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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**

**ZIMBABWE**

## **Agenda Item 2 (a) Political Developments in the Non-Self-Governing Territories – Situation in Western Sahara**

**STATEMENT BY HONOURABLE SHEILLAH CHIKOMO, DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE AT THE CARIBBEAN REGIONAL SEMINAR ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF COLONIALISM: CARACAS, VENEZUELA, 14 TO 16 MAY 2024**

Madame Chair,

Distinguished delegates,

Zimbabwe stands in solidarity with the people of Western Sahara as they continue their struggle for self-determination and independence. As a nation that has itself fought against colonialism, Zimbabwe recognizes the importance of supporting all peoples in their quest for freedom.

The situation in Western Sahara, the last colony in Africa, serves as a poignant reminder of the obstacles encountered in the implementation of the UN Settlement Plan and the holding of a referendum. As a former colony, Zimbabwe stands in solidarity with the people of Western Sahara and calls for the international community to redouble its efforts to facilitate a just and lasting resolution to this protracted conflict. This position stems from our

understanding of the pain of being denied the right to self-determination.

Central to our discussions is, therefore, the principle of self-determination, which lies at the heart of decolonization efforts. NSGT must be afforded the opportunity to freely determine their political status and pursue their own socio-economic development pathways. Zimbabwe reiterates its unwavering support for the inherent right of all peoples to self-determination. In this vein, we once again reiterate our call for Morocco to facilitate the holding of a referendum on self-determination for the Saharawi people.

This fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, which we strongly believe will be the last one, presents an opportune moment to reinvigorate efforts towards a just resolution for the Western Sahara conflict. We urge all stakeholders to redouble their commitment to finding a peaceful and lasting solution that respects the rights and aspirations of the Sahrawi people.

Zimbabwe reaffirms its unwavering support for the principles of sovereignty and self-determination enshrined in the United Nations Charter. We call on the international community to prioritize the resolution of the Western Sahara issue and to support the efforts of the United Nations in facilitating a referendum on self-determination for the people of Western Sahara.

We commend the tireless efforts of Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura and the invaluable contributions of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINUSO) in advancing the cause of decolonization. Their dedication and perseverance inspire us to redouble our own efforts in this noble endeavour.

Now is the time we all come together, to address the unique challenges faced by NSGT in their quest to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and sustainable development. These challenges are multifaceted and require tailored solutions that account for the distinct circumstances of each territory. Zimbabwe reaffirms its commitment to supporting NSGT in overcoming these obstacles and realizing their full potential.

In conclusion, Zimbabwe reiterates the urgent need for the total elimination of colonialism in all its forms and manifestations. Let us seize this historic moment to reaffirm our collective commitment to the principles of justice, equality, and self-determination for all peoples. The concerned people expect action and change to their circumstances and not mere conferences.

**I thank you.**