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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

Summary record of the 3rd meeting*

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 17 June 2019, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. McGuire (Grenada)

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* No summary record was issued for the 2nd meeting.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

Organization of work (A/AC.109/2019/L.2)

2. **The Chair** drew attention to the programme of work and timetable (A/AC.109/2019/L.2) and the updated version circulated. She took it that the Committee wished to approve the updated programme of work and timetable, with the understanding that they might be subsequently revised if required.

3. *It was so decided.*

4. She reminded the Committee that the delegations of Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Guyana, Kazakhstan, Morocco, Namibia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, Togo, Uganda and Uruguay had indicated their wish to participate in the work of the Committee as observers. In addition, the delegations of Bahrain, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Colombia, Comoros, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Gabon, Gambia, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Lebanon, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Senegal and United Arab Emirates had requested to participate as observers.

Requests for hearing (Aides-memoires 01/19, 02/19, 03/19, 04/19, 05/19, 06/19 and 07/19)

5. **The Chair** drew attention to aides-memoires 01/19, 02/19, 03/19, 04/19, 05/19, 06/19 and 07/19 relating to the Special Committee decision of 18 June 2018 concerning Puerto Rico and to the questions of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), French Polynesia, Gibraltar, Guam, New Caledonia and Western Sahara.

6. She took it that the Committee wished to accede to the requests for hearing.

7. **Mr. Mounzer** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation objected to the list contained in the aide-memoire on the question of Western Sahara. At the Committee's 2018 session, the representative of the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguía el-Hamra y de Río de Oro (Frente POLISARIO) had been listed as the first petitioner to speak; it was unacceptable that the current list relegated that representative to the third speaking slot. According to the rules of procedure, the representative of a Territory was not required to submit a written request to speak but could ask to be given the floor while in the conference room. He therefore requested that the list be corrected so that the representative of the Frente POLISARIO – the legitimate representative of the Sahrawi people, recognized as such in United Nations resolutions – could be the first to

address the Committee, as had been the case at the previous session.

8. **Mr. Ley De Araujo Montilo** (Timor-Leste) said that his delegation endorsed the position expressed by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

9. **The Chair** said that while the representative of the Frente POLISARIO had indeed been the first petitioner to take the floor on the question of Western Sahara at the Committee's 2018 session, he had been accorded the first slot on the list as a result of the Committee's long-standing procedure to list the speakers in the order in which their requests for hearing addressed to the Chair had been received by the Committee secretariat. The aide-memoire and the documents attached to it attested to that order.

10. **Ms. Williams** (Grenada) said that her delegation supported the aide-memoire as circulated because it confirmed the practice of the Committee, namely, that the list reflected the order in which the requests for hearing had been received.

11. **Mr. Rivero Rosario** (Cuba) said that the Chair's explanation notwithstanding, his delegation did not deem it appropriate that the representative of the Frente POLISARIO would be denied the priority accorded to him by General Assembly resolutions that designated the Frente POLISARIO as the representative of Western Sahara because his request for hearing arrived a few days later than those submitted by other petitioners. Moreover, the fact that other petitioners would also address the Committee on the question of Western Sahara did not negate the right of the representative of the Frente POLISARIO to speak first, even though his request for hearing had been received later.

12. **The Chair** said that the 2018 session had been the first time in recent memory, dating back at least to 2005, that speakers other than the representative of the Frente POLISARIO had addressed the Committee on the question of Western Sahara. Until 2015, the Frente POLISARIO had been the sole petitioner submitting a request for hearing to the Committee. In 2016, 2017 and 2018, requests other than those submitted by the Frente POLISARIO had been received, and only at its 2018 session had the Committee, for the first time ever, actually heard other petitioners. On that occasion, the order of speakers had conformed to the Committee's long-standing procedure of listing petitioners in the order in which their requests for hearing had been received.

13. **Mr. Sheriff** (Sierra Leone) said that his delegation supported the list contained in the aide-memoire as it had been formulated not to slight any party but instead

to observe the Committee's customary procedure of using the order in which requests for hearing had been received to determine the order of speakers.

