



General Assembly

Seventy-fourth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
18 December 2019

Original: English

Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 8th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 16 October 2019, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Bahr Aluloom (Iraq)
later: Ms. Bacher (Vice-Chair) (Austria)
later: Mr. Bahr Aluloom (Chair) (Iraq)

Contents

Agenda item 55: Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations (*continued*)*

Agenda item 56: Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories (*continued*)*

Agenda item 57: 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 (*continued*)*

Agenda item 58: Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories (*continued*)*

Agenda item 59: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (*Territories not covered under other agenda items*) (*continued*)*

* Items which the Committee has decided to consider together.

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be sent as soon as possible, under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, to the Chief of the Documents Management Section (dms@un.org), and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org/>).



The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 55: Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 e of the Charter of the United Nations (*continued*) (A/74/23 (chaps. V and XIII) and A/74/63)

Agenda item 56: Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories (*continued*) (A/74/23 (chaps. VI and XIII))

Agenda item 57: 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 (*continued*) (A/74/23 (chaps. VII and XIII) and A/74/80)

Agenda item 58: Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories (*continued*) (A/74/65 and A/74/65/Add.1; A/C.4/74/L.2)

Agenda item 59: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (*Territories not covered under other agenda items*) (*continued*) (A/74/23 (chaps. VIII, IX, X, XI, XII and XIII), A/74/80 and A/74/341; A/C.4/74/L.3 and A/C.4/74/L.4)

1. **Mr. Llorenty Solíz** (Plurinational State of Bolivia), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), said that all peoples should be able to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination. CELAC remained fully committed to the goal of the third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism and called on the administering Powers to cooperate with 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) and to adopt the measures necessary to attain the rapid decolonization of each of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, some of which were in the CELAC region, while taking the individual situations of the Territories into account, including the fact that some of them were “special and particular” colonial situations involving sovereignty disputes. The administering Powers should regularly communicate accurate information on each of the Territories under their administration. At the January 2017 CELAC Summit, the Heads of State and Government of the Community had renewed their commitment to continue working to make Latin America and the Caribbean a region free of colonialism.

2. CELAC supported the work of the Department of Global Communications, including the use of the six official languages on the decolonization website, but stressed the importance of ensuring that content was regularly updated in all languages. It appreciated the measures taken to provide coverage of Special Committee meetings on United Nations Web TV in 2018 and urged the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Public Information to ensure the widest dissemination of information on decolonization, including the coverage of all meetings of the Special Committee.

3. CELAC strongly supported the legitimate rights of the Argentine Republic in the sovereignty dispute over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas. At the 2017 CELAC Summit, the States members of the Community had reaffirmed their abiding interest in the resumption of negotiations by the Governments of the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom in order to find, as soon as possible, a peaceful and definitive solution to the dispute, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations and the Organization of American States. They had also called on the Secretary-General of the United Nations, once again, to renew his efforts to fulfil the mission of good offices entrusted to him by the General Assembly with a view to the resumption of negotiations, and to report on the progress made. CELAC further reiterated the importance of observing General Assembly resolution 31/49 calling on both parties to refrain from taking decisions that would imply introducing unilateral modifications in the situation, and highlighted the full willingness of the Argentine Government to set in place arrangements for the resumption of dialogue aimed at reaching a peaceful and definitive solution to the sovereignty dispute.

4. With regard to the Special Committee’s 38 resolutions and decisions on Puerto Rico reaffirming the inalienable right of the Puerto Rican people to self-determination and independence, the Heads of State and Government of CELAC had highlighted the Latin American and Caribbean character of Puerto Rico at the 2017 Summit and had recalled the Havana Declaration of 2014 calling for progress on the question of Puerto Rico.

5. With regard to the small island Territories of the Caribbean and the Pacific, which constituted the majority of existing Non-Self-Governing Territories, continued efforts were needed to facilitate the sustained and balanced growth of their fragile economies. Those Territories should be allowed to exercise their right to self-determination. Crucially, when the will of the majority of the indigenous population was unequivocal, the administering Powers should not directly or

indirectly thwart that will. CELAC therefore remained concerned at the situation in the Turks and Caicos Islands and underscored the need to guarantee a truly inclusive, democratic and representative governmental approach to allow the people of that Territory to participate meaningfully in determining their own future. Similarly, special attention should be paid to key issues affecting small islands, such as accelerating loss of territory due to natural disasters and rising sea levels resulting from climate change.

6. CELAC endorsed all the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council on the question of Western Sahara, including General Assembly resolution 70/98, and reiterated its strong support for the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy to reach a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution leading to the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV).

7. **Mr. Al Fazari** (Oman) said that his country endorsed the legitimate right of peoples to self-determination, a right enshrined in numerous General Assembly resolutions on decolonization. Oman supported United Nations-led international efforts to reach a realistic, practicable and enduring political solution to the question of the Sahara, in line with the relevant Security Council resolutions adopted since 2007. In that connection, his delegation welcomed the participation of Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania and the Polisario in the round-table meetings convened in 2018 and 2019 under the auspices of the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy.

8. **Mr. Webson** (Antigua and Barbuda) said that completion of the decolonization process would require ongoing open dialogue between the administering Powers, the Special Committee on decolonization and the peoples of the Territories concerned. His delegation called on the administering Powers to develop the necessary frameworks and road maps to achieve the decolonization of each Territory, taking into account the specific situation in each case, including “special and particular” situations involving sovereignty disputes. They must also continue adhering to their obligation to promote the well-being of the inhabitants of those Territories, particularly given that many were situated in areas that were vulnerable to the extremities of nature.

