



# General Assembly

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

### Anguilla

### Working paper prepared by the Secretariat

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*Note:* The information contained in the present working paper has been derived from public sources, including those of the territorial Government, and from information transmitted to the Secretary-General by the administering Power under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations. Information was transmitted by the administering Power on 21 December 2023. Further details are contained in previous working papers, available at [www.un.org/dppa/decolonization/en/documents/workingpapers](http://www.un.org/dppa/decolonization/en/documents/workingpapers).



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### **The Territory at a glance**

*Territory:* Anguilla is a Non-Self-Governing Territory under the Charter administered by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

*Representative of administering Power:* Governor Julia Crouch (since September 2023). She is the third woman to become Governor in Anguilla.

*Geography:* The Territory lies 240 km east of Puerto Rico, 113 km north-west of Saint Kitts and Nevis and 8 km north of Sint Maarten/Saint Martin. It has a relatively flat topography, with a few rolling hills rising to 213 ft.

*Land area:* 96 km<sup>2</sup>. The main island has a maximum length of 26 km and a maximum width of 5 km.

*Exclusive economic zone:* 92,178 km<sup>2</sup>

*Population:* 15,899 (2023 estimate)

*Life expectancy at birth:* 77 years (men: 74.1 years; women: 81.2 years (2022))

*Languages:* 97 per cent of the population speaks English. Spanish and Chinese are also spoken.

*Capital:* The Valley.

*Head of territorial Government:* Premier Ellis Lorenzo Webster (since June 2020).

*Elections:* Most recent: 29 June 2020; next: by September 2025.

*Main political parties:* Anguilla Progressive Movement; Anguilla United Front.

*Legislature:* House of Assembly.

*Gross domestic product per capita:* US\$ 21,019 (2022 estimate)

*Economy:* Tourism and financial services.

*Main trading partners:* United States of America and States members of the Caribbean Community.

*Unemployment rate:* 8 per cent (2012 estimate).

*Monetary unit:* East Caribbean dollar, pegged to the United States dollar at EC\$ 2.6882.

*Brief history:* Originally inhabited by the Arawaks, the Territory was colonized by British and Irish settlers in 1650 and was periodically associated with Saint Kitts and Nevis, as well as various regional structures. In 1980, the Territory became a dependency of the United Kingdom.

## **I. Constitutional, legal and political issues**

1. According to the Anguilla Constitution Order, which originally came into force in 1982 and was amended in 1990, 2019 and 2020, the Government of Anguilla now consists of the Governor, the Executive Council and the House of Assembly. The Governor, appointed by the British Crown, is responsible for defence, external affairs, internal security (including the police), international financial services and their regulation, public service appointments and the application to public servants of their terms and conditions of service. On all other matters, the Governor is required to consult and act on the advice of the Executive Council. At the same time, the Order stipulates that the British Crown reserves the power, with the advice of the Privy Council, to make laws for the peace, order and good government of Anguilla.

2. In accordance with the Constitution, the Territory's Executive Council consists of the Premier, not more than three other ministers and two ex officio members, namely, the Attorney General and the Deputy Governor. The Governor acts as Chair of the Council, without voting rights. The House of Assembly is currently elected for a five-year term and comprises the Speaker, not less than seven members elected from single-member constituencies, four members elected in island-wide constituencies, and the same two ex officio members as in the Executive Council. Following a request from the Government of Anguilla, the Anguilla Constitution (Amendment) Order 2020 changed the category of persons eligible to hold the office of Deputy Speaker of the House of Assembly. The effect of the Order is that neither the Attorney General nor Deputy Governor will be able to hold that office, but that any elected members of the Assembly other than a member of the Executive Council may be elected as Deputy Speaker. The Assembly also elects a new Deputy Speaker when it first meets after the order comes into force. The Governor appoints as Premier one of the elected members of the Assembly who, in the judgment of the Governor, is likely to command the support of a majority of the elected members of the Assembly. Under the constitutional amendments of 2019, a limit of two consecutive terms for the Premier was introduced. Other ministers are also appointed by the Governor, in accordance with the advice of the Premier, from among the elected members of the Assembly.

3. The general elections held in Anguilla on 29 June 2020 resulted in a change of government from the Anguilla United Front, which won four seats, to the Anguilla Progressive Movement (APM), which won seven seats. Ellis Lorenzo Webster from APM took office on 30 June 2020 as the Premier.

4. According to the Supervisor of Elections report published in July 2020, changes and innovations introduced to the 2020 general elections included: enactment of the Elections Act 2019 and the Elections Registration Regulations 2020; development of an online voter database; introduction of voter registration cards; introduction of electronic poll books; introduction of advance polls for certain categories of voters; introduction of electronic tabulating of votes; commissioning of a full service, stand-alone Central Electoral Office; conduct of public voter education sessions; and introduction of a single island-wide electoral district to elect four candidates.

