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**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**

## **Information submitted by the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system on their activities with regard to the 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**

### **Report of the President of the Council**

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## I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 2021/2, the Economic and Social Council requested the President of the Council to continue to maintain close contact with the Chair of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples on the matters considered in that resolution and to report thereon to the Council.

2. In paragraph 7 of its resolution 75/104, entitled “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”, the General Assembly requested the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system and international and regional organizations to examine and review conditions in each Non-Self-Governing Territory, so as to take appropriate measures to accelerate progress in the economic and social sectors of the Territories. In paragraph 21 of the resolution, the Assembly commended the Economic and Social Council for its debate on the question and requested the Council to continue to consider and intensify its cooperation with the Special Committee, with the aim of developing appropriate measures for the further coordination of the policies and activities of the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system in implementing the relevant resolutions of the Assembly. The Assembly, in paragraph 12 of its resolution 75/103, encouraged the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system and regional organizations to continue to provide assistance to the Non-Self-Governing Territories affected by hurricanes, natural phenomena or other extreme weather events and to formulate appropriate programmes to support emergency response and recovery and rebuilding efforts, and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly on that matter.

3. The following 17 Territories are under the purview of the Special Committee: American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Falkland Islands (Malvinas),<sup>1</sup> French Polynesia, Gibraltar, Guam, Montserrat, New Caledonia, Pitcairn, Saint Helena, Tokelau, Turks and Caicos Islands, United States Virgin Islands and Western Sahara. Information submitted in response to a request to the specialized agencies and the international organizations associated with the United Nations to provide an account of their activities in relation to those Territories is set out below.

## II. Support provided to Non-Self-Governing Territories by the specialized agencies and international organizations associated with the United Nations

4. Responses were received from 15 United Nations system entities and one international organization. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the International Maritime Organization, the International Telecommunication Union, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the World Intellectual Property Organization and the World Trade Organization indicated that they did not have any information to submit on the issue. According to the information received, during the period under review, the eight organizations indicated below continued to

<sup>1</sup> A dispute exists between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas).

provide support to the peoples of Non Self-Governing Territories, pursuant to the relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Special Committee.

## **A. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean**

5. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) provided the information set out below in the context of relevant resolutions of the United Nations, including General Assembly resolution [75/104](#).

6. ECLAC indicated that it gave attention to responding to needs associated with the vulnerability of the Non-Self-Governing Territories to climate change and related environmental events and natural disasters. Support was also given to their sustainable development efforts within the frameworks of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (Samoa Pathway).

7. The Non-Self-Governing Territories of the Caribbean continue to face development challenges similar to those experienced by the wider membership of the subregion, characterized, as small island developing States, by significant economic, social and environmental vulnerabilities and low levels of resilience. The Territories also face mounting public debt and onerous fiscal challenges, which contribute to high interest rates and curtailing local investment. Furthermore, their limited technical and institutional capacity has circumscribed their efforts at more effective governance and has had an impact on their ability to deliver a range of social services to meet the growing needs of their vulnerable populations.

### **1. Support for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

8. The Commission's support for the Territories over the past year continued to be focused on capacity development and technical assistance framed by the 2030 Agenda, keeping in mind the unique challenges that the Territories face. Workshops and face-to-face training activities, however, were severely curtailed given the limits on travel and assembly during 2020 resulting from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

9. ECLAC, however, continued to sponsor regular virtual capacity development events through training and workshops, as well as opportunities for virtual peer exchange and information-sharing through communities of practice. Associate members were invited to participate in those activities. An example of this was the two-day workshop on "Leaving no one behind in the Caribbean: building resilience through universal social protection", which was organized within the framework of the ECLAC Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. ECLAC partnered with the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility segregated portfolio company in delivering the virtual workshop on 6 and 7 October 2020. The workshop was designed to strengthen the policymakers' understanding of universal and comprehensive social protection systems; facilitate the exchange of knowledge and best practice to promote a shared understanding of inclusive social development within the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals; promote the design and implementation of socially inclusive recovery measures in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic; and encourage action on the Regional Agenda for Inclusive Social Development in the Caribbean. Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands and Montserrat participated.

