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## Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

### Summary record of the 7th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 15 October 2012, at 10 a.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Messone . . . . . (Gabon)

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

**Agenda item 56: Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 e of the Charter of the United Nations**  
(*continued*)

*Draft resolution I: Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories (A/67/23 (chap. XII))*

1. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.
2. *A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, 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, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan,

Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

*Abstaining:*

France, Israel, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

3. *Draft resolution I was adopted by 161 votes to none, with 4 abstentions.*

4. **Ms. Grant** (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 the main objective of the draft resolution, which was to seek compliance with Article 73 e of the Charter of the United Nations, and would continue to meet its 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.

**Agenda item 57: Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories** (*continued*)

*Draft resolution II: Economic and other activities (A/67/23 (chap. XII))*

5. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.
6. *A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic,

Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, 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, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

*Against:*

Israel, United States of America.

*Abstaining:*

France, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

7. *Draft resolution II was adopted by 165 votes to 2, with 2 abstentions.*

8. **Mr. Díaz Bartolomé** (Argentina) said that he had voted in favour of draft resolution II on the understanding that the references in the text to the right to self-determination — which, according to resolution 1514 (XV), presupposed the existence of a people subject to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation — were in no way applicable to the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South

Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas. There was no right to self-determination because the Islands had been illegally occupied by the United Kingdom, which had expelled their local population and replaced it with its own population.

9. All the General Assembly resolutions on the issue, in particular resolution 2065 (XX), as well as those adopted by the Special Committee, expressly established that, owing to the existence of a sovereignty dispute over the Islands and the surrounding maritime areas in question, the way to put an end to that special and particular colonial situation was not through self-determination but rather through a negotiated settlement of the dispute over sovereignty between the two parties involved: Argentina and the United Kingdom. The General Assembly itself had expressly ruled out the applicability of the principle of self-determination with regard to 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. 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 during such negotiations. The unilateral and illegal exploration and exploitation by the United Kingdom of the renewable and non-renewable natural resources of Argentina in the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas were in open violation of that specific United Nations pronouncement.

10. **Ms. Grant** (United Kingdom), replying to the statement of the representative of Argentina, said that the United Kingdom did not accept the assertion that the people of the Falkland Islands, South Sandwich Islands and South Georgia did not have the right of self-determination.

**Agenda item 58: 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*)

*Draft resolution III: Implementation of the Declaration by the specialized agencies and international institutions* (A/67/23 (chap. XII))

11. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

12. *A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

*Against:*

None.

*Abstaining:*

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chad, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of

Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

13. *Draft resolution III was adopted by 118 votes to none, with 51 abstentions.*

14. **Mr. Díaz Bartolomé** (Argentina) said that his delegation had abstained in the vote because the draft resolution had to be implemented in accordance with the resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and the Special Committee relating to specific Territories.

15. **Ms. Grant** (United Kingdom) said that, while her delegation supported assistance by the specialized agencies to Non-Self-Governing Territories in humanitarian, technical and educational fields, it considered that the agency mandates must be scrupulously observed, and for that reason it had abstained in the vote.

**Agenda item 59: Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories** (*continued*)

*Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.3: Offers by Member States of study and training facilities*

16. **The Chair** announced that Nigeria and Thailand had become sponsors of the draft resolution, which had no programme budget implications.

17. *Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.3 was adopted.*

**Agenda item 60: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples** (*Territories not covered under other agenda items*) (*continued*)

*Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.4: Question of Western Sahara*

18. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

19. **Ms. Ortiz de Urbina** (Observer for the European Union), making a general statement also on behalf of the acceding country Croatia; the candidate countries Iceland, Montenegro, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the European Union supported the efforts of the Secretary-General and his

Personal Envoy to achieve a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution that provided for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara. Encouraging the parties and neighbouring States to cooperate with the Personal Envoy, it welcomed the parties' commitment to intensify the negotiations, which should be held in good faith and without preconditions, and take note of developments since 2006, in accordance with Security Council resolution 2044 (2012) and other recent Council resolutions. Continued meetings between the parties had the European Union's full support, as did their discussion of the ideas put forward by the Secretary-General in his report to the Security Council on the situation concerning Western Sahara (S/2011/249, para. 120).

20. The parties should also cooperate with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in implementing and possibly extending confidence-building measures relating to family visits. The UNHCR seminars on confidence-building, held in Portugal in 2011 and 2012 had been a success. The Office should also continue to consider conducting a refugee registration in the Tindouf camps.

21. The European Union and its member States remained concerned about the implications of the Western Sahara conflict for security and cooperation in the region.

22. *Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.4 was adopted.*

*Draft decision A/C.4/67/L.5: Question of Gibraltar*

23. **The Chair** said that the draft decision had no programme budget implications.

24. *Draft decision A/C.4/67/L.5 was adopted.*

*Draft resolution IV: Question of New Caledonia (A/67/23 (chap. XII))*

25. **The Chair**, indicating that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications, recalled that it had been orally amended by the Rapporteur of the Special Committee on decolonization at the Committee's 2nd meeting.