5. The law of Anguilla is the common law of England and Wales, together with all legislation inherited from the former associated State of Saint Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla up to August 1971 and any legislation that has been enacted either locally or by the United Kingdom on its behalf since. The law is administered by the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, a regional court based in Saint Lucia for the members of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, which consists of two divisions, an itinerant court of appeal and a high court of justice. There is ultimate recourse to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

6. The British Overseas Territories Act 2002 provides for the granting of British nationality to British overseas territories citizens.

7. In 2011, Anguilla set up a team headed by H. Clifton Niles to draft a new constitution. As previously reported, a draft text was presented to the Government in February 2012, containing changes in governance that could become features of an independent constitution. In September 2015, the territorial Government established a new Constitutional and Electoral Reform Committee to advance constitutional and electoral reform with a mandate to, *inter alia*, review previous proposals for the reform of the 1982 Constitution of Anguilla. In November 2016, the territorial Government published the proposals for electoral and constitutional reform by the Committee as the draft new Constitution, the draft new election bill and the draft new electoral boundaries commission, after which the Committee carried out a public consultation. A revised draft, dated 31 March 2017, was issued and presented to the Executive Council on 4 May. In June 2018, the territorial Government made proposals to the Government of the United Kingdom on amendments to the Constitution of Anguilla, which would be implemented through a phased approach, with the first phase taking effect before the 2020 general election, and the second phase, consisting of a full review of the Constitution, following thereafter.

8. In October 2018, a public consultation on a draft of the Anguilla Constitution (Amendment) Order was held in the Territory. In February 2019, in sharing the draft Order in Council with the Foreign Affairs Committee of its Parliament, the administering Power indicated that proposals under the first phase had been negotiated with the territorial Government and that they were aimed at improving the efficiency of the government process and preparing for the elections. According to the administering Power, the proposals did not affect the balance of constitutional powers between the United Kingdom and the territorial Government.

9. The Privy Council passed the relevant Order in the Council in April 2019, and the first stage of amendments to the constitution of Anguilla were brought into force by the Governor on 14 May 2019. Formal negotiations to move the second phase forward began in November 2019. In a joint statement by the negotiating teams of the United Kingdom and Anguilla, dated 26 November 2019, it was noted that good progress had been made, although nothing final had been agreed to. The statement further indicated that there had been concerns in Anguilla about separating the electoral and constitutional reforms. In 2021, a series of public consultations on the Constitutional amendments recommenced during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic (see also para. 61).

10. According to the administering Power, in line with its white paper entitled *The Overseas Territories: Security, Success and Sustainability*, published in 2012, any decision to sever the constitutional link between the United Kingdom and Anguilla should be on the basis of the clear and constitutionally expressed wish of the people of Anguilla. If the desire for independence was clearly expressed, the Government of the United Kingdom would meet its obligations to help the Territory to achieve it.

11. Two inquiries were launched in the Parliament of the United Kingdom in April and June 2023, respectively, one, by the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee, to explore the constitutional arrangements of the overseas territories and whether the relationship is fit for purpose in the twenty-first century; and the other, by the House of Commons Procedure Committee, to examine options for the representation of overseas territories within the House of Commons.

12. In October 2023, the Government of Anguilla submitted written evidence to each inquiry. In response to the first inquiry, the Premier referred to ongoing challenges in the aftermath of the global COVID-19 pandemic, a succession of natural disasters following climate-related shocks, and the decision of the United Kingdom

to exit the European Union. Although the Government of the United Kingdom had provided much-needed resources, the Territories had sustained heavy financial and trade losses. Moreover, the United Kingdom had been through a process of constitutional reform in recent decades, and the overseas territories needed to be subject to this drive for modernization, reform and redistribution of power. In response to the second inquiry, the Premier expressed the view that legislative arrangements had to be updated and modernized to reflect the growing desire of citizens in the Territories to achieve self-government, as well as to enable territorial Governments to deal more effectively with new governing challenges, from climate change risks to global pandemics. He also expressed the need for a fundamental redistribution of power between the Government of the United Kingdom and the overseas territories, and for an updating of bilateral relations. The territorial Government submitted proposals to address the democratic deficit and lack of adequate representation currently experienced by Anguilla and other overseas territories in parliamentary processes of the United Kingdom.