14. **Mr. Moriko** (Côte d'Ivoire) said that his delegation endorsed the explanation given by the Chair and would therefore prefer the list to remain in its current form, per Committee procedure.

15. **Mr. Condor** (Saint Kitts and Nevis) said that his delegation was in agreement with the explanation given by the Chair and was therefore pleased to support the aide-memoire on Western Sahara as circulated.

16. **Mr. Rai** (Papua New Guinea) said that his delegation supported the explanation given by the Chair and the aide-memoire as circulated.

17. **Ms. Joseph** (Saint Lucia) said that her delegation was satisfied with the explanation given by the Chair in response to the concerns expressed by some delegations; Saint Lucia therefore accepted the circulation of the aide-memoire on Western Sahara in its current form.

18. **Ms. Bannis-Roberts** (Dominica) said that her delegation was in agreement with the explanation given, and as such, supported the aide-memoire as circulated.

19. **Mr. Bessedik** (Observer for Algeria) said that the Committee, as a subsidiary body of the General Assembly, must not contravene the latter's rules of procedure in its deliberations. The Frente POLISARIO was clearly recognized in General Assembly resolutions as the sole legitimate representative of the Sahrawi people. Therefore, regardless of the order in which requests for hearing were received from States or other entities, the order established by protocol must be respected, as was done in the General Assembly. It was inconceivable for a so-called representative to take precedence over a legitimate representative. In the hypothetical absence of a relevant resolution, it was unclear how such an issue – and, in particular, one involving a dispute like the one presently before the Committee – should be resolved and whether it should be brought to the Office of Legal Affairs or some other entity. As it happened, a General Assembly resolution did in fact exist and was being ignored, unacceptably and in an unprecedented manner.

20. Quite apart from his delegation's position, the legal question at hand, namely, of whether the decision reflected in the list was in line with the Organization's rules of procedure, must be addressed. All proceedings, whether they involved States or organizations as participants, were governed by certain rules establishing protocol, according priority to entities with special status, as in the case of non-governmental organizations with consultative status with the Economic and Social

Council. There was therefore no need to discuss that governing principle; it should simply be applied. He called on the Committee to do so. Failure to do so would imperil the very future of the Committee, not to mention that of the Non-Self-Governing Territories aspiring to exercise the right to self-determination.

21. **Mr. Hilale** (Observer for Morocco) said that he had not wished to take the floor, as discussions of procedural matters, normally the province of Committee members, were off limits to delegations like his own, participating in Committee deliberations as observers. However, his delegation was surprised that the representative of Algeria, a country that bore the brunt of the responsibility for the broader question, was interfering in the work of the Committee and attempting to intimidate Committee members. He enjoined his Algerian colleague to show some wisdom and allow the Committee to resolve the issue, which concerned only the order of speakers. Determining who represented whom was beyond the scope of the Committee's mandate.

22. The rules of procedure of the Fourth Committee concerning the order of speakers must be observed, as must the procedure and time frame for submitting requests for hearing. Each petitioner had the right to speak; the actual order in which petitioners spoke was of no political significance and would not confer legitimacy on any petitioner. Neither the question of representativeness nor that of status was addressed in the rules of procedure or other Committee documents. Simply put, the first to submit a request for hearing would be the first to speak.

23. **Mr. Bessedik** (Observer for Algeria) said that he wished his Moroccan colleague would have exhibited some of the wisdom he was now calling for at previous Committee meetings, where he had instead pounded on the table demanding to impose his views. The Algerian delegation, by contrast, had no intention of imposing anything on anyone, as the Committee's decision-making process was independent. Algeria was merely doing its duty to recall that, although the Committee was governed by a set of rules, in the absence of clear directives, General Assembly rules of procedure should apply, as the Committee was a subsidiary body of the General Assembly. In recalling those rules and calling for compliance with them, his delegation's main concern was to prevent the creation of dangerous precedents that would imperil the future and work of United Nations bodies in general. If the Committee indeed desired to uphold the aspirations of the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories, it must uphold those rules.

24. **Mr. Hilale** (Observer for Morocco) said that his delegation had indeed been compelled to speak forcefully at a meeting of the Committee presided over by its dictatorial former Chair – presently in exile – who had politicized Committee deliberations, treated United Nations rules and democracy itself with contempt and betrayed his own country.

