/113.

<sup>6</sup> [A/66/23](#), [A/67/23](#), [A/68/23](#), [A/69/23](#), [A/70/23](#), [A/71/23](#), [A/72/23](#), [A/73/23](#) and [A/74/23](#).

provided by the administering Powers pursuant to Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations and the annual working papers prepared by the Secretariat, as well as information provided by the representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territories and petitioners at hearings and regional seminars held by the Committee. On the basis of such analysis, the Committee has formulated recommendations to the Assembly.

12. On the basis of the reports prepared by its Rapporteur, the Special Committee annually took decisions to continue to consider the question of Puerto Rico, heard petitioners on that subject and adopted resolutions on the question.<sup>7</sup>

13. In accordance with the plan of action, the Special Committee has held annual regional seminars in either the Caribbean or Pacific regions. The seminars have included the participation of the representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, the administering Powers, Member States, regional organizations, specialized agencies, non-governmental organizations and experts. Nine regional seminars were held during the reporting period, as follows: Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (2011 and 2017), Ecuador (2012 and 2013), Fiji (2014), Nicaragua (2015 and 2016) and Grenada (2018 and 2019). The 2020 seminar scheduled to be held from 5 to 7 May 2020 in Bali, Indonesia, was postponed because of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). The regional seminars have served as an effective forum for discussion on issues of concern to the Non-Self-Governing Territories, providing the Territories with opportunities to present their views and recommendations to the Committee. The seminars have also served as forums for exchange among the Non-Self-Governing Territories, experts, members of civil society, Member States and other stakeholders, thereby assisting the Committee in making a realistic analysis and evaluation of the situation in the Territories, on a case-by-case basis, and of the ways in which the United Nations system and the international community at large could enhance programmes of assistance to the Territories.

14. Pursuant to the plan of action, the Special Committee has continued to seek the full cooperation of the administering Powers with regard to the dispatch of visiting missions to the Territories. During the period under review, the Committee dispatched three visiting missions: two to New Caledonia, in 2014 (see [A/AC.109/2014/20/Rev.1](#)) and in 2018 (see [A/AC.109/2018/20](#)), both were conducted to assist the Territory in the period leading up to the referendum on self-determination that was held in November 2018 and both were conducted with the cooperation of France as the administering Power for New Caledonia; and one to Montserrat, in 2019 (see [A/AC.109/2020/20](#)), with the cooperation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

15. In compliance with the provisions of General Assembly resolutions and the objectives of the Decade, during the plenary meetings held at Headquarters and the regional seminars of the Special Committee, the delegation of New Zealand continued to participate in the work of the Committee regarding Tokelau. The delegation of France participated in the work of the Committee during its consideration of the question of New Caledonia. While the delegations of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America have not formally participated in meetings of the Committee in recent years, their representatives have attended some of the Committee's regional seminars.

16. Informal contacts have continued in order to explore means to improve cooperation between the Special Committee and the administering Powers. Since 2013, the Bureau of the Committee has held informal consultations with the

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<sup>7</sup> See [A/66/23](#), paras. 20–25; [A/67/23](#), paras. 17–22; [A/68/23](#), paras. 17–26; [A/69/23](#), paras. 17–25; [A/70/23](#), paras. 15–22; [A/71/23](#), paras. 19–32; [A/72/23](#), paras. 25–35; [A/73/23](#), paras. 22–31; and [A/74/23](#), paras. 22–30.

administering Powers in order to reinvigorate cooperation and partnerships with them.

17. Informal consultations with the representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territories and other stakeholders concerned with regard to the Territories were also undertaken during the period under review. In addition, since 2015, pursuant to relevant General Assembly resolutions,<sup>8</sup> the Bureau has regularly held meetings with the Secretary-General.