10. Associate members also continued to benefit from ongoing projects by ECLAC to further the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, even though activities were substantially curtailed during 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Strengthening capacity for robust data collection and analysis for evidence-based decision-making, as well as for effective monitoring and measurement of implementation of the Goals, remains essential. ECLAC therefore continued to prioritize support in those areas.

11. In this regard, the support provided by ECLAC to the British Virgin Islands in the design of its sustainable development plan continued during 2020. Consultations with key stakeholders across Government and civil society are ongoing, and a completed draft plan is expected in June 2021. Attention will also be given to the strengthening of capacity in the production and dissemination of official statistics, for the benefit of territorial development, to enhance the Territory's ability to report on progress made with the Sustainable Development Goals. To that end, the British Virgin Islands participated in the virtual training on "Evidence-based policy planning for sustainable development in the Caribbean" organized by ECLAC on 10 December 2020.

## 2. Assessment on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Caribbean

12. ECLAC conducted extensive, in-depth research and analysis on the economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economies and populations of the Caribbean. The analysis included the following associate members: Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands. At least two major publications of the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean comprehensively described those impacts: *The Caribbean Outlook: Forging a People-Centred Approach to Sustainable Development post-COVID-19*<sup>2</sup> and *The case for Financing: Caribbean Resilience Building in the Face of the COVID-19 Pandemic*.<sup>3</sup>

13. Under the leadership of its Executive Secretary, ECLAC also convened during 2020 a series of high-level meetings for the Caribbean with ministers of sectors critical to the national, territorial and regional response to COVID-19, most notably the ministers responsible for finance, gender issues, social development, data, South-South cooperation and information and communications technology.

14. As an illustration, on 8 April 2020, ECLAC and UN-Women organized a briefing for ministers and high-level authorities involved in machineries for the advancement of women in Latin America and the Caribbean, to discuss the response to the COVID-19 pandemic from a gender perspective. The event brought together representatives from 29 members in the region, including Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands as associate members. ECLAC presented the document "The COVID-19 pandemic is exacerbating the care crisis in Latin America and the Caribbean"<sup>4</sup> and a mapping of initiatives by Latin American and Caribbean Governments to address the gender dimensions of the pandemic. The central themes of the meeting were the accentuation of the unequal distribution of care tasks in the context of social isolation and the increase in situations of physical, psychological and economic violence against women caused by staying at home. The importance of the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030 and the Santiago de

<sup>2</sup> Available at [www.cepal.org/en/node/52477](http://www.cepal.org/en/node/52477).

<sup>3</sup> Available at [www.cepal.org/en/publications/46629-case-financing-caribbean-resilience-building-face-covid-19-pandemic](http://www.cepal.org/en/publications/46629-case-financing-caribbean-resilience-building-face-covid-19-pandemic).

<sup>4</sup> Available at [www.cepal.org/en/publications/45352-covid-19-pandemic-exacerbating-care-crisis-latin-america-and-caribbean](http://www.cepal.org/en/publications/45352-covid-19-pandemic-exacerbating-care-crisis-latin-america-and-caribbean).

Chile Commitment, as regional instruments for a comprehensive approach to pandemic responses, was emphasized. Information was shared on the main initiatives in such areas as the prevention of violence against women, the promotion of co-responsibility for care and the protection of women's jobs and income. As a result, ECLAC is including government initiatives on gender equality in its COVID-19 Observatory in Latin America and the Caribbean and working towards expanding its scope to include the associate members, and will continue to promote opportunities for discussion and regional cooperation to foster a gender-sensitive, coordinated response to the crisis.

15. On 21 April 2020, a virtual meeting on the role of ministries of social development in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Caribbean was held within the framework of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, with the participation of ministers and secretaries of social development from 18 Caribbean members, including Anguilla, Montserrat, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands as associate members. Participants in the meeting analysed the main socioeconomic challenges and priorities in social protection, the difficulties and challenges posed by the crisis, lessons learned and cooperation needs.

