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

Summary record of the 6th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 24 June 2014, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Lasso Mendoza (Ecuador)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

Question of Tokelau ([A/AC.109/2014/2](#); [A/AC.109/2014/L.15](#))

2. **The Chair** drew attention to the working paper prepared by the Secretariat on Tokelau ([A/AC.109/2014/2](#)) and to a draft resolution on the question of Tokelau ([A/AC.109/2014/L.15](#)). As the draft resolution had not been issued in time for consideration at the current meeting, owing to the time required for consultations on the text, action on the draft would be deferred to a future meeting.

Hearing of representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territory

3. **The Chair** said that, in line with the Committee's usual practice, representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territory would be invited to address the Committee and would withdraw after making their statements.

4. **Mr. Nasau** (Ulu-o-Tokelau), titular head of the Territory, said that the Pacific regional seminar on the implementation of the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism: accelerating action, held in Nadi, Fiji, had provided Non-Self-Governing Territories with a useful opportunity to reflect on strategies for a sustainable self-determined future. In Tokelau, the elections held earlier in 2014 for the General Fono and the Council of Ongoing Government had for the first time been based on common national basic criteria in all three villages. A voter education programme supported by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) had been introduced to encourage registration and awareness among women. For the first time, a woman had been elected to the six-member Council of Ongoing Government.

5. Thus far, 60 per cent of the targets of the Tokelau National Strategic Plan 2010-2015 had been met, as had 50 per cent of the outcomes under the Joint Commitment for Development between Tokelau and New Zealand 2011-2015. The Territory's development efforts focused on good governance, human resource capacity, women's empowerment, and environmental sustainability. Those priorities were putting pressure on current revenues, and Tokelau was keen to work closely with the Government of New Zealand to ensure clarity on the use of its revenue, in particular revenue from its

fisheries and the Tokelau International Trust Fund. In 2014, Tokelau would be completing reviews of education, health care, asset management and telecommunications, and funding for the implementation of recommendations emerging from those reviews would be provided by the Governments of New Zealand and Australia.

6. Tokelau had won the 2014 Renewable Energy Award of New Zealand's Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority for switching electricity production from diesel generators to solar panels. The Tokelau Renewable Energy Project now supplied 90 per cent of Tokelau's electricity needs, making it the world's first nation to run almost exclusively on solar power. Tokelau had entered into a partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to implement a sustainable support framework for that project. As a Territory consisting of low-lying atolls, Tokelau had also been engaging with a number of organizations that could assist in mitigating the effects of climate change, including the Pacific-Australia Climate Change Science and Adaptation Planning Program.

7. Tokelau had agreed with New Zealand to defer the question of another referendum, and would continue to focus on meeting basic needs. While Tokelauans were proud of their heritage as citizens of New Zealand, they also made their own distinct voice heard through participation in numerous regional and international organizations. Tokelau continued to be grateful to the Government of New Zealand for its support of initiatives that helped it to maintain its unique heritage. Discussions were already under way to put together a post-2015 strategic plan.

Draft resolution [A/AC.109/2014/L.15](#): Question of Tokelau

8. **Mr. Aisi** (Papua New Guinea), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of his country and Fiji, said that the text reflected developments since 2013 by highlighting the free and fair democratic election held on 23 January 2014, the critical importance of climate change mitigation for Tokelau's sustainable development, the reaffirmation of the 2008 agreement between the Government of New Zealand and Tokelau to defer Tokelau's self-determination process to an appropriate time, the achievement of 60 per cent of Tokelau's National Strategic Plan objectives, and the intention of the General Fono to further review the 2010-2015 National Strategic Plan to determine priorities beyond 2015.

9. **Mr. Koroma** (Sierra Leone) said that his delegation commended the National Strategic Plan's focus on good governance, infrastructure, human development, gender equality and sustainable development. The synergy between New Zealand and Tokelau was a model for relationships between administering Powers and Non-Self-Governing Territories, and the Committee and the international community should provide the Government of New Zealand with all necessary support.

10. **Mr. Suveinakama** (Fiji) said that much work remained to be done with respect to the situations of the other Non-Self-Governing Territories, each of which should be approached with an open mind. His country's commitment to the decolonization process had been reflected by its recent hosting of the Pacific regional seminar for a fourth time. He expressed support for the decision to defer Tokelau's self-determination process in order to focus on the goals of its 2010-2015 National Strategic Plan. An emphasis on economic and social development needed to be part and parcel of the decolonization process.

11. **Mr. Kings** (Administrator of Tokelau) said that the relationship between New Zealand and Tokelau continued to be extremely positive. The main challenges facing Tokelau were its extreme geographic isolation and its small population, which had numbered only 1,411 at the most recent census. His Government was committed to ensuring that the population, who were New Zealand citizens, received basic services.

12. One prominent challenge had been shipping. There was now a safe, reliable and efficient transport service for Tokelau. A new purpose-built ship was being built at a cost of some \$NZ 12.5 million and would be ready by 2015.