9. His Government stood by the guiding principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant General Assembly resolutions, and called for a negotiated and mutually acceptable political solution to all disputes. All parties concerned should implement and comply fully

with the mandates established by the Security Council. They should also show the requisite political will and work in a manner conducive to dialogue. Political, economic, human rights and security concerns should remain at the forefront of all negotiations.

10. His delegation welcomed the organization of a visiting mission by the Special Committee to the Territory of Montserrat. Such missions were an integral part of discussions and provided support on the path towards self-determination. With regard to the question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), the Secretary-General should redouble efforts to carry out the mission of good offices entrusted to him by the General Assembly, with a view to achieving the resumption of negotiations aimed at finding a peaceful solution to the dispute as soon as possible. Moreover, his delegation supported the ongoing political process, held under the auspices of the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy, aimed at achieving a mutually acceptable and negotiated political solution to the regional dispute over the Sahara, based on a spirit of realism and compromise.

11. All Member States must uphold the Charter of the United Nations by recognizing the interests and seeking the independence of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. Promoting social, economic and political progress in the Territories was of paramount importance. In doing so, Governments must take into account the specific circumstances and the wishes of the peoples of each Territory.

12. **Ms. Bannis-Roberts** (Dominica) said that, as her country had undergone decolonization itself, the work of the Committee had a special place in the hearts and minds of the people of Dominica. On the question of Western Sahara, her delegation supported the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy to achieve a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution to the dispute, and welcomed the adoption of Security Council resolution 2468 (2019). It also supported the convening of two round tables between Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania and the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguía el-Hamra y de Río de Oro (Frente POLISARIO) and the agreement to hold a third round table, which could allow for more substantive discussion on elements of convergence. The Moroccan autonomy initiative represented a serious and credible proposal for the resolution of the dispute. Lastly, registration of the population in the Tindouf camps should be carried out, in accordance with international law.

13. **Mr. Guillermet-Fernandez** (Costa Rica) said that it was alarming that there were still peoples that were unable to exercise the right to self-determination. The Special Committee should continue to seek appropriate

measures to implement the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (Declaration on decolonization) in the framework of the third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, which should be extended into a fourth decade.

14. Costa Rica recognized the sovereign rights of Argentina over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas. The legitimate Argentine claim had been supported by various General Assembly resolutions. His delegation commended Argentina and the United Kingdom for the improvements in their bilateral relations, but urged the parties to begin negotiations as soon as possible with a view to finding a definitive and peaceful solution to the protracted dispute. With regard to Western Sahara, his delegation supported the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy to find a fair, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution that was in line with international law.

15. As sovereignty and democracy were inextricably linked, the United Nations should seek efficient, sustainable and peaceful solutions to international conflicts that upheld the values of democracy, human rights and justice. Costa Rica was firmly committed to supporting all efforts to achieve a world free from colonialism in all its forms and manifestations.

16. **Mr. Tejan** (Sierra Leone) said that all peoples had the inalienable right to self-determination and his country remained firmly committed to the implementation of the Declaration on decolonization. With regard to the question of Palestine, his Government supported the two-State solution, whereby Palestine and Israel could live side by side in peace.

17. The achievement of a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution to the dispute over Western Sahara was long overdue, and his delegation fully supported Security Council resolution [2468 \(2019\)](#). The two round tables held in 2018 and 2019 had created fresh momentum and he commended all parties, the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy for their contributions in that regard. The third round table and the resumption of negotiations under the auspices of the Secretary-General would further enhance prospects for a just and enduring political settlement in the interest of the people of Western Sahara. His delegation renewed its commitment to work with other States in pursuit of a solution to the question of Western Sahara, which directly impacted peace, security and development in the region.

18. With regard to the question of Tokelau, he commended New Zealand, the administering Power, for

working closely with the Territory of Tokelau and hoped that it would provide the road map for a definitive solution.

19. **Mr. Reyes Hernández** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that it was regrettable that, even though colonialism was inconsistent with the Charter of the United Nations, the peoples of 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories were still waiting to exercise their right to self-determination and independence peacefully, fairly and freely, in accordance with the relevant legal instruments.

20. Information about the economic and social conditions and political and constitutional developments in the Non-Self-Governing Territories was fundamental for advancing international decolonization efforts. Administering Powers should therefore transmit adequate information on the Territories under their administration in a timely manner to facilitate the work of all parties involved and the fulfilment of mandates. They should also participate officially in the sessions of the Special Committee.

21. Venezuela recognized the contribution that specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system made to the sustainable development of Non-Self-Governing Territories. It also welcomed visiting missions, which were an effective instrument for understanding the situations of the peoples in those Territories. Administering Powers should cooperate with the United Nations to facilitate visiting missions to the Territories under their administration, in line with the relevant United Nations resolutions.

22. The United States continued to subject the people of Puerto Rico to a situation of colonial oppression, and the financial oversight board imposed by the President of the United States to exercise powers over the elected officials of the Government of Puerto Rico was only aggravating the colonial situation. Mass protests had taken place in the face of corruption that was causing Puerto Ricans to be denied their labour rights, access to education and health care. The people of Puerto Rico had the right to self-determination and independence in accordance with General Assembly resolution [1514 \(XV\)](#) and his delegation urged the General Assembly to examine the question of Puerto Rico in all its aspects.