25. He reminded Committee members that there was no precedent in the Fourth Committee – a Main Committee of the General Assembly whose rules of procedure emanated from that parent organ – for designating the Frente POLISARIO as the first petitioner to speak. On the contrary, a simple review of meeting records would reveal that the representative of the Frente POLISARIO sometimes took the floor at the final meeting of the Fourth Committee on the question of Western Sahara. Although his delegation was not contesting any particular order of speakers, it did wish to recall that there were rules that must be observed, namely, the same rules of procedure that governed Fourth Committee proceedings. Moreover, he did not understand the Algerian delegation's insistence on the Frente POLISARIO being granted the privilege of speaking first, a privilege that it did not enjoy in the Fourth Committee.

26. Ultimately, the subject at hand was not the legitimacy of the Frente POLISARIO – nor indeed that of other representatives of Saharan provinces, who, as officials elected directly by the population of the Sahara and participants in the political process, enjoyed legitimacy in their own right without demanding any privileges – but instead whether its representative should be allowed to speak first. If he wished to be granted that privilege, he should ensure that his request for hearing was received before any others. Taking the floor first or last would neither bolster the legitimacy of the Frente POLISARIO nor weaken its status as representative. He underscored that the question of representation was not on the agenda, and that any attempt to treat it as such would reveal intent to derail the Committee's deliberations. In closing, he appealed to his Algerian colleague to allow Committee members to decide freely on the matter at hand.

The meeting was suspended at 10.45 a.m. and resumed at 12.05 p.m.

27. **The Chair** said that the Committee had been unable to achieve consensus on the objection raised by the Syrian Arab Republic concerning the list attached to the aide-memoire on the question of Western Sahara, on which list the Frente POLISARIO was listed third instead of first. She had explained to the concerned delegation, which had been unable to withdraw its objection, that without any further action on its part, the

Committee would note the objection and proceed with the aide-memoire in its current form.

28. **Mr. Mounzer** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation had requested the opinion of the legal adviser and clearly stated its position that the list of speakers was illegitimate. He registered his delegation's reservation on the decision taken by the Chair. That decision, along with a complete account of the deliberations, would be reflected in the forthcoming report of the Rapporteur.

29. **The Chair** took it that the Committee wished to accede to the requests for hearing.

30. *It was so decided.*

Dissemination of information on decolonization (A/AC.109/2019/18; A/AC.109/2019/L.4)

31. **Ms. Pumpyanskaya** (Director, Strategic Communications Division, Department of Global Communications), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the dissemination of information on decolonization during the period from April 2018 to March 2019 (A/AC.109/2019/18), said that, during the reporting period, the Department had issued 41 press releases in English and French, covering meetings, statements and hearings related to the work of the United Nations on decolonization. In addition, the Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit and the Media Documents Centre had continued to disseminate relevant information and news to their database of journalists and media aggregators. The Department had deployed a press officer to cover the Pacific regional seminar in Saint George's, Grenada, from 9 to 11 May 2018, and the Caribbean regional seminar, also held in Saint George's, from 2 to 4 May 2019.

32. The Department had continued to update and maintain the United Nations decolonization website in the six official languages and had used the "Global Issues" web page of the United Nations website and the Department's social media accounts to highlight decolonization-related activities and issues. The social media accounts had also helped to drive traffic to the decolonization website. In 2018, more than 196,000 users had visited the decolonization website. The Department had also provided guidance regarding branding, multilingualism, accessibility and the process of data migration, given that the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Office of Information and Communications Technology had undertaken a project aimed at revamping the decolonization website during the reporting period.

33. The Department's multimedia United Nations News operation had provided, in the six official languages, as well as in Kiswahili and Portuguese, news

and feature coverage of activities, events and issues related to decolonization and to the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

34. The Visitors' Services at the United Nations Offices at Geneva, Nairobi and Vienna had shared informational materials and conducted briefings on decolonization as part of the guided tours programme, reaching a total of 420,000 visitors.

35. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library had provided research and other services for information relating to the Non-Self-Governing Territories and the Special Committee and had continued to digitize important United Nations documents on decolonization. The global network of United Nations information centres had delivered over 1,200 briefings to high school and university students on the history of the United Nations, including the role of the Trusteeship Council.

36. The Department would spare no effort to disseminate information about decolonization across its traditional and digital platforms. It would continue to highlight the work of the Special Committee and promote the need for the immediate and full implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

37. **Ms. Kadota** (Decolonization Unit, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs), delivering a statement on behalf of the Chief of the Decolonization Unit, said that the Unit prepared the annual Secretariat working papers on each of the Non-Self-Governing Territories on the basis of the Charter of the United Nations and relevant General Assembly resolutions, including the one adopted annually on the information transmitted by the administering Powers under Article 73 *e* of the Charter. That information was complemented by other relevant information from official sources, including the administering Powers, whose cooperation the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs regularly sought.

38. During the first quarter of 2019, in coordination with the Department of Global Communications, all working papers and the report on Puerto Rico prepared by the rapporteur of the Special Committee had been posted on the United Nations decolonization website upon issuance.

39. During the period under review, the Decolonization Unit had worked closely with the Department of Global Communications to update the United Nations website on decolonization, to reflect the activities of the Special Committee, as well as the proceedings of the Fourth Committee, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

40. The Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Department of Global Communications, the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management and the Office of Information and Communications Technology had worked together to create a fully revamped, user-friendly, multilingual website. The arduous and costly effort had entailed the migration of content from the former website to a new platform, expanding its content and translating revised and enhanced content into the six official languages. Despite the challenges and difficulties posed by the project, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs had spared no effort to ensure its completion. For its part, the Decolonization Unit would continue to implement its mandate of disseminating information on decolonization, in cooperation with the Department of Global Communications and aided by the new website, which would help to disseminate that information more widely.

41. **Mr. Rivero Rosario** (Cuba) said that it had been 59 years since the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, and yet there were still 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories and others that were not classified as such, as was the case of Puerto Rico. The Department of Global Communications should therefore expand its efforts to ensure the widest possible dissemination of information on decolonization, using all available media, to inform the peoples of those Territories of their options for self-determination and raise awareness of the importance of international support for the decolonization process. Recalling General Assembly resolution [73/122](#), his delegation hoped that the Organization-wide reform process and its impact on the area of global communications would not hinder efforts to advance the cause of self-determination.

42. As the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism was drawing to a close, its objective not yet attained, it would be necessary to overhaul the international effort and launch a Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, with the vital support of the Department of Global Communications and its network of United Nations information centres.

43. The decolonization website had received more than 354,000 hits during the Committee's regional seminars, and over 458,000 pages had been viewed. His delegation noted the hard work of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and its retrospective digitalization programme, which improved access to information, and the work carried out in the area of publications and in the United Nations information centres.

44. The Department needed to work more systematically to disseminate the Committee's work, which helped to raise awareness and promote social engagement in the decolonization process. To that end, the Department should transmit webcasts of Committee meetings, within existing resources. The Department of Global Communications and the Decolonization Unit of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs should continue to publish and update the content on the decolonization website, avoiding taking an unbalanced linguistic approach to decolonization. The information should be of high quality and timely, in order to promote good decision-making and a better understanding of the decolonization process. It should also be published in real time and proactively.

45. **Mr. Koba** (Indonesia) said that the eradication of colonialism was one of the Organization's established, long-standing priorities because its work was directly related to the well-being of the peoples in the territories under colonial rule, who continued to face challenges related to development and other issues. In that regard, it was imperative that the Committee continue to focus on the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories. While the successful referendum in New Caledonia constituted an important milestone, strengthened political will and redoubled efforts would be needed to advance the decolonization agenda in the remaining Territories. Moreover, constructive engagement and dialogue would remain paramount in the Committee's fulfilment of its mandate. The Committee's approach had always been based on a careful, balanced and thorough assessment of the situation in each Territory, avoiding a one-size-fits-all approach. Given the need for stronger communication and consultation processes with all stakeholders, he commended the Bureau for continuing informal consultations and engagement with the administering Powers and other actors. In closing, he underscored the need for the Committee to ensure that its efforts were in line with the Charter of the United Nations and to continue to seek consensus, diverging positions on issues notwithstanding, in its pursuit of Committee members' common objectives.