## **II. Budget**

13. The Governments of the United Kingdom and Anguilla have agreed upon a framework for fiscal responsibility and development, which was passed into Anguillan law in November 2013. It set out the commitment of the Government of Anguilla to a balanced budget, borrowing guidelines and a medium-term fiscal plan for the management of public finances covering a period of at least three fiscal years.

14. According to the territorial Government, Anguilla is committed to fiscal reforms and maintains a position of control over the fiscal responsibility of the Territory. The territorial Government has expressed the view that, given the recovery efforts and financial strains following Hurricane Irma, fiscal reform should not be a precondition for disaster relief.

15. In August 2023, the Premier and Minister of Finance and Health, Ellis Lorenzo Webster, presented to the people of Anguilla the inaugural Citizen's Guide to the 2023 Budget, with the budget for that year amounting to EC\$ 267.36 million. Recurrent expenditure was estimated at EC\$ 245.93 million, while the capital budget had an allocation of EC\$ 21.43 million. The recurrent revenue estimate was EC\$ 288.23 million.

16. According to a quarterly debt bulletin prepared by the Ministry of Finance, total public debt, comprising central government debt, government-guaranteed debt and non-guaranteed debt from domestic and external sources, stood at EC\$ 409.86 million as at 31 December 2022, and the debt-to-gross domestic product (GDP) ratio was 36.03 per cent.

17. There is no income, estate, capital gains or corporate tax in Anguilla. In May 2018, the territorial Government approved a goods and services tax as an essential component of its tax reform and agreed on its phased implementation. On 29 July 2021, the Goods and Services Tax Bill passed the House of Assembly and went into effect on 1 July 2022 at a rate of 13 per cent, with five existing goods and services taxes simultaneously repealed. Goods and services tax collections at the end of November 2022 totalled EC\$ 40.87 million, 14.7 per cent above the revised revenue estimate of EC\$ 35.63 million, and was estimated that the new tax would contribute EC\$ 139.96 million to the proposed tax revenue estimate of EC\$ 234.61 million in 2023.

### **III. Economic conditions**

#### **A. General**

18. Following the largest economic contraction ever recorded of 29.87 per cent, in 2020, attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic, GDP in constant prices increased by 12.82 per cent in 2021 and by 21.63 per cent in 2022. A slowdown is anticipated in 2023.

19. According to the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, the main industries in Anguilla are tourism, real estate, construction and financial intermediation. According to the administering Power, tourism is projected to be the largest contributor to the economy in 2024, accounting for 25.84 per cent of real economic activity and increasing by 79.38 per cent compared with 2021.

20. The Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean reported in 2018 that Anguilla had sustained significant damage to its environment and economy from Hurricane Irma, a category 5 hurricane, in September 2017. The total damages were estimated to be EC\$ 507 million. Total losses and additional costs were valued at EC\$ 331.5 million and EC\$ 41.9 million, respectively. The most affected sector was tourism, which was the driving force of Anguilla's economy, including as the main source of its tax revenue, while the power, telecommunications and transportation infrastructure sectors, which are necessary for the functioning of tourism, also suffered significant impacts. However, according to the territorial Government, in 2019, a real economic expansion of 5.40 per cent was realized. Then, in 2020, economic activity in the tourism sector ground to a halt, as Anguilla was significantly impacted by the effects of COVID-19. The economic decline in real terms was 29.76 per cent.

#### **B. Tourism**

21. The Ministry of Infrastructure, Communications, Utilities, Housing and Tourism is responsible for tourism, while the Anguilla Tourist Board and the Anguilla Hotel and Tourism Association market and promote the Territory's tourism product. There is currently no information regarding an updated master plan.

22. Visitor arrivals in 2022 numbered 95,767, a 233.7 per cent increase from 28,696 in 2021. There were 74,053 stay-over visitors, the fourth highest annual figure.

#### **C. Financial services**

23. The financial intermediation sector, representing all banking, insurance and related services, experienced a 2.82 per cent decline in 2021. In 2022, the financial intermediation sector was projected to remain among the top sectors contributing to the economy of Anguilla.

24. The Anguilla Financial Services Commission was established in 2004 as an independent regulatory body reporting to the Governor. At the same time, the administration of the Territory's responsibilities with respect to the United States Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act rests with the Ministry of Finance. In October 2014, Anguilla joined the early adopters' initiative to commit itself to the early adoption of the Common Reporting Standard, which was the new standard in the automatic exchange of information between tax authorities developed by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

25. In April 2016, Anguilla concluded a bilateral arrangement with the United Kingdom on the reciprocal exchange of beneficial ownership information, which came into effect on 30 June 2017. Under the arrangement, law enforcement authorities have timely access to beneficial ownership information on corporate and legal entities incorporated in the respective jurisdictions.