23. A negotiated solution had to be found to the question of Western Sahara in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions. International efforts involving the Secretary-General to reinvigorate the search for a fair, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution must be redoubled. A solution to the dispute, based on cooperation, would contribute to stability and security in the region.

24. As a staunch defender of the principles of sovereignty and the self-determination of peoples, his delegation called on the international community to fully commit to the total eradication of colonialism in all its forms. Venezuela confirmed its commitment to the effective implementation of the Declaration on decolonization, in the name of peace, human rights and economic and social development.

25. **Mr. Cochard** (France) said that France had been cooperating fully with the United Nations on the question of New Caledonia for over 30 years, within the framework of the Nouméa Accord, which had been negotiated by the people of New Caledonia with the support of the State. The fundamental principles of neutrality, dialogue and respect for democratic choices were guaranteed by the State, while the United Nations and the Special Committee brought transparency and legitimacy to the process.

26. Over 80 per cent of the New Caledonian electorate had participated in a referendum held in November 2018, in which 56.67 per cent of voters had voted against independence. In accordance with the Nouméa Accord, a second referendum would be held in 2020 and a third in 2022. The 2018 referendum had been facilitated by strengthened cooperation between France and the United Nations. In 2019, for the fourth year running, the United Nations had sent an expert mission to New Caledonia, which had provided expertise to the French authorities on the revision of the electoral roll. Furthermore, a United Nations panel of experts and a ministerial mission of the Pacific Islands Forum had observed the 2018 referendum and confirmed the transparency of the process and the validity of the result.

27. France submitted information on New Caledonia in accordance with Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations. At the invitation of the French Government, the Special Committee had conducted a second visiting mission to New Caledonia in 2018, during which the Special Committee had seen the political, socioeconomic, cultural and educational measures taken by France to ensure full implementation of the Nouméa Accord, including an educational campaign on the consequences of the referendum.

28. The inclusion of French Polynesia on the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories ran counter to the democratic choice of the French Polynesian people. In October 2019, the President of French Polynesia had requested the removal of French Polynesia from that list and had presented all the grounds for its removal, not least the high level of autonomy that French Polynesia had within the French Republic, including a democratically elected President, a Government to

manage Polynesian affairs and a legislature, the Assembly of French Polynesia, with members elected by popular vote every five years. That status respected the identity, history, culture and specificities of the Territory and suited Polynesians, as demonstrated at elections that met democratic standards. His delegation hoped that the inclusion of French Polynesia on the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories would be reviewed in light of the wishes of the French Polynesian people.

29. **Ms. Chikanyairo** (Zimbabwe) said that it was disturbing that 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories remained, despite the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) in 1960. Her delegation supported the work of the United Nations to enable the peoples of those Territories to exercise the right to self-determination and urged the administering Powers to take the necessary steps to facilitate that right.

30. Western Sahara had been on the Committee's agenda since 1963 and was the only remaining Non-Self-Governing Territory in Africa. Her delegation supported all Security Council resolutions on that question and the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) so that the people of Western Sahara could exercise its inalienable right to self-determination. Her delegation hoped that a new Personal Envoy to the Secretary-General would be appointed without delay and that negotiations would be resumed, under the auspices of the Secretary-General, without preconditions and in good faith, with a view to achieving a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution to allow for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara.

31. The decolonization of Western Sahara would not be complete until its people had been granted the opportunity to determine its own future, in line with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). Her delegation therefore requested the inclusion of human rights monitoring in the MINURSO mandate, so that human rights violations against the Sahrawi people could be documented and perpetrators held accountable. Moreover, the African Union decision to establish a mechanism to enable the Troika of the African Union and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission to support United Nations-led efforts towards a solution to the question of Western Sahara was welcome.

32. The General Assembly was fully responsible for completing the decolonization of Western Sahara by means of a referendum for self-determination, to allow the free expression of the sovereign will of the Sahrawi people. It was imperative that a date be set for that referendum. Both Morocco and Frente POLISARIO

were urged to negotiate in good faith for an amicable, lasting political solution leading to self-determination.

33. *Ms. Bacher (Austria), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

34. **Mr. Tito** (Kiribati) said that, on the question of Western Sahara, Kiribati supported the approach of the Security Council and MINURSO, as well as the role played by the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General in fostering dialogue between the concerned parties to facilitate a way forward. Morocco had also played a positive role, supporting the multilateral approach of the United Nations and offering broad autonomy to the people of Western Sahara as a way forward to resolve the dispute. The adoption of a declaration by the African Union reaffirming its support for the United Nations as a framework for seeking a mutually acceptable, realistic, pragmatic and lasting political solution to the issue was encouraging. Given that the question of Western Sahara was an Africa-based issue, the committed engagement of the African Union was a necessary ingredient in that pursuit.

35. **Ms. Hassan** (Djibouti), referring to the question of Western Sahara, said that her delegation supported the political process led under the exclusive auspices of the United Nations and commended the efforts of the Secretary-General to establish a frank and constructive dialogue between the parties in order to reach a mutually acceptable negotiated political solution to the regional dispute, as recommended by the relevant Security Council resolutions. To that end, Djibouti joined the Security Council in its support for the Moroccan autonomy initiative.