16. On 28 April, the virtual meeting of ministers of finance to discuss the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Caribbean brought together prime ministers, premiers, ministers, financial secretaries and other high-level authorities of 16 Caribbean members, including Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat and the United States Virgin Islands as associate members. Participants expressed concern at the highly vulnerable economic situation that the countries and Territories of the subregion were facing and urged ECLAC to support their efforts to engage with the international community for better access to grants and concessional financing, given their inability to service debt payments in the current circumstances. The meeting was also an opportunity to discuss debt relief proposals and other measures to fight the effects of the pandemic, including proposals by ECLAC for building resilience and reducing debt through the ECLAC Debt for Climate Adaptation Swap initiative and the creation of the Caribbean Resilience Fund, with a view to creating a globally coordinated debt deleveraging mechanism with a climate component to address the global debt overhang problem through standstills and debt moratorium.

17. The aforementioned meetings resulted in the meaningful engagement of ministers and senior decision makers across the Caribbean. All 14 associate members were invited to participate in the meetings, and their contributions resulted in a rich exchange.

### **3. Participation in the subsidiary bodies and intergovernmental meetings of the Commission**

18. Particular effort is made to accommodate the associate members in the meetings of the Commission. Most significant during 2020 were the twenty-eighth session of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee, the subsidiary intergovernmental body of ECLAC that oversees the development issues of concern to the Caribbean, and the thirty-eighth session of the Commission. Both sessions were held virtually, under the leadership of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Costa Rica, respectively. All associate members were invited to participate in the meetings. The British Virgin Islands, as Vice-Chair, and Montserrat, as Rapporteur, currently serve on the bureau of the Committee. These positions are held for a period of two years.

19. During the thirty-eighth session of ECLAC, held virtually from 26 to 28 October 2020, Caribbean countries and Territories had a historic level of representation, with 43 member States and nine associate members, including premiers, prime ministers and other high-level government representatives from Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat and the United States Virgin Islands. The specific challenges of the Caribbean were addressed with a view to building forward better.

20. In addition, it is also important to highlight the participation of the associate members in the nineteenth meeting of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, held virtually from 25 to 27 August 2020. Representatives of statistical offices from 47 member States and associate members, including Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat and the Turks and Caicos Islands, recognized the role of official statistics in the development of public policies for mitigating the effects of the health emergency prompted by COVID-19 and in the post-pandemic economic reactivation. During the meeting, the participants commended statistical offices and other agencies producing official statistics for the various actions taken to provide continuity in statistical production during the pandemic, and encouraged them to identify innovations and good practices implemented during that period that could be adopted on a permanent basis to strengthen the efficiency of statistical operations and the quality of official statistics.

21. The sixth Caribbean Development Round Table organized by the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean was convened on 10 September 2020, with priority attention given to the economic and financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the subregion and to the consideration of strategies to build economic and environmental resilience to address the vulnerabilities of those small islands.

22. The seventh Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean was held virtually by ECLAC and the Government of Ecuador from 23 to 26 November 2020 and saw the participation of Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands and Montserrat as associate members. Participants approved the Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean, which includes eight areas of action – along with a specific section on the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and economic recovery – and identifies 39 specific goals for its implementation over the next two years.

23. On 11 December 2020, within the framework of the ECLAC Committee on South-South Cooperation, the Expert Group Meeting on the Evaluation of South-South Cooperation in the Caribbean in the context of the post-pandemic recovery brought together 22 members, including the British Virgin Islands and Montserrat as associate members, as well as the Caribbean Community secretariat and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation. ECLAC presented the main findings of the “Evaluation of South-South cooperation in Selected Caribbean Countries: Barbados and Jamaica”, which served as a basis for discussing the advances and value of South-South cooperation, triangular cooperation and cooperation among small island developing States, and explored modalities for their further strategic consolidation and development in the post-COVID-19 social and economic recovery agenda.

24. The British Virgin Islands was elected to serve as one of the presiding officers of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2019 and contributed to the preparation of the fourth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference, held on 13 January 2021, which brought together 30 member States and seven associate members, including Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands and the Turks and Caicos

Islands, and at which participants confirmed their commitment to the Regional Agenda for Inclusive Social Development for tackling the current crisis and moving towards a transformative recovery with equality at its centre.

25. ECLAC has continued to observe a significant increase in the involvement of the associate members in the meetings and work of the Commission in recent years. Indeed, a special high-level event on issues of priority concern to the ECLAC associate members was held during the fourth meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, convened virtually from 15 to 18 March 2021. The meeting was held under the leadership of the British Virgin Islands in its capacity as Vice-Chair of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee and was attended by the current Chair of the Commission and the ECLAC Executive Secretary. This accommodation of the interests and concerns of the associate members is part of the ECLAC Caribbean First strategy intended to ensure focused attention on the unique challenges facing the small vulnerable countries and Territories of the subregion. The ECLAC subregional headquarters continued to encourage more active engagement with the associate members and made every effort to ensure the meaningful delivery of support to those Territories.