26. In May 2018, the Parliament of the United Kingdom passed the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act, pursuant to which the Secretary of State was required to provide all reasonable assistance to the Governments of overseas territories to enable each of those Governments to establish a publicly accessible register of the beneficial ownership of companies registered in its jurisdiction and to prepare, no later than 31 December 2020, a draft Order in Council requiring any overseas territory that has not introduced such a register to do so. On 14 December 2020, the Government of the United Kingdom published a draft Order in Council setting out a framework for the registers. The Government of Anguilla has committed itself to introducing such a register, and the Government of the United Kingdom is providing support where required. In 2020, the Government of the United Kingdom set out a reasonable expectation that the registers of the overseas territories would be in place by the end of 2023.

#### **D. Agriculture and fisheries**

27. Agricultural activity in Anguilla is limited due to scarcity of arable land and low rainfall. A small number of farmers supply fresh vegetables for the local market. Food production is low resulting in over 90 per cent of produce to be imported. The Government of Anguilla has prioritized food security and is committed to revolutionizing the agriculture sector to increase food production. In 2023, the Ministry of Sustainability, Innovation and the Environment procured shade houses, ground cover and water tanks for distribution to farmers and developed facilities and services to support animal farmers. In 2024, the Ministry is expected to roll out support measures to more farmers by providing shade houses for climate amelioration and water tanks to assist with access to potable water, producing fodder for livestock and operationalizing the hatchery and abattoir.

28. Fishing is significant to the livelihoods of many Anguillans, generating direct revenue for more than 300 people; many more turn to fishing for subsistence. In 2024, support measures for fishers are to be implemented, including the provision of public fish aggregating devices, biodegradable wire to encourage sustainability, and capacity-building. In addition, a fish stock assessment is expected to be conducted on selected fisheries as a key step in the certification process for the local fishery. As previously reported, Anguilla is using less than one quarter of its exclusive fishing zone to the north of the island. The Fisheries and Marine Resources Unit in the Department of Natural Resources is making efforts to mobilize fishers in a united body and to encourage stewardship and sustainable and innovative ways to boost the fishing industry. According to the territorial Government, the Anguilla Fisheries Development Plan for 2015–2025, adopted by the Executive Council in April 2016, outlines the work needed to ensure the optimal and sustainable exploitation of Anguilla's fisheries resources. In March 2022, the territorial Government approved the Blue Anguilla Implementation Plan 2022–2024, which provides a road map for the development of the blue economy.



## **E. Infrastructure**

29. According to the Government of Anguilla, the Territory has approximately 100 km of paved roads and 60 km of unpaved roads. Some of the paved roads are over 25 years old and have not been sufficiently maintained.

30. The Anguilla Air and Sea Ports Authority, an independent statutory body, manages the operations of the airport and seaports on a commercial basis. Clayton J. Lloyd International Airport, situated on the outskirts of The Valley, is the only airport on the island and serves both commercial and private aircraft. There are direct flights to and from the international airports of Antigua, Sint Maarten/Saint Martin, Puerto Rico and the United States of America, through Miami. In addition, the ferry and charter boat service between Anguilla and Sint Maarten/Saint Martin remains a vital international transportation link between Anguilla and other major international gateways.

31. In November 2017, the Government of the United Kingdom awarded the territorial Government a grant of £60 million following the damage to infrastructure caused by Hurricane Irma earlier that year. The Anguilla Programme was set up with this grant under a memorandum of understanding, signed in May 2018, between the administering Power and the territorial Government. The territorial Government has confirmed a list of infrastructure projects to be supported though the funding, including the redevelopment of schools, the only hospital, three polyclinics, the environmental health unit and other critical national infrastructure, such as the island's only airport and the passenger ferry terminal at Blowing Point. The Blowing Point ferry terminal was reported to have become operational on 30 January 2023. Additional funding for £21 million was secured for further initiatives, including the construction of a new cargo jetty at the Road Bay port and resurfacing of the airport runway. According to the 2022 budget address delivered by the Premier and Minister of Finance and Health, further funding of £4 million a year for three years was announced under the Anguilla Economic Resilience Programme for new economic resilience projects, including the rehabilitation of The Valley Road and continued development in the aviation sector.

## **F. Transportation and communications**

32. In its 2023 budget address, the territorial Government stated that the Ministry of Infrastructure, Communications, Utilities, Housing and Tourism and its departments had a recurrent budget of EC\$ 26.67 million, a 14.7 per cent (EC\$ 3.43 million) increase from the 2022 recurrent expenditure of EC\$ 23.24 million. This increase is primarily due to an increase in the provision of a subvention for the Water Corporation of Anguilla until the organization is completely functioning within the Central Government's operations.