36. Her delegation commended the former Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General, Horst Köhler, for his pragmatic and dynamic work. Everyone must work together to sustain the gains made in recent meetings and a new Personal Envoy must be appointed to take further action based on those gains. The commitment by the parties concerned to hold a third round table in order to find a political solution to the dispute was also welcome. The question of Western Sahara must be resolved through political dialogue and constructive compromise, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

37. **Mr. Karbou** (Togo) said that, in the interests of global peace, security and sustainable development, the international community must enhance efforts to resolve conflicts relating to the right of peoples to self-determination and the territorial integrity of States.

38. With regard to Western Sahara, his delegation commended the Secretary-General and his former Personal Envoy, Horst Köhler, on their efforts to resolve

the crisis, which had generated fresh momentum in the political process through the convening of round tables involving Morocco, Frente POLISARIO, Algeria and Mauritania. The only realistic way of achieving peace in Western Sahara was through negotiation. The parties involved should avoid taking entrenched positions, bearing in mind that only a pragmatic and realistic approach could lead to the resolution of the crisis and dispel the tensions that reigned throughout the region and beyond. His delegation therefore called on Mauritania, Morocco and Algeria to continue to participate in direct negotiations through the round table initiative of the United Nations. As highlighted in various Security Council resolutions, a political solution to the long-standing dispute required reinforced cooperation between the member States of the Arab Maghreb Union.

39. The socioeconomic challenges facing the entire region could be addressed only if a definitive and sustainable solution to the question of Western Sahara was reached. His delegation acknowledged the efforts of Morocco towards the development of the Sahara region and encouraged strengthened efforts to protect human rights in the region. Resolution of the question of Western Sahara was a shared responsibility among all stakeholders. Only a significant improvement of relations between them, particularly Morocco and Algeria, could lead to that successful end. The authorities of both those countries must continue their dialogue in a spirit of openness.

40. **Mr. do Rego** (Benin) said that his delegation fully supported the United Nations-led political process aimed at resolving the regional dispute over the Sahara. It welcomed the holding of the two round tables involving Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania and Frente POLISARIO, as well as the plans to hold a third round table in accordance with Security Council resolution [2468 \(2019\)](#). His Government commended Morocco on its launch of a new development model for the Sahara in 2015, as well as on its notable achievements in the area of human rights in Laayoune and Dakhla.

41. The Moroccan autonomy initiative constituted a realistic compromise solution that could lead to a negotiated, mutually acceptable political settlement, in line with international law and United Nations resolutions. The political process must be given priority and any initiative emanating from the Security Council for the adoption of a timetable and concrete parameters for credible negotiations should be supported. No initiative would be successful, however, without the commitment of the parties, who should, in a spirit of compromise, seek fair and mutually acceptable solutions that would lead to lasting peace and the definitive settlement of the issue.

42. **Ms. Kpongo** (Central African Republic) said that the remaining decolonization questions must be addressed on a case-by-case basis that took into account the specificities of each.

43. With regard to the dispute over Moroccan Sahara, her delegation supported the political process conducted under the exclusive auspices of the United Nations aimed at achieving a realistic, practicable and enduring political solution based on compromise. Her Government welcomed the convening of two round tables with the participation of Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania and the “Polisario” and the commitment of all four participants to attend a third meeting, pursuant to Security Council resolution [2468 \(2019\)](#). Realism and a spirit of compromise were vital to the achievement of a definitive political solution to the regional dispute.

44. The Moroccan autonomy initiative was the clear compromise solution as it complied fully with international law, the Charter of the United Nations and General Assembly and Security Council resolutions. Moreover, the initiative took into account regional specificities and met the highest international standards regarding the devolution of powers to local populations. The Security Council had acknowledged that the efforts of Morocco to resolve the dispute were serious and credible. Moreover, the new development model for the Sahara launched by Morocco in 2015 was noteworthy, as was the participation by elected officials of the two provinces of Moroccan Sahara in the deliberations of the Special Committee on decolonization and in the round-table talks.

45. Morocco had made commendable progress in advancing human rights, through its engagement with international human-rights mechanisms and the activities of the regional commissions on human rights in Laayoune and Dakhla. The human rights violations being perpetrated in the Tindouf camps were of grave concern, hence the pressing need to register the camp population, in accordance with international humanitarian law, the mandate of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the recommendations of the Secretary-General and all Security Council resolutions adopted since 2011. In closing, it was vital for all parties to continue working towards a consensus and a long-overdue solution to the regional dispute.

46. **Mr. Gurach** (Ethiopia) said that his Government had consistently supported a just, lasting and mutually acceptable solution to the question of Western Sahara, providing for the self-determination of its people in line with the Charter of the United Nations, relevant African Union decisions and Security Council resolutions.

Ethiopia regretted the continued impasse in the conflict and the lack of meaningful progress in negotiating a solution. It was equally unfortunate that the parties’ interpretations of the issue remained diametrically opposed; he therefore urged the parties to seek common ground, paving the way for the resumption of direct talks without preconditions. While the political will and good-faith efforts of the two parties remained vital, the Secretary-General and the Security Council should remain seized of the matter and encourage the resumption of serious talks. In addition, the Security Council should renew the mandate of MINURSO in view of the need for continued monitoring of the human-rights situation. To conclude, he called on all stakeholders, including the neighbouring countries, to provide the necessary support for the United Nations-led peace process.

47. **Mr. Kapambwe** (Zambia) said that, despite the encouraging progress towards decolonization since 1945, when nearly a third of the Organization’s current membership had been under colonial domination, only one colony had gained its independence since the beginning of the twenty-first century. As the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations drew near, Member States must redouble their efforts to obtain the desired results in advancing the cause of self-determination, namely, lasting solutions that were acceptable to all concerned parties and to the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories themselves.