#### **4. Ad hoc technical assistance**

26. ECLAC continued to offer training in damage and loss assessment and disaster risk management, with a view to building indigenous capacity in the countries and Territories of the Caribbean to incorporate prevention, estimation and risk reduction in their public investment plans and sustainable development programmes.

27. The Commission also paid close attention to the increasing concerns expressed by countries and Territories of the eastern Caribbean regarding the impact of *Sargassum* on the health of coastal waters and beaches, which are areas central to the tourism sector on which these service economies depend. Research on the impact of *Sargassum* on the subregion has been delayed because of the COVID-19 pandemic, but the commitment of ECLAC to completing this work remains firm.

#### **5. Support for research and data analysis**

28. Lastly, the Commission continued to make every effort to respond to the requests of its associate members to include more data on the Territories in its flagship publications. Coverage of the economic performance of some of the associate members is already included in the subregional headquarters annual publications *Economic Survey of the Caribbean* and *Preliminary Overview of the Economies of Latin America and the Caribbean*. Continued effort will be made to expand such coverage to other studies and publications.

### **B. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**

29. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) provided the information set out below.

30. In their capacity as associate members, American Samoa, French Polynesia and New Caledonia have in the past participated in intergovernmental meetings for small island developing States, including the reviews of the Samoa Pathway and the Mauritius Strategy for the further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. New Caledonia contributes annually to the Pacific Trust Fund to support the participation of countries of the Pacific in the work of the Commission. French Polynesia attended the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development 2021, held virtually in Bangkok from 23

to 26 March 2021. ESCAP is in contact with officials of New Caledonia and French Polynesia in relation to their attendance of the Pacific Sustainable Development Forum in October 2021.

31. The *Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2020: Leveraging Ocean Resources for Sustainable Development of Small Islands Developing States* includes data on the associate members American Samoa, French Polynesia, Guam and New Caledonia, as well as tourism policy recommendations that may be relevant to them.

## C. International Monetary Fund

32. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) provided the information set out below.

33. The engagement of IMF with the dependent Territories of a member constitutes part of a broader engagement with the member. Separate assessments of the issues specific to the Territories are not common. For that reason, IMF has only limited information to share.

34. During the fiscal year 2021, the following 27 missions<sup>5</sup> to Non-Self-Governing Territories were conducted:

(a) Anguilla: missions for capacity development on medium-term fiscal frameworks (6 July 2020), budget preparation and public expenditure management (13 July), fiscal law (3 August), national act and prices (16 November) and revenue mobilization (6 July and 21 September 2020 and 18 January 2021);

(b) Bermuda: missions for capacity development on balance of payments and trade (6 July 2020), budget preparation and public expenditure management (3 August) and revenue mobilization (18 January 2021);

(c) British Virgin Islands: missions for capacity development on budget preparation and public expenditure management (7 September 2020 and 1 February 2021) and financial stability (7 September 2020);

(d) Cayman Islands: mission for capacity development on financial stability (19 April 2021);

(e) Montserrat: missions for capacity development on budget preparation and public expenditure management (23 November 2020), fiscal law (7 September) and revenue mobilization (5 and 19 October);

(f) Turks and Caicos Islands: missions for capacity development on financial stability (23 and 30 November 2020), consumer/producer price statistics (1 February 2021), regulation and supervision (1 March), budget preparation and public expenditure management (29 March) and revenue mobilization (10 August and 16 November 2020 and 8 March and 12 April 2021).

## D. Pacific Islands Forum

35. The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat provided the information set out below.

### 1. Status within the Forum

36. French Polynesia and New Caledonia are full members of the Pacific Islands Forum, while Tokelau is an associate member and American Samoa and Guam are observers.

<sup>5</sup> The documents resulting from the missions are not in the public domain.