33. The island's only runway is not suited to accommodate large payloads and aircraft. According to the administering Power, work is underway to develop the airport and expand the operations of the airport to improve international access and enable larger airfreight transportation to the island. As part of the economic resilience funding by the administering Power, an airport master plan was commissioned and completed in March 2022. On 9 June 2022, the Airport Master Plan 2022–2041 was released, which identifies opportunities and constraints associated with the existing airport infrastructure. Under the plan, the airport terminal building was identified as a critical component for immediate development; work commenced in 2022.

34. Anguilla has a modern internal telephone system with multiple external gateways, including several microwave relays to Sint Maarten/Saint Martin, and a

fibre landing point on Tortola for international calls, with competition in mobile, landline and Internet services.

## **IV. Social conditions**

### **A. General**

35. The social security scheme of the Territory is overseen by the Anguilla Social Security Board. The Department of Social Development under the Ministry of Social Development and Education offers social services to the public. The national social protection policy launched in 2019 sets out the framework for an integrated social protection system in the Territory, with a view to helping Anguilla to advance towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular, those focused on social developments. The policy is aimed at ensuring fairness and justice in service delivery, while respecting the views and inputs of rights-holders and bringing social protection into a single, coherent planning and response framework. The Government of Anguilla continues to provide temporary relief to vulnerable groups in the form of public assistance grants. According to the administering Power, there have been some major inroads in the area of shock-responsive social protection.

36. The Ministry of Social Development and Education continues to sensitize stakeholders to the importance of adhering to the Inter-Agency Child Protection Protocol, developed in collaboration with UNICEF, to ensure that all agencies responsible for safeguarding children work collectively to respond to child abuse and neglect. According to the administering Power, the Ministry has been supported by the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service of the United Kingdom, which has provided a series of training courses for staff in the areas related to child safeguarding.

37. The implementation of the Interagency Child Protection Protocol continued to be monitored in monthly review meetings with the key agencies. According to the administering Power, the Child Safeguarding Board formed in 2016 has evolved into the Child Safeguarding and Harm Reduction Board, working towards protecting children and other vulnerable groups in the community.

### **B. Education**

38. According to the Pan American Health Organization, functional literacy in Anguilla in 2020 was 95.7 per cent for men and 95.4 per cent for women, and net enrolment in public schools (at both the primary school and secondary levels) is universal, with 100 per cent completing the last grade.

39. According to the administering Power, the Department of Education, in collaboration with the Eastern Caribbean Joint Board for Teacher Education and Anguilla Community College, provides in-service teacher training for teachers in need of certification as well as continuing professional development for all school leaders, teachers and professional staff and auxiliary staff. Further to this, the Department of Education has a robust teacher quality system that provides for ongoing in-class support to new teachers; observation, monitoring and appraisal of all teachers, professional staff and school administrators. On 12 May 2022, the Executive Council approved the Education Development Plan 2020–2025 with the following priorities: addressing the changing needs of students and student engagement; embracing and optimizing technology and technological advances; holistic human resource development; enhancing the teaching and learning environment; and addressing the changing landscape of English as a second language.

40. Anguilla Community College offers associate degrees, a postgraduate diploma and technical and vocational education and training qualifications, among others. The Open Campus of the University of the West Indies offers fully accredited tertiary education in Anguilla. In addition, according to the administering Power, two private medical schools based in the United States have a campus in the Territory.

41. The Government of Anguilla has expressed the view that the Territory would benefit from an official assessment of the standard of education provided on the island, as well as the introduction of alternative options to provide education, if required, outside the Territory or through e-learning and remote learning. According to the administering Power, the COVID-19 pandemic placed e-learning and remote learning at the top of the Department of Education's priority list. In June 2022, the Department of Education launched a comprehensive technology integration project called Project INSPIRE, piloted at the Orealia Kelly Primary School. Project INSPIRE focuses on the procurement of technology to aid teaching and learning, provides teacher training and support for transformational educational experiences and develops a rigorous performance evaluation plan. Further investments are needed to improve the availability of reliable internet access in education facilities and extend Project INSPIRE to all public schools on the island. In October 2022, the Department of Education, with the Richard Shulze Family Foundation, launched a school lunch programme ensuring healthy, balanced meals to all children at three pilot primary schools.

42. Students from overseas territories benefit from the home student rate for tuition fees at British universities, provided that they have lived in a British overseas territory, the European Economic Area or Switzerland for the three years prior to the first academic year of their course of study. Students will be eligible for tuition fee loans in England provided that they have settled status upon arrival in the United Kingdom and are starting full-time or part-time undergraduate courses in the 2023/24 academic year. Eligible students are encouraged to ensure that they hold a British passport before applying for home fee status to study in the United Kingdom.