Draft resolution A/AC.109/2019/L.4: Dissemination of information on decolonization

46. *Draft resolution A/AC.109/2019/L.4 was adopted.*

Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations (A/74/63; A/AC.109/2019/L.3)

47. **The Chair** drew attention to the report of the Secretary-General on information from Non-Self-

Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations (A/74/63).

48. **Mr. Rivero Rosario** (Cuba) said that the information submitted by the administering Powers under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations informed the decisions of the Committee and, by extension, those of the Decolonization Unit of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, with respect to the situation in each Territory. It must therefore be accurate and current and reflect the economic, social and educational conditions and the political and constitutional developments in each Territory.

49. According to the Secretary-General's report, some States had failed to submit the required information in 2018. The submission of information by the administering Powers pursuant to Article 73 *e* was a requirement and a commitment that should be honoured. Nonetheless, the work of the Committee would greatly benefit from the active participation of the administering Powers in Committee meetings and their regular attendance of the Caribbean and Pacific regional seminars. Regrettably, the administering Powers had yet to accept the standing invitation extended by the Committee, which would continue to welcome their participation.

*Draft resolution A/AC.109/2019/L.3: Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations*

50. *Draft resolution A/AC.109/2019/L.3 was adopted.*

Question of sending visiting and special missions to Territories (A/AC.109/2019/L.5)

Draft resolution A/AC.109/2019/L.5: Question of sending visiting and special missions to Territories

51. *Draft resolution A/AC.109/2019/L.5 was adopted.*

Visiting mission to Montserrat

52. **The Chair** said that the Bureau of the Committee had consulted the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom to the United Nations regarding the organization of a visiting mission to Montserrat in accordance with the request for a visiting mission noted in the Committee's 2018 resolution on the question of sending visiting and special missions to Territories (A/AC.109/2018/L.5) and General Assembly resolution 73/114 on the question of Montserrat. She took it that the Committee wished to proceed with the proposed visiting mission to Montserrat.

53. *It was so decided.*

54. **The Chair** said that the Bureau had proposed that the visiting mission to Montserrat should take place on the dates to be identified in consultation with the administering Power and the Territory, preferably between 15 and 26 November 2019, taking into account the conclusion of the work of the Fourth Committee. It had also proposed that the mission should be composed of four Committee members and four Secretariat staff, two of each from the two departments that supported the substantive and procedural work of the Committee, and should be funded from the Committee's budget. She took it that the Committee wished to proceed in accordance with the proposed time frame and composition of the visiting mission.

55. *It was so decided.*

56. **The Chair** said that the outcome of the visiting mission would be a comprehensive report of its activities, including conclusions and recommendations.

Question of Gibraltar (A/AC.109/2019/8)

57. **The Chair** drew attention to the working paper prepared by the Secretariat on the question of Gibraltar (A/AC.109/2019/8). She informed the Committee that the delegation of Spain had indicated its wish to participate in the Committee's consideration of the item.

Hearing of representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territory

58. *At the invitation of the Chair, Mr. Picardo (Chief Minister, Gibraltar) took a place at the Committee table.*

59. **Mr. Picardo** (Chief Minister, Gibraltar) said that the contribution of Gibraltarian volunteers and soldiers to the war effort during the Second World War had attested to their bravery, courage and determination. Later, the fascist regime of General Franco, determined to isolate Gibraltar physically and economically and thereby force its people to surrender, whatever the human cost, had closed the frontier between Gibraltar and Spain. The enforced separation had torn families apart, with many relatives living mere kilometres away yet barred from communicating across the divide.

60. Against that backdrop, it was important to note that the General Assembly resolutions often cited by representatives of Spain had been adopted following intense lobbying by that same fascist Government. The economic strangulation that had been intended to subjugate Gibraltarians had instead forged in them an iron will, sealed their distinct identity and given shape to their modern reality. Any others seeking to emulate Franco's example of attempted subjugation would thus be doomed to fail; while Gibraltarians had never turned

down friendship or cooperation, they would always defend their right to determine the future of their homeland and would defeat any foe, however mighty, seeking to remove them from it. Fifty years on, Gibraltar was thriving and prosperous, providing 15,000 jobs for cross-frontier workers, many of them Spanish.

