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**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**

**RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

**Remarks by Sergey Vershinin  
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs  
of the Russian Federation  
at the Caribbean Regional Seminar  
of the UN General Assembly  
Special Committee on Decolonization  
(Caracas, 14 May 2024)**

Madam Chair,

First, let me warmly greet you and all of the distinguished participants of the 2024 Caribbean Regional Seminar of the Special Committee on Decolonization (C24) here in beautiful Caracas. I extend sincere gratitude to the Government of Venezuela for hosting this event.

Madam Chair,

Although we are nearing the middle of the Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, we are nowhere near the attainment of that goal. Colonial countries and territories still exist, and colonialism flourishes in new forms and manifestations that affect even independent states. Therefore, the work of the UN with regards to decolonization and the eradication of colonialism remains as relevant as ever.

We are proud that the Soviet Union stood at the origins of the combat against colonialism in 1960 when our delegation submitted a draft of what would later be adopted as General Assembly resolution 1514, which endorsed the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

This vital document gave a powerful impetus to the colonial territories' movement for independence, proclaimed the necessity of bringing colonialism to an unconditional end and ultimately changed the world for the better. Thanks to the Declaration, 750 million people across the Globe, or one-third of the world's population at the time, was freed from colonial occupation. 80 new states in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Oceania have emerged throughout the process of decolonization.

64 years later, however, there are still 17 non-self-governing territories, as well as Puerto-Rico, that have not yet exercised their right to self-determination. The C24 members are expected to address the goals and needs of such territories at the

seminar. Well, we believe that the inalienable right to independently determine their future without manipulation and interference is exactly the most desired need and goal in this context.

Administering powers are obliged, under international law, to create conditions for that. While they maintain control over certain territories, they should also take the necessary measures to promote political, economic and cultural advancement of the peoples living in these territories, preserve their environment and conserve their natural resources. Sadly, what we see in some cases under the purview of the Special Committee goes clearly against the aforementioned principles.

Madam Chair,

We all know that decolonization is not only about formal independence from colonial countries. It is about fully enjoying the sovereign right to choose international partners, to freely determine political status and pursue economic, social and cultural development based on national priorities.

Unfortunately, former and current administering powers still believe in their supremacy. They have never accepted responsibility for the subjugation and exploitation they had exercised towards their colonies and they never apologized or paid compensation for the crimes of colonialism. Moreover, to preserve their domination in a changing and increasingly multipolar world, western countries resort to the same colonial policies towards the now independent nations. Neocolonial practices, such as unilateral coercive measures, restriction of access to new technologies, foreign interference and destabilization, have major detrimental implications for the development opportunities of affected peoples.

The sorrowful legacy of colonialism is not a long-forgotten past as former oppressors and slave-masters attempt to claim. It is a heavy burden on our present that slows down the development of the whole humanity. Therefore, we will continue to do our utmost to put an end to colonialism and its contemporary forms, including within the mandate of C24. We encourage to devise feasible steps to help redress the historic injustice of colonialism.

Thank you for your attention.