## **B. Security Council**

18. During the period under review, the Security Council has continued to consider reports of the Secretary-General and has adopted resolutions on the situation concerning Western Sahara. The envoys and special representatives of the Secretary-General have continued to consult with the parties on ways to address the situation. In 2011 and 2012, the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara, Christopher Ross, continued to hold informal talks between the parties, Morocco and the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguía el-Hamra y de Río de Oro (Frente POLISARIO) (see [S/2011/249](#) and [S/2012/197](#)). More recently, on 5 and 6 December 2018 and on 21 and 22 March 2019, the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara, Horst Köhler, convened round-table meetings between Morocco, Frente POLISARIO, Algeria and Mauritania in Switzerland (see [S/2019/282](#) and [S/2019/787](#)), which marked the first face-to-face encounters in the context of the political process since 2012. On 30 October 2019, the Security Council adopted resolution [2494 \(2019\)](#), in which it decided to extend the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) until 31 October 2020, welcomed the new momentum created by the two round tables and called upon the parties to resume negotiations under the auspices of the Secretary-General without preconditions and in good faith, taking into account the efforts made since 2006 and subsequent developments with a view to achieving a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara.

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

19. The Economic and Social Council has considered the question of the implementation of the Declaration by the specialized agencies and other United Nations organizations annually. The Council has also considered reports of the President of the Council on the assistance provided by those organizations to Non-Self-Governing Territories and has adopted resolutions asking the specialized agencies to examine and review conditions in each Territory, so as to take appropriate measures to accelerate progress in the economic and social sectors of the Territories. In its resolutions, it has also urged the specialized agencies and organizations of the United Nations system that have not yet provided assistance to the Territories to do so as soon as possible. The Chair of the Special Committee or a member of its Bureau has participated in the Council's annual consideration of the relevant item.

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<sup>8</sup> See para. 14 in resolution [69/107](#); para. 17 in resolutions [70/231](#) and [71/122](#); and para. 18 of resolutions [72/111](#), [73/123](#) and [74/113](#).

## **D. Secretary-General**

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

21. Given the importance of disseminating information on decolonization to further the objectives of the plan of action, the Department of Global Communications, previously known as the Department of Public Information, continued to broadcast information on decolonization through available media and to publicize the work of the United Nations in that field. Over the past decade, a total of 257 videos on the issue of decolonization were made available on the United Nations Web television website for on-demand access, thus making United Nations meetings and events related to decolonization open to the global public.

22. In 2011, the Department of Public Information created and launched a website dedicated to the Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories, which continues to be maintained and updated in the six official languages. In the same year, it also redesigned and launched a flagship website on the United Nations and decolonization. From 2011 to June 2019, the Department, which became the Department of Global Communications in January 2019, continued to maintain and update that site in the six official languages by adding new content, with substantive support from the Department of Political Affairs and later the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. The site attracted a growing number of visitors, totalling nearly 2.7 million page views during that period.

23. In June 2019, upon becoming fully responsible for its content and technical management, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs revamped the website and content in the six official languages. Since the launch of the enhanced website, there have been, on average, 4,700 views per week.

24. In 2012, the Department of Public Information worked with the Department of Political Affairs to produce a visual identity for a poster, postcard and online products to mark the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. In 2016, the Department of Public Information, in cooperation with the Department of Political Affairs, updated the leaflet entitled “What the United Nations can do to assist Non-Self-Governing Territories”. It was made available in both electronic and print formats in the six official languages.

25. In May 2020, the Secretariat produced a new brochure entitled “Ten frequently asked questions on the United Nations and decolonization”, with the aim of providing relevant information about the decolonization process and the work of the United Nations in that regard.

26. A detailed account of activities in the field of dissemination of information on decolonization, including services to the media, the academic and library communities, United Nations television, visitors services in New York, Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi, and United Nations publications, is presented annually by the Department of Global Communications to the Special Committee, which in turn reports to the General Assembly on the matter.

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

27. In addition to the 29 members of the Special Committee, a number of Member States have participated in the work of the Committee as administering Powers or

observers and have attended its meetings and regional seminars. This tendency has grown over time, in particular as the end of the Decade draws near.