## 2. Recent developments in New Caledonia

37. Since 1990, the Pacific Islands Forum has supported efforts for self-determination in New Caledonia under the Matignon Agreements and the Nouméa Accord, in particular through a Forum Ministerial Committee. To date, the Committee has deployed to New Caledonia nine times to monitor the implementation of the accords, most recently for the referendum on independence held in 2018.

38. Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Forum Ministerial Committee was unable to deploy to observe the referendum held on 4 October 2020 (delayed from 6 September because of the pandemic). At the invitation of France, the Forum nevertheless deployed an observer mission comprised of senior officials with diplomatic presence in New Caledonia to observe polling day activities only.

39. Overall, the Forum Team was pleased with the conduct of and arrangements made for the referendum and found that it was free, fair and transparent.

## 3. Environmental problems facing Non-Self-Governing Territories

### *French Polynesia*

40. Rising sea levels threaten coastal populations. Most of the city of Papeete has an elevation of zero to 15 metres and is surrounded by a shallow lagoon, with coastal beaches along the outer edge.

41. Coral bleaching threatens fishing activities and the natural barriers that reefs constitute against heavy storms. The damage to the country's coral reefs has led to a decline in the number of lagoon fish and the overall ocean food chain. This has an impact on the Territory's subsistence fishing as well as on its fishing exports.

### *New Caledonia*

42. The New Caledonian barrier reef is the second-longest double-barrier coral reef in the world. Most of the reefs are considered in good health. In January 2002, the Administering Power proposed to list the reef as a world heritage site of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, owing to its threatened marine species. The health of the reef is monitored by 13 local management committees. However, intensified erosion during cyclone flooding continues owing to rising sea temperatures and the loss of coastal habitats.

### *Tokelau*

43. Rising sea levels threaten human habitation and subsistence agriculture. The low-lying, flat landscape of Tokelau puts human habitation in an especially vulnerable position with regard to rising sea levels. Smaller islets have already disappeared, and now the larger ones are at risk. There is no higher ground where the people of Tokelau can move as the sea rises, and the soil is a mixture of coral and sand, which can only support limited crops, such as breadfruit, coconut, pandanus, giant swamp taro and banana. Rising sea levels are putting the larger islets at risk as the ocean encroaches and increases the salinity of the already poor soil. Several species of plants have already disappeared owing to soil erosion.

44. Rising temperatures threaten human health and water supply. Hotter global temperatures have increased the already hot climate of Tokelau, which has an impact to human health. Those with respiratory ailments, the young and the elderly are especially at risk of increased health issues due to higher temperatures. The hotter climate also exacerbates drought periods, when fresh water, already a scarce supply, becomes increasingly hard to find.

45. Subsistence fishing depends on coral health. The coral populations within the lagoons surrounding the islands of Tokelau have declined as a result of higher ocean temperatures, coral bleaching and ocean acidification. In addition, extreme weather conditions have contributed to the disappearance of some species of lagoon fish.

**4. Impact of natural disasters, such as hurricanes and volcanic eruptions, and other environmental problems, such as beach and coastal erosion and droughts**

*New Caledonia*

46. New Caledonia faces the particular challenge of needing to build both resistance and resilience to tropical cyclones. In 2021, a rare occurrence took place, whereby three tropical cyclones (Lucas, Bina and Ana) formed in proximity to New Caledonia all at the same time, with Cyclone Lucas having a direct impact on New Caledonia. The archipelago has long been affected by severe storms, which have the potential to cause irreversible damage, but those are now generally stronger and occur outside the normal cyclone season.

**5. Ways and means to assist the Territories in fighting drug trafficking, money-laundering and other illegal and criminal activities**

47. As members of the Pacific Islands Forum, French Polynesia and New Caledonia are party to existing Forum security declarations and arrangements. The Boe Declaration on Regional Security of 2018 addresses an expanded concept of security that includes transnational security issues, such as drug trafficking and money-laundering. Policy development, capacity development and information exchange on drug trafficking, money-laundering and other illegal criminal activities within the region are areas in which French Polynesia and New Caledonia will benefit under the security declarations.

48. Pacific Islands Forum leaders endorsed the Boe Declaration Action Plan when they met in Tuvalu in August 2019. The Action Plan provides specific proposed actions to be progressed under six strategic focus areas, including transnational crime, and humanitarian assistance and disaster response.