### **C. Public health**

43. The Health Authority of Anguilla is responsible for all public primary, secondary and personal health-care services. There are three health districts in the Territory, with three polyclinics and one hospital, the Princess Alexandra Hospital, which received significant investment in its infrastructure during 2020, including a purpose-built oxygen plant, storage buildings and an extension to the laboratory, which has the ability, through polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing, to screen for COVID-19. Further upgrades in 2022 included a new dialysis unit and an isolation ward. Patients requiring tertiary health care are usually evacuated to a neighbouring island. Anguilla continues to be dependent on regional and international health institutions for specialty services.

44. The Ministry of Finance and Health regulates and monitors the public and private health sectors and carries out policymaking and regulatory functions operating within the framework of the national health strategic plan.

45. Under the quota system, since 1985, up to four patients per year from Anguilla have had free access to primary health care through the National Health Service in the United Kingdom. The territorial Government has called for the quota system to be reconsidered, given that the population has increased by 250 per cent since 1985, leaving the Territory, according to its Government, dependent on neighbouring islands for health care.

46. The Government of the United Kingdom supported the overseas territories throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The support included the funding and supply of testing kits, laboratory consumables, medical equipment, medical supplies and COVID-19 vaccines, including booster doses, and the provision of public health expertise. According to the administering Power, its support was in line with its enduring commitment to the peoples of its overseas territories.

## **D. Crime and public safety**

47. The Royal Anguilla Police Force is responsible for protecting residents and visitors of Anguilla. Owing to the increase in gun violence in recent years, the territorial Government is committed to enhancing the capabilities of the Police Force. In 2024, resources are to be allocated to workforce and technology as well as training and development.

48. Following the passage of the Financial Intelligence Unit Act, 2020 in December 2020, the Money Laundering Reporting Authority ceased to exist. Under the Act, the Financial Intelligence Unit was established as the primary institution responsible for the maintenance of intelligence and the conduct of investigations concerning financial crimes, including money laundering, terrorist financing and proliferation financing offences. These functions are executed by its two divisions: the Intelligence Division and the Investigations Division.

49. The Government of the United Kingdom has indicated its commitment to providing assistance to the overseas territories to deal with major storms and other disasters. In 2023, HMS *Dauntless* was stationed in the Caribbean as part of the North Atlantic patrol tasking of the Royal Navy, ensuring a year-round maritime presence of the United Kingdom to support the overseas territories to prepare for and respond to the threat of hurricanes and other disasters and to provide humanitarian assistance, disaster relief and crisis communications support in the region.

## **E. Human rights**

50. The Territory's Constitution provides that every person in Anguilla is entitled to life, liberty, security of person, the enjoyment of property, protection of the law, freedom of conscience, expression and peaceful assembly and association, and respect for his or her private and family life. The provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women have been extended to Anguilla. The European Convention on Human Rights also applies to Anguilla, with individuals having the right to bring cases to the European Court of Human Rights where no other remedy exists in the Territory. However, other fundamental human rights treaties have yet to be extended to Anguilla, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

## **V. Environment**

51. In its 2020 budget address, the Government of Anguilla announced the establishment of the Department of Natural Resources, created from the merger of the Departments of Environment, Agriculture and Fisheries and Marine Resources with

the aim of increasing efficiency and effectiveness in the management of the natural endowments of Anguilla.

52. In February 2021, the Blue Anguilla task force was established by the Ministry of Economic Development, Commerce, Information Technology and Natural Resources to harness economic growth opportunities from marine resources and facilitate the collaborative development of Anguilla's blue economy in the areas of offshore fishing, energy, transportation, waste management, climate change and tourism. According to the administering Power, the Fishmongers' Company's Fisheries Charitable Trust provided funding for five ecosystem accounting practitioners network meetings, which enabled practitioners in overseas Territories to prioritise ecosystem services, present and review findings, and discuss how to improve future accounts.