13. His Government's current efforts were centred on improving education and health-care delivery despite the skills shortage and difficulties with recruitment and retention. It was supporting Tokelau in implementing the recommendations of a recent review of the education system, which had found a need for urgent action. Tokelau had agreed to increase its budget allocation for schools over time, as reflected in the National Strategic Plan. From its side, his Government would provide up to an additional \$NZ 1 million per year for five years towards implementing those changes.

14. In July 2014, Tokelau would host the annual Ministerial Meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Committee, which would allow it to share its experience of fisheries management, including its

considerable success in increasing returns from tuna. His Government was working to ensure that fishing revenue continued to benefit the local economy. In the fiscal year 2014/15, fisheries were expected to account for 25 per cent of budgeted revenue. Acting in close cooperation with Tokelau, he continued to be responsible for managing the Territory's exclusive economic zone.

15. His Government continued to focus on providing core services for Tokelau before any further act of self-determination was considered, and he was not aware of any push for a change to the status quo. New Zealand would provide at least \$NZ 19,650,000 to Tokelau in the areas of transport, education and budget support in 2014/15, and remained the Territory's largest bilateral donor.

Questions of American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, Saint Helena, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands (A/AC.109/2014/3, A/AC.109/2014/4, A/AC.109/2014/5, A/AC.109/2014/6, A/AC.109/2014/7, A/AC.109/2014/8, A/AC.109/2014/9, A/AC.109/2014/10, A/AC.109/2014/11, A/AC.109/2014/13 and A/AC.109/2014/14; A/AC.109/2014/L.8)

Draft resolution A/AC.109/2014/L.8: Questions of American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, Saint Helena, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands

16. *Draft resolution A/AC.109/2014/L.8 was adopted.*

Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (A/AC.109/2014/L.9)

Draft resolution A/AC.109/2014/L.9: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

17. *Draft resolution A/AC.109/2014/L.9 was adopted.*

18. **Mr. Jiménez** (Nicaragua) said that his country continued to support the struggle of those peoples and Non-Self-Governing Territories, which now included French Polynesia, that continued to suffer under the vestiges of colonialism in all its forms and manifestations. Over half of those peoples lived in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Pacific regional seminar held in May 2014 had been very important for all the Non-Self-Governing Territories, particularly

those in the Pacific region. Greater efforts and resources were needed in order to ensure that Non-Self-Governing Territories and peoples could be better represented at such gatherings.

19. The heroic people of Puerto Rico was an integral part of the Latin American and Caribbean region and shared in its struggles against colonialism, imperialism and militarism. It could not be left out of the decolonization process.

20. The Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas had been forcibly usurped from Argentina by the United Kingdom in 1833. The United Kingdom must hear the outcry of the world and, in particular, the Latin American and Caribbean region, which had called repeatedly for the immediate resumption of negotiations between Argentina and the United Kingdom. The negotiations should lead to a peaceful political solution and bring an end to the United Kingdom's increasingly entrenched military occupation of Argentine territory.

21. For over 40 years, the Sahrawi people had struggled for self-determination and national independence. Negotiations should take place without preconditions and lead to a referendum organized by the United Nations, in which the Sahrawi people would exercise its inalienable right to self-determination. His delegation hoped that the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic and the Kingdom of Morocco would continue cooperating with the Secretary-General towards that objective. The plight of the Sahrawi refugees was an urgent concern; all stakeholders, particularly the relevant international organizations, must take action to protect their human rights. Nicaragua had recognized the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic since 1979 and supported the struggle of the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguía el-Hamra y de Río de Oro (Frente Polisario).

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
(A/69/66; A/AC.109/2014/L.10; E/2014/11)

Draft resolution A/AC.109/2014/L.10: 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

22. **Mr. Volgarev** (Russian Federation) said that his Government consistently advocated the right of the

peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories to self-determination and independence. However, consideration of that particularly political issue in the framework of the Economic and Social Council distracted the Council from its primary function of coordinating the work of the United Nations in the economic and social sphere. His delegation would therefore abstain in any vote on the draft resolution.

23. *Draft resolution A/AC.109/2014/L.10 was adopted.*

Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories (A/AC.109/2014/L.11)

Draft resolution A/AC.109/2014/L.11: Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories

24. *Draft resolution A/AC.109/2014/L.11 was adopted.*

Other matters

25. **Mr. Aisi** (Papua New Guinea) said that, as the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism approached its halfway point, the Committee might wish to explore new approaches in order to improve its effectiveness, particularly with regard to the more sensitive subjects on its agenda.

26. **The Chair** said that the Committee did indeed need to find ways to develop a more active role, perhaps by moving beyond certain routines that could at times risk holding it back. Without wishing to minimize his own responsibilities, he felt that the task would require the input of all members of the Committee. In particular, he believed that the Committee should learn to engage better with administering Powers, especially in the less straightforward cases on its agenda. Such dialogues should be construed not as asking for concessions, but as seeking acknowledgement of the rights of others.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.