49. Both French Polynesia and New Caledonia are members of the Pacific Island Chiefs of Police organization and, as such, benefit from discussions held within and advice given by that organization on drug issues, money-laundering and other illegal criminal activities within the region.

50. The two Territories are also members of the Pacific Immigration Development Community. By virtue of their membership, they are eligible to access to capacity development initiatives that target border management and related crimes, including drug trafficking and money-laundering.

51. French Polynesia and New Caledonia are members of the Oceania Customs Organization. Under its Law Enforcement and Border Security programme, there is constant dialogue to address pertinent law enforcement and border security issues that affect the region as a whole and to ensure that its members benefit from and contribute to mutually beneficial regional initiatives. The programme is aimed at:

(a) Increasing end-to-end international supply chain security by introducing a balanced approach to security measures and facilitations to safeguard shipments entering or leaving a customs territory from manipulation or interference by criminals; providing compliant traders with greater facilitations; and increasing both the level of protection achieved by customs controls and cooperation between customs and trade actors;

(b) Playing a vital role in the fight against organized crime, as customs has information and expertise on goods and cargo movements, to produce faster and better targeted customs controls that facilitate legitimate trade but tighten security requirements, and to ensure by way of greater transparency that stakeholders in the international supply chain refrain from illegal, criminal and terrorist activities.

## **6. Illegal exploitation of the marine and other natural resources of the Territories and need to use those resources for the benefit of the Territories**

52. The Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency has 17 members, including Tokelau. Tokelau also participates in the Vessel Day Scheme of the parties to the Nauru Agreement concerning Cooperation in the Management of Fisheries of Common Interest. The Agency supports its members to sustainably manage their fishery resources that fall within their 200-mile exclusive economic zones. This support includes monitoring, control and surveillance activities to strengthen national capacity and regional solidarity to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the Pacific.

53. The aforementioned Vessel Day Scheme has greatly reduced opportunities for illegal, unreported and unregulated activity through a management system for purse seiners. The monitoring, control and surveillance strategy of the Agency and of the parties to the Nauru Agreement has been developed in support of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing mitigation, which members of the Agency are spearheading. In addition, the Scheme has contributed to increasing revenue from tuna fishing, which grew from around \$60 million in 2010 to \$500 million in 2018.

54. Notwithstanding the increased revenue generated by the Vessel Day Scheme for the parties to the Nauru Agreement, including Tokelau, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing persists and the value of illegal catch is estimated at more than \$600 million a year. More work is needed to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the region, and members of the Agency, including Tokelau, are taking the lead in progressing this work.

## **E. United Nations Development Programme**

55. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) provided the information set out below.

### **1. Pacific**

#### *Tokelau*

56. Although there were no confirmed COVID-19 cases in Tokelau at the time of writing, the socioeconomic impacts have been felt severely owing to a drastic reduction in remittances and tourism earnings, which were the backbone of the economy.

57. The UNDP Samoa multi-country office supported COVID-19 prevention and preparedness with a focus on establishing quarantine and isolation facilities and conducting a socioeconomic impact assessment to understand the impact of COVID-19 on households and affected industries in Tokelau. The assessment is based on a survey covering all three atolls (Atafu, Fakaofu and Nukunonu) with a sample size of 200 households and 20 businesses.

58. The socioeconomic impact assessment found that COVID-19 had had an impact on food security, education and access to health care for households. The continued restriction on travel has limited the number of supply shipments to Tokelau through Samoa as the main port of entry, which has decreased the available supply of basic

food items, hygiene products, personal protection equipment and basic necessities. Price increases were reported for imported supplies. On the other hand, only very minimal impact was noted on employment and the level of income of households. With regard to health care, the assessment found that the pandemic had had an impact on the ability of Tokelauans to gain access to medical treatments overseas, in Samoa and New Zealand, owing to the states of emergency in effect in Tokelau and Samoa and border closures in both places as well as in New Zealand. However, medical services provided on site in Tokelau remained accessible. The assessment also confirmed the significant impact on education, with more than 70 per cent of students remaining without access to education owing to school closures and very limited online access in Tokelau.