48. Zambia reiterated the African Union position on decolonization, which addressed the question of Western Sahara. The Southern African Development Community conference on solidarity with Western Sahara had reaffirmed the United Nations position on the dispute, which had awaited resolution since 1975. Welcoming the resumption of talks between Frente POLISARIO, Algeria, Mauritania and Morocco, he encouraged the parties to strive for more progress and appealed to the Secretary-General to take steps to enhance the deliberations and appoint a Personal Envoy.

49. **Mr. Abdallah** (Comoros) said that the third Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism was drawing to a close, hence the need to end colonial rule where it persisted by finding solutions acceptable to all parties. Comoros supported the political process aimed at resolving the question of Moroccan Sahara, in line with Security Council resolutions adopted since 2007, including Security Council resolution [2468 \(2019\)](#) urging progress towards a realistic, practicable and enduring political solution based on compromise. His delegation welcomed the round-table talks that had brought together Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania and the Polisario as well as the commitment of the parties to participate in a third round table. Realism and a spirit of

compromise were paramount in attaining a definitive political settlement. In that regard, Comoros endorsed the Moroccan autonomy initiative as a compromise solution that took into account regional specificities, met the international standard for the devolution of powers to local populations and complied with international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the Organization's relevant resolutions. In addition, his delegation hailed the new development model for the Sahara launched by Morocco in 2015. The participation, for the second year running, of two elected representatives of Moroccan Saharan provinces, in the deliberations of the Special Committee on decolonization and the two round-table talks, at which Moroccan Saharan civil society representatives had also been present, was equally worthy of note. Lastly, his delegation called for the population of the Tindouf refugee camps to be registered, in accordance with international humanitarian law, the mandate of UNHCR, the recommendations of the Secretary-General and all Security Council resolutions adopted since 2011.

50. **Mr. Da Silva** (Guinea-Bissau) said that the only way to resolve the question of Western Sahara was through the United Nations-led political process, based on the relevant Security Council resolutions adopted since 2007. Against that backdrop, he welcomed the convening of two round-table talks between Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania and the Polisario under the auspices of the Secretary-General's former Personal Envoy and looked forward to the appointment of the latter's successor. Guinea-Bissau encouraged Morocco to continue working to attain a mutually acceptable political solution through its realistic, credible autonomy initiative, in support of which the Kingdom had launched its new development model for the Sahara in 2015, taking tangible action to improve the living conditions of the Moroccan Saharan population.

51. **Mr. Hilale** (Morocco) said that, against the backdrop of a world in constant flux, the Organization had undertaken serious reform in order to tackle contemporary challenges more effectively. Meanwhile, the Committee remained paralyzed by repetitive debates that provided no solutions to the questions on its agenda, most notably, the question of Moroccan Sahara. Keeping the question on the Committee's agenda was in blatant violation of Article 12 of the Charter of the United Nations, which stipulated that while the Security Council – which had been seized of the matter since 1988 – was taking action on any dispute or situation, the General Assembly should not make any recommendation unless the Security Council so requested.

52. The fact that two United Nations organs were simultaneously considering and adopting different

resolutions on the question of Moroccan Sahara bordered on the absurd. His delegation therefore reaffirmed its urgent call for the Committee and its subsidiary bodies to discontinue consideration of the matter, which was no longer a decolonization issue but rather a matter of restoring the territorial integrity of Morocco. The decolonization of the southern provinces of Morocco, comprising Moroccan Sahara, had taken place in 1975 under the Madrid Agreement, which had been recognized by the United Nations in General Assembly resolution 3458B (XXX). The legal validity of the negotiated return of the Sahara to Morocco was further confirmed by customary practice and the long-standing, regularly renewed declaration of allegiance by Moroccan Saharan tribes to the Moroccan King.

53. The Security Council had made notable progress towards a political settlement of the regional dispute. His Government's autonomy initiative, first introduced in 2007 and characterized by the Council as serious and credible, had paved the way for the political process that was currently under way. The option of autonomy, which had served as the basis for some 70 agreements concluded worldwide since the end of the Second World War, had served as a corrective to the after-effects of colonization and the often arbitrary drawing up of borders by facilitating conflict resolution in a manner that reconciled respect for territorial integrity and regional specificities and sovereign handling of local matters. Moreover, an extensive body of international law confirmed the legal validity, political relevance and pragmatic value of autonomy as the compromise solution of choice. By making a win-win solution possible, preserving the unity and sovereignty of States while also enshrining as Constitutional the right of the concerned population to democratic self-governance, autonomy constituted a modern, democratic and thoroughly viable manner of exercising self-determination. A negotiated political solution was another form that self-determination – which in no way required the holding of a referendum – could take. Indeed, neither Security Council resolutions nor reports of the Secretary-General issued since 2001 had contained any mention of the referendum option, indicating it had run its course.

54. His Government's autonomy initiative, as the culmination of broad local, national and international consultations, guaranteed the Saharan population a key role in the region's institutions, enabling it to manage its affairs democratically in the various branches of government. Under the initiative, the region would receive development assistance, and its people would participate actively in all areas of national life.