28. During the period under review, 24 Member States have provided information on scholarships offered to students from the Territories. That information is available in the Secretary-General's annual reports on the topic.<sup>9</sup>

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

29. The General Assembly, the Special Committee and the Economic and Social Council have considered on a yearly basis the question of the implementation of the Declaration by the specialized agencies and international institutions associated with the United Nations. A yearly report is issued on those activities by the President of the Council on the basis of replies received from those bodies. Recent information on their activities with regard to the Third Decade can be found in annex II to the present report.

#### **V. Conclusions and recommendations**

30. The end of the Third Decade is an important opportunity to take stock of the progress made in the task of eradicating colonialism, which remains one of the priorities of the United Nations. Moving the decolonization agenda forward, in keeping with the principles of the Charter and relevant resolutions of the United Nations, requires proactive and sustained engagement from all actors involved: administering Powers; peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories; and other relevant stakeholders. During the Third Decade, in building on the encouraging signs of rejuvenation of the work of the Special Committee already seen in the first half of the Decade, the Committee continued to intensify its efforts to implement the Declaration and all relevant resolutions on a case-by-case basis. The Committee revived one of its useful tools, the dispatching of visiting missions to the Non-Self-Governing Territories, where applicable and in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions on specific Territories. It also endeavoured to ensure that due attention was paid to each of the Territories and that their voices were taken into account in its decision-making.

31. In the case of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) and Gibraltar, the Special Committee and the General Assembly have continued to appeal to the Governments involved to resume negotiations on the relevant issues, including those related to sovereignty.

32. On Western Sahara, the question continues to receive consideration by the General Assembly and the Security Council, as well as by the Secretary-General in the context of his good offices.

33. Upholding the collective duty to enable the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories to exercise their right to self-determination, according to their particular circumstances, requires strengthening action-oriented dialogue and identifying concrete and implementable steps to generate further momentum in the implementation of the decolonization mandate. The Special Committee may continue to explore the possibility of further strengthening ongoing informal consultations with the administering Powers with a view to enhancing cooperation and creating the

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<sup>9</sup> A/66/68 and A/66/68/Add.1; A/67/74; A/68/66 and A/68/66/Add.1; A/69/67; A/70/66 and A/70/66/Add.1; A/71/70; A/72/66/Rev.1 and A/72/66/Add.1; A/73/73; and A/74/65 and A/74/65/Add.1.

conditions necessary for the total resumption of formal cooperation with the Committee.

34. Specialized agencies and other organizations and institutions of the United Nations system are encouraged to intensify their engagement with the work of the Special Committee as an important element in the implementation of the Declaration and the sustainable development agenda, including through more regular participation at the regional seminars on decolonization. Furthermore, specialized agencies and other organizations and institutions of the United Nations system are also reminded that, in line with the provisions of relevant General Assembly resolutions, they are requested to report periodically to the Secretary-General on the implementation of those resolutions.

35. The Secretariat will continue to assist the international community in undertaking its work with renewed vigour and creativity, in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, to make tangible progress in the implementation of the decolonization agenda.

## Annex I

### Replies received from Member States

#### Argentina

[Original: Spanish]

[8 May 2020]

The Argentine Republic reiterates its support for the decolonization process carried out by the United Nations through its relevant bodies, in accordance with the provisions and objectives 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 successes of the United Nations, and Argentina has actively participated in the 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 to explore ways to advance the process of decolonization and compliance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions. The annual presentation to the Committee has been made by the country's various Ministers of Foreign Affairs, with the exception of 2012, when the then President of Argentina became the first Head of State to address the Special Committee. Furthermore, the will of the Argentine Government 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.

At the end of the Third 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. Throughout the Third 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.

During the Third International Decade, Argentina 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 Union of South American Nations (UNASUR).