59. Furthermore, the socioeconomic impact assessment indicated that the pandemic had had a major impact on the business community and private sector in Tokelau, with more than 57 per cent of businesses experiencing declines in activity (with 18 per cent heavily affected and 39 per cent moderately affected). Most businesses are dealing with such challenges as the price fluctuation of supplies and sources (46 per cent), the disruption of supply chains (42 per cent), disruption in sales and distribution networks (32 per cent) and the loss of markets and customers (10 per cent).

60. The Government of Tokelau reallocated part of its budget to upgrade and repurpose existing buildings for quarantine and isolation. With financial support from UNDP and New Zealand to complement the territorial Government's allocation, Tokelau was able to make rapid progress in establishing the isolation and quarantine facilities in each of the three atolls. By December 2020, the facilities were completed and used for quarantining 104 repatriates from Australia, Fiji, New Zealand and Samoa, of which 55 per cent were women. The repurposed facilities that were upgraded and refurbished include school buildings and community centres for women, which will be returned to their intended use when the COVID-19 pandemic is over.

61. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UNDP jointly supported capacity development, with UNDP providing training on COVID-19 case management to Tokelauan health workers and UNFPA focusing on the continued provision of gender-sensitive essential services, such as sexual reproductive health for women and girls. A total of 20 health workers were trained, of whom 14 (70 per cent) are women.

## **2. Caribbean**

62. In Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands and Montserrat, UNDP, in collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund and UN-Women, conducted human and economic assessments of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic focused on the most vulnerable groups and income losses for micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises and the informal sector, which employ a large share of women.

63. In Anguilla, UNDP, together with United Nations partners, produced an assessment report that models a series of possible impacts, including a gender perspective, and contains a range of fiscal, economic and social policy proposals to accelerate post-COVID-19 recovery. It recommends enhanced social protection investments, government guarantees to support micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises and the establishment of a shelter for survivors of gender-based violence as key interventions to weather the social and economic fallout of the pandemic.

64. In the British Virgin Islands, an assessment recommends temporary expanded income, support for small firms to preserve livelihoods and the implementation of rapid work permit transfers to mitigate emigration. In the longer term, it proposes a rigorous assessment of poverty to inform the design and implementation of an

expanded gender-responsive public assistance programme. During the second half of 2020, UNDP facilitated a SURGE support programme focusing on enhancing national capacities for data-driven decision-making. The initiative involved the development and operationalization of a macroeconomic forecasting model that allows the Government to conduct dynamic impact and scenario analyses to identify the potential impacts of natural disasters, epidemiological crises or other shocks on various sectors and vulnerable groups, including women.

65. In addition, the UNDP-UN-Women COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker monitors and analyses policy measures through a gender lens in 206 countries and Territories. Notably, it brought to light that Montserrat had introduced a “discretionary leave provision” to allow employees the time and flexibility to make alternate arrangements to look after their children. During this “relaxed attendance period”, heads of departments may grant their workers additional paid leave to resolve personal commitments related to childcare.

## **F. United Nations Environment Programme**

66. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) provided the information set out below.

67. In 2020, within the framework of the UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme, UNEP produced a report entitled *The State of Nearshore Marine Habitats in the Wider Caribbean*.<sup>6</sup> The report supports the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife Subprogramme and the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems (CLME+) Strategic Action Programme by focusing on three habitats characteristic of coastal ecosystems in the wider Caribbean, including relevant Non-Self Governing Territories, namely, coral reefs, mangrove forests and seagrass meadows. The report highlights the status and trends of those habitats, identifies the drivers of change and pressures, summarizes the interventions to address those pressures, identifies gaps in response and emerging challenges, and proposes actions to improve the management of the target habitats. The report also provides background information and context for the development of a regional strategy and action plan for the conservation of coral reef, mangrove and seagrass habitats in the wider Caribbean. The regional strategy and action plan will be presented at the Eleventh Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife, in 2021.

## **G. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime**

68. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) provided the information set out below.

### **1. Drugs**

69. UNODC provides technical assistance to border control, law enforcement and health personnel in the Latin American and Caribbean region aimed at strengthening the full range of forensic services available in situ, including:

(a) Equipment and specialized training for units dealing with counter-narcotics and countering the operations of international organized criminal groups, in particular those involved in drug trafficking and using the Territories as trans-shipment points for maritime trafficking in drugs and precursors. This includes

<sup>6</sup> Available at [www.icriforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SOMH15.4.2020-en.pdf](http://www.icriforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SOMH15.4.2020-en.pdf).

new and highly potent substances that eventually trickle down into the local markets of the Territories;

(b) Strengthening the training of relevant forensic services in the use of field test equipment to take evidence-based decisions on the ground, procedures for handling toxic substances safely and the health risk associated with drugs.