55. Developments over the previous year had enabled the political process to take a more defined shape. In its resolutions 2440 (2019) and 2468 (2019), the Security Council had called for a realistic, practicable and enduring political solution based on compromise; definitively identified Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania and the “Polisario” as the four primary participants in the political process and reaffirmed that the Moroccan autonomy initiative constituted the serious and credible solution to the regional dispute. The two round-table talks had reinvigorated the process, thanks to the active involvement of all participants in substantive discussion and their commitment to attend a third talk.

56. The population of Moroccan Sahara participated fully in regional and national electoral processes and political life. Elected representatives from the region had taken part in international meetings, including the substantive sessions of the Special Committee on decolonization and the round-table talks in Geneva. The local population had an active role in formulating development policies and programmes through its elected representatives, while the income-generating activities of private entrepreneurs from the Southern Provinces and the export of local products contributed to regional and national prosperity. His Government’s new development model for Moroccan Sahara, launched in 2015, had given rise to inclusive, multidimensional development. Lastly, the \$100 million investment in the construction of a new Atlantic Ocean port in Dakhla was projected to generate 183,000 jobs by 2030.

57. The Moroccan citizens of the Southern Provinces enjoyed the same rights and freedoms as their northern counterparts, supported by the local efforts of the National Council for Human Rights. Moreover, the region had become a celebrated tourist destination as well as the site of numerous regional and international conferences and headquarters to global chains. Côte d’Ivoire had recently opened an honorary consulate in Laayoune to provide assistance to Ivorian nationals residing in or transiting through the region.

58. The international community must not stand idly by as the “Polisario”, an armed separatist group, continued to violate human rights in the Tindouf camps. Subject to a military and security blockade, the camps had witnessed numerous popular demonstrations and uprisings against the “Polisario”, which had resorted to violent repression in response. The Secretary-General had accounted for those violations, which ranged from the detention incommunicado and torture of bloggers living in the camps to the enforced disappearance of a former “Polisario” official, in ample detail in his most recent report to the Security Council (S/2019/787).

59. The Tindouf camp inhabitants must be registered by UNHCR, as required by international law and as called for by the Security Council in its relevant resolutions since 2011. Failure to register refugees encouraged the diversion of humanitarian assistance by the “Polisario”, an act denounced by various international organizations.

60. Morocco remained committed to the United Nations-led political process aimed at achieving a realistic, practicable and enduring solution, based on compromise, in line with the Moroccan autonomy initiative, which constituted the only basis for such a solution. The political process must be resumed in accordance with the agreements reached under the auspices of the former Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General, as stipulated in Security Council resolution 2468 (2019), including the round-table process, with the full, active and responsible participation of all parties.

61. His Government affirmed its full support for the national unity and territorial integrity of the United Arab Emirates and for its sovereignty over the islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb. It supported all peaceful measures by the United Arab Emirates to re-establish its full sovereignty over the three islands.

62. *Mr. Bahr Aluloom (Iraq) resumed the Chair.*

63. **Mr. Mimouni** (Algeria) said that the close of the third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism provided an opportunity to take stock of the progress made towards achieving the Organization’s decolonization objectives and determine whether the United Nations, which had long supported peoples under colonial rule in their struggle for liberation, had upheld its duty to the 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories that remained. Several obstacles continued to hinder the Organization’s efforts. Some peoples had been able, with the Committee’s support, to attain full sovereignty, while others – notably, the people of Western Sahara – continued to wait on the international community to facilitate the exercise of their sacred right. The question of Western Sahara had been on the Organization’s list of Non-Self-Governing Territories for over half a century, with numerous General Assembly resolutions recognizing the right of the Sahrawi people to self-determination and independence since 1966. Moreover, the International Court of Justice, in its advisory opinion on Western Sahara, had not found any legal ties of such a nature as might affect the application of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) in the decolonization of Western Sahara and, in particular, of the principle of self-determination through the free and genuine expression of the will of the peoples of the Territory. There was therefore no doubt that the question of

Western Sahara was a pending decolonization question that could be resolved in a just and enduring manner only by enabling the people of the Territory to exercise its right of self-determination.

64. Algeria supported the efforts of the Security Council, the Secretary-General and his former Personal Envoy to promote the decolonization of Western Sahara and reinvigorate the Territory's peace process. Nevertheless, the people of Western Sahara continued to endure exile, occupation, injustice, hardship and deprivation of its most basic rights. The impasse in the peace process posed grave threats to regional peace and stability. In that regard, the Secretary-General's recent report clearly indicated that no progress had been made towards resolving the conflict; objective observers interested in regional stability, such as his country, were therefore justified in expressing their concern.

65. A radical effort would be needed to end the current stalemate and redefine the terms of a just and enduring solution that provided for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara. In that context, his country hoped that the Secretary-General and his new Personal Envoy would effectively relaunch efforts to resolve the conflict and that both parties would commit, in good faith and without preconditions, to negotiate a mutually acceptable solution in accordance with international law. To that end, Algeria echoed the call of the Secretary-General on the Security Council, the friends of Western Sahara and other stakeholders to encourage Morocco and Frente POLISARIO to continue participating in the political process. Both parties must act wisely and responsibly in renewing dialogue and pursuing serious negotiations, as direct dialogue remained the most effective means of forging a lasting peace, to the benefit of the entire region. As an official observer of the peace process, his country would continue to contribute to a just and enduring solution to the conflict in Western Sahara, sparing no effort to encourage its Moroccan and Sahrawi brethren to choose peace over tension and instability.