53. The territorial Government obtained funding from Darwin Plus, also known as the Overseas Territories Environment and Climate Fund, for various projects. In 2017, Darwin Plus provided £228,584 for regional collaboration to achieve sustainable Caribbean fisheries management; the project ended in March 2023. In 2021, Darwin Plus provided £228,595 for sustainable sargassum management in Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands and Montserrat, as sargassum influxes have had increasingly negative ecological and socioeconomic impacts on those Territories since 2011; £284,755 for the protection of biodiversity in Anguilla by building capacity in invasive plant management, to tackle five priority invasive plant species and eradicate at least three; £328,144 for institutionalizing sustainable and collaborative management solutions for the Territory's marine parks; £300,576 for a pollination project; and £371,004 for the Anguilla Shark Conservation project. These projects are to end in 2024. In 2022, Darwin Plus provided £499,982 to pilot a new solution for invasive species in overseas Territories and £299,249 to enhance the monitoring of and prevent the introduction and spread of invasive non-native species across British overseas Territories. These projects are to end in 2025. Fountain National Park is Anguilla's largest terrestrial protected area but is severely degraded by invasive alien species that threaten native biodiversity, including globally endangered and critically endangered endemic reptiles and plants. According to Darwin Plus, the project is expected to create the first "mainland island" in the overseas Territories by constructing a high-tech, pest-resistant, storm-proof barrier around the park, removing multiple harmful invasive alien species, and managing the site as a biosecure wildlife sanctuary and visitor attraction to ensure long-term sustained benefits for Anguilla's biodiversity and people.

54. The Territorial Government received funding for the "Building environmental resilience and security in a changing climate through biodiversity conservation programme" from the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund. The programme seeks to address the range of threats facing coral reefs to achieve long-term resilience and help corals to naturally fight disease and adapt to changing environmental conditions and also to facilitate a collaborative approach to inform the adaptive management of coral reef ecosystems, based on emerging technologies and innovation.

55. The Blue Belt Programme is the international marine conservation initiative of the Government of the United Kingdom. Anguilla joined the Programme in 2023. Fieldwork, including training deployments, took place the same year.

## **VI. Relations with international organizations and partners**

56. The Territory is an associate member of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (since 1998), the Caribbean Community and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States. It is a member of the Caribbean

Development Bank, the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force, Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism and the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank. Since 2011, it has maintained a formal dialogue with the International Monetary Fund.

57. The territorial Government cooperates directly with Caribbean Governments and participates in regional projects of various international organizations and agencies, including the Pan American Health Organization and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency.

58. According to the administering Power, a team comprised of representatives from the Governments of Anguilla and the United Kingdom negotiated the agreement of a maritime boundary between Anguilla and Antigua and Barbuda, with a treaty to this effect signed in July 2021.

## **VII. Future status of the Territory**

### **A. Position of the territorial Government**

59. A representative of the Government of Anguilla addressing the 2022 regional seminar 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 (Special Committee on Decolonization), held from 11 to 13 May 2022 in Castries, reiterated that the territorial Government understands that enhancing the foundation of a great society means investing more in its people and empowering them to take ownership of their own destiny.

60. The representative stated that the negotiations on a new constitution between the Territory and the administering Power had not concluded and it had been decided that they be suspended until after the general elections in 2020. The representative affirmed the Territory's commitment to continuing the constitutional reform process, having held town hall meetings in 2021 to discuss the draft constitution which confirmed the desire to improve the level of democratic representation and to have adequate safeguards and protections to ensure good governance and promote high standards of integrity in public life. The representative provided information regarding the proposed way forward and expressed the desire to receive technical assistance with redrafting the constitution, preferably from a Caribbean constitutional expert or experts.

### **B. Position of the administering Power**

61. In 2023, two meetings of the United Kingdom-Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council were held in London, on 11 and 12 May and on 14 and 15 November 2023, when the administering Power hosted the representatives of the Governments of its overseas territories.

62. In the communiqué adopted at the meeting held in May, the Government of the United Kingdom and the leaders of the overseas territories indicated that the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, applied to the peoples of the overseas territories. They reaffirmed the importance of promoting the right of those peoples to self-determination, a collective responsibility of all parts of the Government of the United Kingdom.

63. The Government of the United Kingdom and the leaders of the overseas territories stated that they would continue to explore ways in which the overseas territories could maintain international support in countering hostile sovereignty claims. It was also stated that, for those Territories with permanent populations that

so wished, the United Kingdom would continue to support their requests for removal from the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories.

64. In the joint declaration issued on 14 December 2023, following the meeting held in November, the Government of the United Kingdom and the leaders of the overseas territories stated that the United Kingdom would support the democratically elected Governments of the overseas territories, if they so wished, in accepting additional responsibilities and greater autonomy, alongside accountability. The United Kingdom would take such steps in line with its sovereign responsibilities and international law, while ensuring that obligations were met under the Charter of the United Nations and relevant international conventions, as well as under the constitution of each overseas territory.

65. At the 8th meeting of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), on 10 October 2023, during the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly, the representative of the United Kingdom stated that the United Kingdom had a modern relationship with all its overseas territories based on partnership, shared values and the right of the people of each Territory to choose to remain British.

