

Distr. RESTRICTED

CRS/2024/CRP.12

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

FOURTH INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF COLONIALISM

**Caribbean regional seminar on the implementation of the Fourth
International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism:
pursuing goals and addressing needs of
the Non-Self-Governing Territories**

Caracas, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

14 to 16 May 2024

STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF

SAINT LUCIA

Statement on the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Caribbean region

At the outset, my delegation expresses our appreciation to the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for hosting the 2024 Caribbean Regional Seminar as we seek to assess the state-of-play in the decolonization process and recommend ways and means to advance these territories to full self-government.

These regional seminars began in the first International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism when the General Assembly turned its focus to the remaining 17 territories which were mostly island territories in the Caribbean and the Pacific. These territories share similar political, socio-economic, and climatic challenges.

Following the adoption of the Decolonization Declaration in 1960 and the acceleration of decolonization through 1990, we have since witnessed an alarming period of "decolonization deceleration." The fact that only one territory has achieved the full measure of self-government in the Caribbean; the independence of Saint Kitts and Nevis in 1983, is illustrative.

Saint Lucia was once on the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories before we attained independence in 1979. There however remains a few territories in the Caribbean region who have not yet achieved the full measure of self-government. It is in this context, our lived reality, that Saint Lucia maintains a sustained interest in the completion of their decolonization process which has remained the unfinished business of the United Nations for far too long.

The Non-Self-Governing territories in the Caribbean are integral parts of the economic, social and cultural space of the Caribbean, and are members of our regional institutions including the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), and the Association of Caribbean States (ACS).

Accordingly, we commend the efforts of some elected territorial governments, in particular the British Virgin Islands and Bermuda in the Caribbean, and French Polynesia and Guam in the Pacific, for commissioning official independent Self-Governance Assessments of their respective territories.

Furthermore, Saint Lucia stands firm with our CARICOM colleagues in support of the Government and people of the British Virgin Islands in calling on the United Kingdom to remove the unilateral Order-in-Council it is holding in reserve that threatens to suspend elected government and to impose direct rule by the administering Power.

We congratulate the elected government of the British Virgin Islands for its efforts in enacting further internal reforms and stand ready to work with the leadership in its self-determination process within the CARICOM framework. In this regard, we take note of the high level of Preparation for Self-Government as determined by the independent Self-Governance Assessment of the British Virgin Island conducted in 2022. In addition, we welcome the decision of the Committee for a visiting mission to the British Virgin Islands to be held in the weeks ahead.

Saint Lucia was proud to host the Pacific Regional Seminar in 2022. It is in

this spirit that we will continue to play our part in fulfillment of the mandate bestowed to this Committee and ensure that the momentum gained is not lost, recognizing that decolonization is unfinished business. In this regard, Saint Lucia reiterates its full support for the principles espoused in General Assembly Resolution 1514, as well as Resolution 1541 which sets the minimum standards for the full measure of self-government.

Thank you.