66. **The Chair** invited the Committee to take action on the draft resolutions before it under agenda items 55, 56, 57, 58 and 59, none of which had any programme budget implications.

Draft resolution I: Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 e of the Charter of the United Nations, submitted under agenda item 55 (A/74/23 (chap. XIII))

67. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lesotho, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia.

Against:

Israel, United States of America.

Abstaining:

France, Guinea-Bissau, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

68. *Draft resolution I was adopted by 161 votes to 2, with 3 abstentions.*

69. **Ms. Viney** (United Kingdom) said that, as in previous years, the United Kingdom had abstained in the vote on the draft resolution. Her Government did not

take issue with its main objective, which was to seek compliance with Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations, and would continue to meet its own obligations fully in that regard in respect of the United Kingdom Overseas Territories. It believed, however, that the decision as to whether a Non-Self-Governing Territory had reached a level of self-government sufficient to relieve the administering Power of the obligation to submit information under Article 73 *e* of the Charter ultimately fell to the Government of the Territory and the administering Power concerned, and not to the General Assembly.

Draft resolution II: Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, submitted under agenda item 56 (A/74/23 (chap. XIII))

70. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra

Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Israel, United States of America.

Abstaining:

El Salvador, France, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

71. *Draft resolution II was adopted by 162 votes to 2, with 3 abstentions*

72. **Mr. Mazzeo** (Argentina) said that the draft resolution just adopted must be considered within the framework of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), according to which the right to self-determination presupposed the existence of a people subject to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation. Consequently, self-determination was in no way applicable to the question of the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, because the United Kingdom, in its illegal occupation of the Islands, had expelled the local population and replaced it with its own population. All General Assembly resolutions subsequent to resolution 2065 (XX) and all subsequent resolutions of the Special Committee on decolonization on the issue had expressly established that the way to put an end to that special and particular colonial situation, in which sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands was disputed, was not through self-determination but rather through a negotiated settlement of the sovereignty dispute between the two parties involved: Argentina and the United Kingdom.

73. The General Assembly itself had expressly ruled out the applicability of the principle of self-determination to the question of the Malvinas Islands in 1985, when it had rejected by a large majority two proposals by the United Kingdom seeking to incorporate that principle into a draft resolution on that specific question. The draft resolution just adopted by the Committee was therefore not applicable to the question. Furthermore, the General Assembly, in resolution 31/49, had called upon Argentina and the United Kingdom to refrain from taking decisions that would imply introducing unilateral modifications in the situation pending the completion of such negotiations. The unilateral exploration and exploitation by the United Kingdom of the natural resources in the Malvinas

Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas were contrary to that resolution and prejudged the outcome of the sovereignty dispute.

Draft resolution III: 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, submitted under agenda item 57 (A/74/23 (chap. XIII))

74. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia.

Against:

Israel, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan,

Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Zimbabwe.

75. *Draft resolution III was adopted by 115 votes to 2, with 52 abstentions.*

76. **Mr. Mazzeo** (Argentina) said that the draft resolution must be implemented in accordance with the relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and the Special Committee on decolonization.

77. **Ms. Viney** (United Kingdom) said that although her Government supported the specialized agencies and their efforts to provide assistance to Non-Self-Governing Territories in the humanitarian, educational and technical fields in particular, the statutes of those agencies should be carefully respected. For that reason, her delegation had abstained during the voting.

Draft resolution A/C.4/74/L.2: Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories, submitted under agenda item 58

78. **Ms. Sharma** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Algeria and Thailand had joined the sponsors.

79. *Draft resolution A/C.4/74/L.2 was adopted.*

Draft resolution A/C.4/74/L.3: Question of Western Sahara, submitted under agenda item 59

80. **Mr. Tanner** (Finland), speaking in explanation of position before the decision on behalf of the European Union; the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia; the country of the stabilization and association process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Ukraine, said that the European Union and its member States looked forward to the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus. They welcomed the commitment of the Secretary-General to relaunch the negotiating process with a renewed dynamic and new spirit leading to the resumption of the political process with the aim of achieving a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution that would provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara in the context of arrangements consistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations. They encouraged the parties to work within the United Nations framework and supported the

meaningful participation of women and young people in the political process.

81. The European Union and its member States expressed gratitude for the efforts of the former Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara and welcomed the holding, at his invitation, of two round-table meetings between Morocco, Frente POLISARIO, Algeria and Mauritania. They looked forward to the appointment of a new Personal Envoy to pursue the United Nations-led political process.

82. The parties should continue to show political will and work in an atmosphere conducive to dialogue in order to advance towards a more intensive phase of negotiations, in good faith and without preconditions, taking note of efforts and developments since 2006, as advocated by the many Security Council resolutions.

83. The parties should also work more closely with UNHCR on confidence-building measures which would help improve the political climate. UNHCR should also, at the urging of the Security Council, continue to consider the registration of refugees in the Tindouf camps. The living conditions in those camps were deeply concerning and it was imperative that the international community should provide new and additional voluntary contributions.

84. Lastly, the consequences of the Western Sahara conflict on security and cooperation in the region continued to be of concern.