During this Decade, numerous international bodies and regional and biregional forums have considered the question of the Malvinas Islands. The summits of CELAC, UNASUR, the Latin American Integration Association, the Africa-South America Summit and the Latin American Energy Organization have supported the legitimate sovereignty rights of the Argentine Republic over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas. Various forums such as the Organization of American States, the Ibero-American Summits, the South American and Arab Countries Summit, the Group of 77 and China, the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic and the Caribbean Community have all expressed their support for the resumption of bilateral negotiations to find a peaceful solution to the sovereignty dispute. Furthermore, the Group of 77 and China and the Ibero-American Summits have reaffirmed the principle of territorial integrity enshrined in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and, together with MERCOSUR, CELAC and the South American and Arab Countries Summit, have urged the United Kingdom to fulfil the mandate set out in General Assembly resolution 31/49 and to cease its unilateral action while the islands are going through the process recommended by the United Nations.

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.

Decolonization and self-determination are not synonyms. Self-determination is one of the mechanisms for implementing decolonization. General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) elevates 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 and there is no people, in the international legal sense, to whom the right of self-determination is applicable. This understanding of the situation is reflected in the 10 General Assembly resolutions (2065 (XX), 3160 (XXVIII), 31/49, 37/9, 38/12, 39/6, 40/21, 41/40, 42/19 and 43/25) and all the resolutions adopted by the Special Committee on Decolonization to date, in which the question of the Malvinas Islands has been categorized as a special and particular case of colonialism. The specificities of the case lie in the fact that the United Kingdom usurped the Islands by force in 1833, expelled the Argentine population and authorities, who were residing there publicly and peacefully, prevented their return and replaced them with a population of its own. In 1985 the General Assembly expressly rejected, by a significant majority, two British attempts to incorporate the principle of self-determination in the draft resolution on the question of the Malvinas Islands. The commitment of Argentina to defending, at the highest institutional level, the interests and way of life of the inhabitants of the Malvinas Islands is enshrined in the Argentine Constitution. The inhabitants of the Malvinas Islands have access to the Argentine public health and education systems, free of charge and on an equal basis with the rest of the Argentine population. However, respect for the interests of the British inhabitants of the Malvinas Islands cannot entitle them to a supposed right to self-determination.

In this connection, it should be recalled that in its recent advisory opinion on the separation of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius, the International Court of Justice indicated that it is for the General Assembly to pronounce on and to oversee

the modalities of the decolonization of a territory. The Court also stressed the binding nature of the principles of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), which is the cornerstone of decolonization, and further recalled that self-determination is not applicable in the case of populations that do not constitute “peoples” entitled to that right.

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 actual situation in the South Atlantic. However, the persistence of the United Kingdom in carrying out unilateral activities in the disputed zone contrary to General Assembly resolution 31/49 is a cause for concern, since it was precisely such activities that prevented the continuation of bilateral cooperation on such matters. The growing military presence in the South Atlantic belies the search for a peaceful resolution of the sovereignty dispute and is also contrary to General Assembly resolution 41/11. That presence goes much further than a purported “defence position”: it enables the United Kingdom to maintain an iron military grip on a strategic zone of the South Atlantic. In terms of fishing, despite the fact that the Scientific Subcommittee of the South Atlantic Fisheries Commission resumed its activity in 2018, the United Kingdom continues to adopt unilateral measures with regard to fishing licences. With regard to hydrocarbons, the United Kingdom violated the 1995 Joint Declaration on Cooperation over Offshore Activities in the South-West Atlantic through its unilateral acts, leading to the denunciation of the Joint Declaration by Argentina in 2007. Any exploration or exploitation activity on the Argentine continental shelf that has not been authorized by Argentina is illegal, and the Argentine Government reaffirms its right to take legal action against such unilateral activities, in accordance with public international law and national legislation.

At the end of the Third Decade, the international community must continue to equip the Special Committee on Decolonization with the tools and mandates needed to put an end to this scourge, which is inconceivable in the twenty-first century. One of the challenges involved is the question of the Malvinas Islands.

Argentina hopes that the United Kingdom will respond to the calls arising from the good offices mandate of the Secretary-General and shoulder 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. As the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism draws to a close, it is imperative to recall that for the United Nations the continuation of colonial situations is a crime that constitutes a 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 duty to put an end to them.