61. He urged the Committee to send a visiting mission to Gibraltar and to do the Territory justice by finally removing it from the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. Draft resolution [A/AC.109/2019/L.5](#) just adopted should have reflected the repeated invitations for a visiting mission, which the Government of Gibraltar had even offered to fund. The day would come when Gibraltar would take its rightful place in the family of neighbours. For the time being, as it reluctantly prepared to leave the European Union with the United Kingdom, Gibraltar had used the opportunity for dialogue with Spain to reach practical agreements on cooperation. He hoped that the success of the Socialist Party in Spain would help restore a mutually respectful and mutually beneficial dialogue.

62. The tax treaty recently concluded with Spain, in which that country recognized the Territory's distinct tax laws and authorities, demonstrated that Gibraltar was entirely transparent in matters of taxation. Additionally, agreement had been reached on tobacco pricing and cooperation on law enforcement, arrangements that effectively disposed of the untrue and unfair criticisms of successive Spanish Governments. Perhaps most important, Spain had recognized the existence and legal status of the Gibraltarians as distinct from British citizens generally.

63. He vowed to continue defending the right of Gibraltar to self-determination and territorial integrity. The recent advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the separation of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius made it clear that the right to self-determination of Non-Self-Governing Territories was paramount and that the territorial integrity of Gibraltar could not be interfered with during the decolonization process. The Government of Gibraltar would welcome an advisory opinion on whether the territorial integrity of Spain was at stake in the decolonization of Gibraltar, despite the fact that Spain had ceded Gibraltar forever in 1713. If given a fair and objective hearing, he was confident that Gibraltar would prevail. Like other peoples liberated from colonial rule, Gibraltarians asked only to be allowed to decide their future freely and democratically, in exercise of the right to self-determination; there could be no other way.

64. *Mr. Picardo withdrew.*

65. **Mr. Santos Maraver** (Observer for Spain) said that as the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism wound down, the Committee's tireless efforts and its ongoing consideration of the question of Gibraltar reminded the international community that the objective had yet to be attained. By adopting resolution [73/295](#) on the implementation of the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice concerning the Chagos Archipelago in Mauritius, the General Assembly had demonstrated its unequivocal support for the decolonization process.

66. Regrettably, in spite of the Organization's best efforts, the anachronistic colonial situation of Gibraltar had persisted into the twenty-first century. In 1704, the United Kingdom had occupied Gibraltar, expelling the original inhabitants. It had artificially repopulated the territory and had then enlarged its holding, by illegally seizing land and waters not ceded in 1713 under the Treaty of Utrecht. Spain had never recognized any sovereignty over the isthmus apart from its own.

67. The United Nations had repeatedly recognized that the colonial situation of Gibraltar undermined the territorial integrity of Spain. A definitive solution must involve the return of the land ceded under that Treaty and later illegally occupied by the United Kingdom.

68. For over 50 years, the General Assembly had been calling for the administering Power and Spain to engage in bilateral negotiations to reach a definitive solution, in accordance with the Brussels Process, the relevant General Assembly resolutions and the conclusions of the regional seminars. Furthermore, General Assembly resolution 2353 (XXII) had denounced the referendum held by the administering Power in 1967.

69. Year after year, Spain invited the United Kingdom to engage in negotiations to end the colonial situation, while considering the interests of the people of the Territory. Every decolonization process must be guided by the United Nations and would not be complete until the General Assembly deemed it to have concluded. Moreover, the administering Power would have certain obligations as a result of decolonization; regrettably, the United Kingdom had failed to uphold its obligations vis-à-vis Gibraltar.

70. The only solution to the question of Gibraltar was decolonization negotiated between Spain and the United Kingdom under the terms established by the United Nations. Spain attached great importance to the work of the Committee and to the need to respect United Nations procedures on decolonization. Spain was confident that the Committee would not remove from the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories any Territory that had not been decolonized pursuant to its own criteria, and

that under its direction the necessary advances would be made for the decolonization of Gibraltar.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.