66. He added that the overseas territories had a large measure of internal self-government, subject only to the United Kingdom retaining powers that enabled it to carry out its obligations under international law. The United Kingdom Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council met annually to monitor and drive forward collective priorities for action, and the United Kingdom was committed to supporting the territories in achieving those collective priorities, including environmental protection, and to carrying out its responsibilities, including ensuring security. His Government provided financial and practical support to build local capacity and resilience, and various infrastructure projects were under way (see [A/C.4/78/SR.8](#)).

## VIII. Action taken by the General Assembly

67. On 7 December 2023, the General Assembly adopted, without a vote, resolution [78/87](#) on the basis of the report 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 for 2023 ([A/78/23](#)) and the subsequent recommendation by the Fourth Committee. In that resolution, the Assembly:

(a) Reaffirmed the inalienable right of the people of Anguilla to self-determination, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and with General Assembly resolution [1514 \(XV\)](#), containing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples;

(b) Also reaffirmed that, in the process of decolonization of Anguilla, there was no alternative to the principle of self-determination, which was also a fundamental human right, as recognized under the relevant human rights conventions;

(c) Further reaffirmed that it was ultimately for the people of Anguilla to determine freely their future political status in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter, the Declaration and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, and in that connection called upon the administering Power, in cooperation with the territorial Government and appropriate bodies of the United Nations system, to develop political education programmes for the Territory in order to foster an awareness among the people of their right to self-determination in conformity with the legitimate political status options, based on the principles clearly defined in Assembly resolution [1541 \(XV\)](#) and other relevant resolutions and decisions;

- (d) Urged that constitutional discussions with the administering Power, including public consultations, be concluded as soon as possible;
- (e) Requested the administering Power to assist the Territory in its current efforts with regard to advancing the internal constitutional review exercise, if requested;
- (f) Called upon the administering Power to facilitate a visiting mission 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, if the territorial Government so desired, and requested the Chair of the Special Committee to take all the steps necessary to that end;
- (g) Requested the administering Power to assist the Territory by facilitating its work concerning public educational outreach efforts consistent with Article 73 *b* of the Charter, and in that regard called upon the relevant United Nations organizations to provide assistance to the Territory, if requested;
- (h) Called upon the administering Power to assist the territorial Government in strengthening its commitments in the economic domain, including budgetary matters, with regional support as needed and appropriate;
- (i) Welcomed the active participation of the Territory in the work of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean;
- (j) Stressed that the Territory should continue to participate in the activities of the Special Committee, including regional seminars, in order to provide the Committee with up-to-date information regarding the decolonization process;
- (k) Also stressed the importance of the Special Committee being apprised of the views and wishes of the people of Anguilla and enhancing its understanding of their conditions, including the nature and scope of the existing political and constitutional arrangements between Anguilla and the administering Power;
- (l) Called upon the administering Power to participate in and cooperate fully with the work of the Special Committee in order to implement the provisions of Article 73 *e* of the Charter and the Declaration and in order to advise the Committee on the implementation of the provisions under Article 73 *b* of the Charter on efforts to promote self-government in Anguilla, and encouraged the administering Power to facilitate visiting and special missions to the Territory;
- (m) Reaffirmed the responsibility of the administering Power under the Charter to promote the economic and social development and to preserve the cultural identity of the Territory, and requested the administering Power to take steps to enlist and make effective use of all possible assistance, on both a bilateral and a multilateral basis, in the strengthening of the economy of the Territory;
- (n) Took into account the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals, stressed the importance of fostering the economic and social sustainable development of the Territory by promoting sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, creating greater opportunities for all, reducing inequalities, raising basic standards of living, fostering equitable social development and inclusion and promoting the integrated and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems that supported, inter alia, economic, social and human development, while facilitating ecosystem conservation, regeneration, restoration and resilience in the face of new and emerging challenges, and strongly urged the administering Power to refrain from undertaking any kind of illicit, harmful and unproductive activities, including the use of the Territory as an international financial centre, that were not aligned with the interest of the people of the Territory;



(o) Requested the Territory and the administering Power to take all measures necessary to protect and conserve the environment of the Territory against any degradation, and once again requested the specialized agencies concerned to monitor environmental conditions in the Territory and to provide assistance to the Territory, consistent with their prevailing rules of procedure;

(p) Reiterated its call upon the administering Power, the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system and regional organizations to provide all the assistance necessary to the Territory, support the recovery and rebuilding efforts and enhance capabilities for emergency preparedness and risk reduction, in particular in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria that impacted the Territory in 2017;

(q) Requested the Special Committee to continue to examine the question of Anguilla and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session and on the implementation of the resolution.

Annex

Map of Anguilla