## Australia

[Original: English]  
[8 May 2020]

### Tokelau

Reflecting Tokelau's non-self-governing status, Australia has a mix of direct and indirect engagement with Tokelau, including through New Zealand. For the 2019/20 financial year, Australia currently contributes AUD 400,000 to bilateral development assistance in Tokelau. This assistance is aligned with the Joint Commitment for Development between New Zealand and Tokelau, and Tokelau's National Strategic Plan (2016–20), which ensures Australia's engagement with Tokelau is focused on local development priorities. Australia's bilateral funding is currently delivered through a delegated cooperation arrangement with the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Funding has focused on improving early childhood learning outcomes and supporting culture and language, through the provision of learning resources to schools in the Tokelauen language. More recent activities have focused on child health and gender outcomes. Prior to the delegated cooperation arrangement, Australia had been contributing directly to the Tokelau International Trust Fund (AUD 8.8 million in the period 2004–2015), which continues to support Tokelau's economic stability and financial security. Acknowledging the significant challenges faced by Tokelau owing to its distance from neighbouring Pacific Islands and the lack of air transport connections, Australia has worked with New Zealand to facilitate Tokelau's connections with the Pacific region. This includes facilitating Tokelauen leaders' attendance at regional events, including those of the Pacific Community and the Forum Fisheries Agency, and inviting Tokelauen representatives to participate in Australia-led regional initiatives and meetings on a funded basis (although in reality the distance and lack of personnel often prevents Tokelau from taking up these offers). Australia supports the promotion of women's leadership in Tokelau, including through a national summit for women, and facilitating the attendance of Tokelauen representatives at the Pacific Women in Power Conference in 2019. In preparation for the 2019 elections in Tokelau, the Australian Electoral Commission undertook capacity-building activities with Tokelau's electoral office and provided support materials.

### New Caledonia and French Polynesia

Australia enjoys strong relationships with the autonomous Governments of New Caledonia and French Polynesia, and the French Republic, and works closely with them on a range of regional issues. More recently, under the Pacific Step-Up programme, Australia has sought to increase its bilateral engagement with both territories, including through stronger trade and investment ties and people-to-people links. Australia supported the 1998 Noumea Accord, signed by French and New Caledonian leaders, which provides the road map for New Caledonia's decolonization and gives New Caledonians the right to self-determination. Australia and other Pacific Islands Forum nations welcomed the successful holding of the New Caledonian referendum on independence held on 4 November 2018, and the measures undertaken by the Government of France to ensure its transparency. We note, for example, the presence of United Nations and Pacific Islands Forum observers in the lead-up to and during the referendum. Australia supported the admission of New Caledonia and French Polynesia as full members of the Pacific Islands Forum in 2017, and their increased engagement with the Pacific region. In recognition of French Polynesia's increased engagement with Australia and the Pacific region, Australia is opening a new diplomatic post in French Polynesia in early 2021. Australia welcomed the appointment by the Government of New Caledonia of diplomatic representatives to

Australia and other Pacific countries in 2018, which enhances New Caledonia's political, economic and cultural engagement with the Pacific. Australia assisted the New Caledonian Government by providing these representatives with diplomatic training at the Diplomatic Academy of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

## **Indonesia**

[Original: English]

[11 May 2020]

Indonesia reaffirms its support for the implementation of the plan of action for the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, as called for by the General Assembly in its resolution [65/119](#) of 10 December 2010, to eliminate the remnants of colonialism. As the initiator and one of the sponsors of landmark Assembly resolution [1514 \(XV\)](#), Indonesia continues to be an active participant in the work of the Special Committee. This includes its full participation in the annual Caribbean or Pacific regional seminars. During the past decade, Indonesia also participated in the dispatch of Special Committee visiting missions to New Caledonia (2018) and Montserrat (2019). Indonesia is also trusted to host the next Pacific regional seminar, the convening of which unfortunately had to be postponed owing to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