85. *Draft resolution A/C.4/74/L.3 was adopted.*

86. **Ms. Viney** (United Kingdom), speaking in explanation of position before the decisions, said that her Government would join the consensus on the draft resolutions concerning the eight British Overseas Territories in order to demonstrate its full support for the right to self-determination, even though some of the language in the draft resolutions was unacceptable. However, it was regrettable that the Special Committee continued to adopt an outdated approach and had failed once again to take full account of the way in which the relationship between the United Kingdom and its Overseas Territories has been modernized in a manner acceptable to both parties. The latter enjoyed a large measure of internal self-government and had all freely chosen to maintain their links to the United Kingdom. The draft resolutions failed to reflect that modern relationship, which was based on partnership, shared values and the right to self-determination.

Draft decision A/C.4/74/L.4: Question of Gibraltar, submitted under agenda item 59

87. *Draft decision A/C.4/74/L.4 was adopted.*

Statements made in exercise of the right of reply

88. **Ms. Viney** (United Kingdom), replying to the statements made by the representatives of Bolivia and Costa Rica, said that her Government had no doubt about its sovereignty over the Falkland Islands and surrounding maritime areas nor about the right of the Falkland Islanders to self-determination, as that principle was enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. None of the regional statements of diplomatic support for sovereignty negotiations invoked by Argentina modified or diluted the obligation of nations to respect the legally binding principle of self-determination. Therefore, no dialogue on sovereignty was possible unless the Falkland Islanders so wished.

89. The Republic of Argentina continued to deny that such fundamental human rights applied to the people of the Falkland Islands, and also to act in ways that went against the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The United Kingdom maintained a modern relationship with the Falkland Islands, and all its Overseas Territories, based on partnership, shared values and the right of the people of each Territory to determine their own future.

90. **Mr. Sahraei** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his delegation categorically rejected the baseless claim made by the representative of Morocco in respect of the three Iranian islands. The claim constituted an attack on the territorial integrity of his country and a violation of international law, in particular, the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States. Morocco continued to defy international law by disregarding the Organization's demand that it grant the Sahrawi people the right to self-determination, long promised to that people by the international community. In that regard, the Islamic Republic of Iran reaffirmed the Sahrawi people's right to self-determination, in line with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), and expressed support for the ongoing negotiation process aimed at achieving a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution that would provide for the exercise of that right. It was vital that the parties commit to continue the process within the framework of United Nations-sponsored talks without preconditions and in good faith, in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter. For its part, the international community must commit to implementing all United Nations resolutions and decisions on Western Sahara and supporting the Territory's people in its quest for self-determination and independence.

91. **Mr. Mazzeo** (Argentina), replying to the United Kingdom concerning the Malvinas Islands and reiterating the statements delivered by the Argentine President to the

General Assembly and by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Worship to the Special Committee on decolonization in 2019, said that his Government reaffirmed that the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas were an integral part of Argentine territory and that, having been illegally occupied by the United Kingdom, they were the subject of a sovereignty dispute between the two parties, which was recognized by a number of international organizations.

92. That illegal occupation had led the General Assembly to adopt 10 resolutions on the issue, all of which recognized the existence of the sovereignty dispute over the Malvinas Islands and called upon the two Governments to resume negotiations with a view to finding a peaceful and lasting solution to the dispute as soon as possible. For its part, the Special Committee had repeatedly adopted resolutions in the same vein, most recently in June 2019, and the General Assembly of the Organization of American States had adopted a new statement on the issue in similar terms that same month.

93. The principle of self-determination of peoples, which the United Kingdom used as the basis for its refusal to resume negotiations on sovereignty, was in applicable to the sovereignty dispute over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, in accordance with the relevant General Assembly and Special Committee resolutions.

94. The interests and way of life of the inhabitants of the Malvinas Islands were adequately addressed by resolutions of the General Assembly and by the Constitution of Argentina. Argentina reaffirmed its legitimate sovereignty rights over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, which were an integral part of its national territory.

95. **Ms. Al Dah** (United Arab Emirates), in response to the baseless allegations levelled against her country by the representative of Iran, said that the question of the three Emirati islands was related to the work of the Committee, which had a responsibility to promote the purposes and principles of the Charter, including the right to self-determination, respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-intervention in the internal affairs of States. Given the importance attached by the Committee to history, it was regrettable that Iran was attempting to erase her country's history; the islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb in the Arabian Gulf were an integral part of the national territory of the United Arab Emirates and had long been under the rule of the emirates of Sharjah and Ra's al-Khaimah. Lastly,

in response to the spurious accusations of expansionism and escalation, she reiterated her Government's sincere call on Iran to resolve the matter peacefully through direct negotiations or by referring it to the International Court of Justice.

96. **Mr. Hilale** (Morocco) said that the United Arab Emirates had sovereignty over Abu Musa, Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb. As for the remarks concerning the territorial integrity of his own country, he reminded the representative of Iran that the Security Council had referred to the political process, a process welcomed in the resolution that the Committee had just adopted. Lastly, he called on Iran to put an end to its ongoing interference in the Tindouf camps.

97. **Mr. Sahraei** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his delegation reiterated that the islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb had been an integral part of Iranian territory for thousands of years. The United Arab Emirates, a country created only decades earlier, was in no position to challenge his country's sovereignty over the islands. By raising an unfounded claim irrelevant to the work of the Committee, that delegation was misusing the august body to advance its narrow political and expansionist policies in the Persian Gulf. He called upon the United Arab Emirates to reconsider its hostile policies targeting the Iranian people, observe the principle of good neighbourliness, respect international law and refrain from spreading hatred and sectarianism in the region and beyond. In response to the remarks made by the representative of Morocco, he reiterated the right of the Sahrawi people to self-determination and independence through the conduct of a referendum.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.