26. *Draft resolution IV was adopted.*

*Draft resolution V: Question of Tokelau (A/67/23 (chap. XII))*

27. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

28. *Draft resolution V was adopted.*

*Draft resolution VI: Questions of American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, Saint Helena, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands (A/67/23 (chap. XII))*

29. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

30. *Draft resolution VI was adopted.*

31. **Ms. Pedrós-Carretero** (Spain) said that her delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution because it supported the principle of self-determination for the Territories it covered. It recalled, however, that it was not the only principle relevant to decolonization. In certain cases the principle of territorial integrity applied, as in Gibraltar. As mandated by the General Assembly, Spain was ready to settle the dispute over Gibraltar once and for all. That could be done only through direct negotiations with the United Kingdom, in which the interests and aspirations of Gibraltar would be heard.

32. **Mr. Díaz Bartolomé** (Argentina), expressing his country's support for the right to self-determination of the peoples in all 11 Territories considered in draft resolution VI, said that the United Nations, the administering Powers and the governments of those Territories must ensure that their populations were made aware of that right through civic education. However, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), self-determination was not the only principle applicable to decolonization; the principle of territorial integrity also applied in certain cases, such as that of the Malvinas Islands, explicitly defined in all resolutions on the question as a special and particular colonial situation. In that context, Argentina reiterated its willingness to resume negotiations with the United Kingdom to settle the sovereignty dispute over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas.

33. **Ms. Grant** (United Kingdom) said that since her Government supported the right to self-determination it had joined the consensus on draft resolution VI. However, it found some of the wording in the draft

resolution unacceptable in that it failed to reflect the modernization of the relationship between the United Kingdom and its Overseas Territories, all of which had a large measure of self-government and had chosen to retain their link to the United Kingdom. It was a mutually acceptable relationship, based on partnership, shared values and recognition of the right to self-determination.

34. In particular, the draft resolution did not reflect the advances in the Turks and Caicos Islands, where, since the suspension of government in 2009, considerable progress had been made towards sound financial management and good governance. Following wide consultations, a new Constitution had been agreed upon and had just entered into force, with elections to be held in early November 2012.

35. In reply to previous statements by Spain and Argentina, she reiterated that the United Kingdom did not accept the assertion that the peoples of Gibraltar and the Falkland Islands did not have the right of self-determination.

*Draft resolution VII: Dissemination of information on decolonization (A/67/23 (chap. XII))*

36. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

37. *A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, 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, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

*Against:*

Israel, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

*Abstaining:*

France.

38. *Draft resolution VII was adopted by 164 votes to 3, with 1 abstention.*

39. **Ms. Grant** (United Kingdom) said that her delegation had voted against the draft resolution because it considered that the obligation placed on the Secretariat to publicize decolonization issues represented an unwarranted drain on the scarce resources of the United Nations.

40. **Mr. Díaz Bartolomé** (Argentina) said that Argentina, while fully supporting the right to self-determination of colonized peoples under resolutions 1514 (XV) and 2625 (XXV), had voted in favour of draft resolution VII on the understanding that it would be interpreted and implemented in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Special Committee, all of which subsequent to resolution 2065 (XX) had defined the issue of the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas explicitly as a special and particular colonial situation in that it involved a

sovereignty dispute between two parties, Argentina and the United Kingdom, which had been requested to conduct negotiations in order to find as soon as possible a peaceful solution to the problem, bearing in mind the interests of the population of the Islands.

*Draft resolution VIII: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (A/67/23 (chap. XII))*

41. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

42. *A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, 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, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of

Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

*Against:*

Israel, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

*Abstaining:*

Belgium, France.

43. *Draft resolution VIII was adopted by 164 votes to 3, with 2 abstentions.*

44. **Ms. Grant** (United Kingdom) said that her delegation continued to find some elements of the draft resolution unacceptable, and had therefore voted against it. Nevertheless, the United Kingdom remained committed to modernizing its relationship with its Overseas Territories, while fully taking into account the views of the peoples of those Territories.

45. **Mr. Díaz Bartolomé** (Argentina) said that he had voted in favour of the draft resolution but wished to recall that visiting missions could be sent only to Territories to which the right of self-determination applied, meaning Territories where there was no dispute over sovereignty. That requirement was fully in line with General Assembly resolution 850 (IX), which also established the requirement that any visiting mission must be approved by the General Assembly.

46. **Ms. Dixon** (Bahamas) said that the process of decolonization must be addressed swiftly and not become a peripheral concern of the United Nations. The Bahamas echoed the calls made by the Caribbean Community and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States for the Turks and Caicos Islands to return promptly to democratic governance. In that connection, her country was encouraged by the stated intention of the administering Power to hold elections in the Territory in November 2012 and also noted with interest the completion of the constitutional reform process.

47. Indigenous peoples must be able to express their will freely so that they might shape their own future. Moreover, all activities that affected the interests of the peoples of any Non-Self-Governing Territory, such as economic activities, must take into account their wishes in furtherance of their own political, economic, social and educational interests.

*The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.*