Indonesia continues to maintain that the tasks concerning the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories should be approached with the fashioning of special solutions to the specific problems and circumstances as they arise. Cognizant of the fact that no two cases of decolonization are similar, subject as they are to historical circumstances and realities, there is a need for flexibility and wisdom in realizing the right to self-determination in those Territories in accordance with resolutions [1514 \(XV\)](#) and [1541 \(XV\)](#). Within that context, Indonesia is committed to supporting the role of the Special Committee, in line with the Committee's mandate to advance a peaceful and dignified decolonization process. That task requires support from all stakeholders involved in the process, namely, the administering Powers, the Non-Self-Governing Territories, Member States and the United Nations system.

In this vein, within the framework of South-South Cooperation, Indonesia has delivered technical assistance programmes to support the economic development of the local community in New Caledonia as well as sociocultural programmes to enhance people-to-people contact.

Finally, Indonesia is fully confident that, by moving forward in a spirit of cooperation and compromise, the remaining issues of decolonization can be resolved in a fruitful and productive manner. Towards the attainment of this noble goal, Indonesia, as a founding member of the Special Committee, lends its full support.

## **New Zealand**

[Original: English]

[15 May 2020]

New Zealand is the administering power of Tokelau and, as such, supports the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. Information on New Zealand's activities in this regard has been submitted annually to the United Nations from the beginning of the Decade, consistent with New Zealand's obligations under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations.

Since our previous report, progress has been made by Tokelau towards governing itself, sustainable development and climate change mitigation. For

additional information, readers should refer to New Zealand's annual reports to the United Nations.

Underpinning Tokelau's governance is the Joint Statement on the Principles of Partnership between Tokelau and New Zealand. This document sets out the respective rights and obligations and provides a solid platform for Tokelau's further constitutional and political development. Tokelauans remain New Zealand citizens.

The Administrator formally delegates his powers to the three Village Councils of Tokelau, which in turn subdelegate responsibility to the General Fono (Tokelauan parliament) in specified areas that need to be handled at the national level. Leaders from the three villages comprise the Council of Ongoing Government (or Cabinet), which is led by the Ulu o Tokelau (titular leader of Tokelau), and each of the members of the Council acts as Ministers over their respective Tokelau public service departments.

Tokelau's constitutional development has continued and its experience of governing itself has grown over the past 17 years. Referendums were held in 2006 and 2007 to ask Tokelauans if they wanted to become self-governing in free association with New Zealand but, in both cases, the required majority for this change narrowly failed to be achieved. The Tokelau-New Zealand partnership has continued and grown since that time and any further referenda on Tokelau's constitutional status would take place at the instigation of the Government and people of Tokelau.

New Zealand has supported, and continues to support, growth in the range and quality of Tokelau's own governance. Tokelauan ministers and public servants are now responsible for all of Tokelau's domestic affairs at a national level (with the responsibility at the local level in the hands of Village Councils of Elders). New Zealand provides budget support, a significant development programme, advice when requested and grant funding to enable the Government of Tokelau to appoint specialist advisers. The coming year will see important work to strengthen further Tokelau's legal institutions and system of justice.

The Tokelau-New Zealand partnership has also been instrumental to improvements in the quality of Tokelau's public services. The two Governments have worked closely together to improve Tokelau's transport, electricity, health and educational services, and these efforts will continue into the future. Also ongoing is work with Tokelau's core public service to improve its governance further.

Infrastructure has been a focus of New Zealand and Tokelauan efforts over the past decade, as improving Tokelau's connectivity with the outside world buttresses its ability to govern itself. A particular focus has been Tokelau's maritime lifeline (it has no air services) following the acquisition of new passenger and cargo vessels and a new inter-atoll boat, along with significant upgrades to the wharves and reef passages on Tokelau. Looking ahead, Tokelau and New Zealand aim to deliver greatly enhanced Internet connectivity (through a high-speed cable and improved on-atoll infrastructure) by the end of the year and are working together to provide air services to Tokelau in the future.

To further reinforce Tokelau's governance, Tokelau and New Zealand have worked to ensure that its public finances are on a sound and sustainable footing. Two important developments over the past two decades have been the establishment of a Tokelau international trust fund – which is now worth close to NZ\$100 million – and the transfer to Tokelau of the substantial revenues paid annually for commercial fishing access to its exclusive economic zone. Fishing revenues are currently worth around NZ\$21 million per annum. These sit alongside significant New Zealand contributions to Tokelau's core budget.

Climate change is one of the gravest challenges facing Tokelau. As a remote island chain, with a highest point only 5 m above sea level, rising seas present an urgent threat. Tokelau and New Zealand are working together on mitigation and resilience measures in Tokelau. New Zealand is also ensuring that Tokelauan voices are heard in international forums (such as the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) on these matters.

The present report has been prepared against the backdrop of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. New Zealand and Tokelau have been working closely together to ensure that Tokelau is well prepared. by closing of Tokelau's borders to the movement of people, preparing stockpiles of essential supplies in case supply chains become stressed and providing extra support (both equipment and specialist advice) to Tokelau's health system. Advice has included ensuring that the Tokelau Director of Health has a direct communication channel to senior specialists and advisers in the New Zealand Ministry of Health.

Whatever governance path Tokelau chooses for itself in the future, New Zealand stands ready to continue to support it in a spirit of partnership. This spirit was demonstrated and reinforced in 2019 when the New Zealand Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, made an official visit to the atolls of Tokelau. Other recent official visits to Tokelau include that carried out in 2018 by New Zealand Government Minister Kris Faafoi, who is of Tokelauan heritage.

The Governments of New Zealand and Tokelau both wish to thank the United Nations and its institutions, especially the World Health Organization, for their ongoing support to Tokelau. This support has never been as important as during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

## Annex II

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

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

1. During the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Caribbean, which include Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands, have regularly participated in the diverse activities and meetings of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in their capacity as associate members. During the Decade, Bermuda became an associate member in 2012.

2. Every effort has been made to integrate and accommodate the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the ECLAC work programme, particularly in the work of the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean. Priority attention was given to responding to needs associated with the vulnerability of Non-Self-Governing Territories to disasters and their efforts to pursue national development within the respective frameworks of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the small island developing States platform, including the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway. In fact, the Non-Self-Governing Territories of the Caribbean continue to face development challenges similar to those experienced by the wider membership of the subregion owing to their unique economic, social and environmental vulnerabilities to external shocks, high levels of indebtedness, limited fiscal space and high exposure to climate change and extreme weather events.

#### **Support in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals**

3. ECLAC support for Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Caribbean has been mainly focused on capacity development and technical assistance framed by the 2030 Agenda, through participation in events to support implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Most significant among these was the Learning Conference on Implementing the 2030 Agenda in the Caribbean Region, which was held in Port of Spain in 2019 and was jointly convened by ECLAC, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat. The provided a valuable space in which the countries and territories of the Caribbean could discuss their common challenges and identify possible solutions towards achieving sustainable development. It also provided a platform to share the mechanisms and good practices that exist for planning, monitoring, evaluating and financing efforts towards achievement of the Goals. Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, Montserrat and the Turks and Caicos Islands actively participated in the Conference. In addition, the British Virgin Islands has also benefitted from ongoing ECLAC projects to accelerate implementation of the Goals, financed with the support of resources from the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany, and aimed at the development of a new national development plan, the National Sustainable Development Plan of the British Virgin Islands. Attention is also given by ECLAC to the strengthening of national capacity in the production and dissemination of official statistics, to enhance the ability of the Non-Self-Governing Territories to implement and monitor the Goals to measure progress. Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands and Montserrat benefitted from the regional workshop on strengthening statistical capacity for censuses and the

Sustainable Development Goals in the Caribbean, which was jointly organized by ECLAC, the United Nations Population Fund and the Caribbean Community Secretariat in Jamaica in April 2019.

#### **Disaster assessments and training**

4. ECLAC assisted Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands with damage and loss assessments following Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017. The effects and impacts were assessed in terms of physical damage, losses of economic incomes and social services, as well as additional costs. ECLAC also continued to offer training in damage and loss assessment and disaster risk management with a view to building indigenous capacity in these Non-Self-Governing Territories to incorporate prevention, estimation and risk reduction in their public investment plans and sustainable development programmes. ECLAC conducted such training workshops in Anguilla in 2018, and in the Turks and Caicos Islands in 2019.

#### **Facilitating participation in regional and global conferences and platforms**

5. Every effort is made to support the participation of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Caribbean, in regional and global platforms, to make their voices heard. At the regional level, all Non-Self-Governing Territories are invited to participate in the 11 intergovernmental bodies convened by ECLAC and for which it serves as the secretariat. These bodies constitute multi-stakeholder platforms for policy dialogue as they examine various public policy issues in the region, facilitate cooperation among countries and territories and promote regional stances while including subregional specificities in their mandates.

6. ECLAC associate members participated in a number of regional meetings. For example, Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands and Montserrat attended the fifth meeting of the Caribbean Development Round Table and the twenty-seventh session of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee, held in Saint Lucia in April 2018, and the Turks and Caicos Islands participated in the nineteenth meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee, held in Port of Spain in May 2019. The British Virgin Islands participated in the XVII Meeting of the Regional Council for Planning of the ECLAC Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning, held in Montevideo in August 2019, by presenting the challenges faced in planning after disasters. Anguilla and the British Virgin Islands participated in the third session of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Mexico in October 2019, and the British Virgin Islands was elected to be one of the presiding officers of the Conference. Montserrat contributed to the tenth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, held in Chile in November 2019, by sharing the importance of using a computer-assisted personal interviewing methodology to collect data for censuses.

7. More recently, in the context of the response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, ECLAC organized a series of virtual dialogues on the impacts of the pandemic with ministers and high-level authorities in charge of statistics, social affairs, gender equality and finance to promote peer learning and sharing of experiences, in which Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands actively participated and shared the measures taken to address the multifaceted effects of this unprecedented crisis.

8. At the global level, ECLAC also facilitates their participation. For instance, for the high-level midterm review of the SAMOA Pathway, all Non-Self-Governing

Territories in the Caribbean were invited to provide updates on action taken, as did the Cayman Islands when attending the interregional preparatory meeting for the midterm review held in Samoa in November 2018. Similarly, ECLAC also facilitated a Caribbean subregional review of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development and of the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes in Guyana in June 2018, in which Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands and Montserrat actively participated. Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, and the Turks and Caicos Islands participated in the subregional preparatory meeting of the fourteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean in June 2019, which served as a key opportunity to exchange views on national reports submitted to assess progress in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action 25 years after its adoption, and during which some of those countries also submitted their national reports.

### **Support for research and data analysis**

9. ECLAC continues to make every effort to respond to the requests of Non-Self-Governing Territories to include more data on the territories in the Commission's flagship publications and observatories. The economic performance of Anguilla and Montserrat is already included in the annual publications entitled *Economic Survey of the Caribbean* and *Preliminary Overview of the Economies of Latin America and the Caribbean*. Recent ECLAC publications entitled *A Review of Caribbean National Statistical Legislation in Relation to the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics* and *Gender Mainstreaming in National Sustainable Development Planning in the Caribbean* include information on Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat and the Turks and Caicos Islands, and another, entitled *Planning for Sustainable Territorial Development in Latin America and the Caribbean*, includes the United States Virgin Islands. Information is collected for Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands and Montserrat in the ECLAC Gender Equality Observatory. Efforts continue towards expanding such coverage to other studies, publications and observatories.

10. It should be noted that, notwithstanding the exhortations for continued United Nations system support to the Non-Self-Governing Territories, resources to assist these Territories have remained extremely limited. Every effort should therefore be made to offer more support to their development and build their resilience, if we are truly to "leave no one behind".