70. The Non-Self-Governing Territories are, in general, characterized by a lack of drug-related data, on both the supply and the demand sides. One exception has been Gibraltar, for which UNODC received a comprehensive response to its annual report questionnaire for 2019 which showed significant seizures of cannabis resin for that year (more than 3 tons).

71. Over the past decade, drug seizures data have been received through the UNODC Drugs Monitoring Platform from: Bermuda (mostly cocaine and cannabis, but also heroin seizures), the British Virgin Islands (including 2.3 tons of cocaine seized in November 2020), the United States Virgin Islands (including 4.6 kg of cocaine seized in July 2020), New Caledonia (including 1.5 tons of cocaine seized off the coast of New Caledonia in July 2017) and French Polynesia (600 kg of cocaine seized in Tahiti in December 2016).

## **2. Homicide**

72. Homicide data in the Non-Self-Governing Territories remain quite limited. Available data indicate that the female homicide rate in the Non-Self-Governing Territories is low, and significantly lower than the male homicide rate. However, some variability can be observed across the Territories. Given the paucity of time-series data for female homicide, only a few examples can be provided to provide a snapshot of the situation regarding lethal violence against women.

73. In Montserrat, no intentional killings of women were recorded between 1995 and 2006, while some variability is observable in Territories where more complete and recent time series are available. In Bermuda, a female homicide rate of 6 per 100,000 female population was recorded in 2011. In 2017, the female homicide rate in Bermuda was 0, while the male homicide rate was approximately 17. Time series data from 2010 to 2017 suggest that any increase in the yearly female homicide rate pushing it above 0 is attributable to relatively rare violent incidents of 1 to 2 intentional killings per year. In the United States Virgin Islands, a peak level of approximately 12 victims per 100,000 female population was recorded in 2010. In 2012, the female homicide rate in that Territory was approximately 27 times lower than the male homicide rate, which stood at 99.2 per 100,000 population for males and 3.6 for females. In other Non-Self-Governing Territories, such as the Cayman Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands, no intentional killings of women were recorded in 2014.

74. The small population size of these Territories is a significant factor behind the geographical and temporal variability of the homicide rate recorded by the authorities. As a result, the yearly homicide rate can be easily inflated by isolated violent incidents. Given the limited capacities of authorities, causes of death are poorly recorded, therefore no data on homicide disaggregated by relationship between victims and perpetrators are available, making it impossible to establish the share of female homicide perpetrated in the domestic sphere and in other contexts. Furthermore, because some of the communities in the Non-Self-Governing Territories are quite isolated, underreporting of homicide by official records cannot be ruled out.

### **3. Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption**

75. UNODC is the custodian of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, the only legally binding universal anti-corruption instrument. The Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the Convention is a peer review process that assists States parties with implementing the Convention effectively.

76. In 2019, the Government of Bermuda, through the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, formally communicated its readiness to participate in the Implementation Review Mechanism and undergo the review of chapters II to V of the Convention. The ongoing review will form part of the first and second cycle reviews of the United Kingdom.

### **4. Transnational organized crime**

77. UNODC assists authorities in the Latin American and Caribbean region in developing responses to counter transnational organized crime at sea. UNODC provides support to maritime law enforcement authorities, naval forces and other authorities involved in maritime crime work, including immigration, border control, fisheries and justice authorities, among others.

78. UNODC is supporting the increase of capacities in the fight against transnational organized crime through the inclusion of Non-Self-Governing Territories in communication and operational networks at the regional and subregional levels and by making use of remote participation to enhance inclusion in capacity-building exercises and regional dialogue.

79. Under the UNODC TRACK4TIP project, implemented in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2020, the Office has provided support to local authorities and international and non-governmental organizations working on the identification of and combat against traffic in persons. This initiative has led to an increase in understanding of human trafficking and its impact in the Caribbean region. Given the transnational manifestations of this crime involving countries of origin, transit and destination, including Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Caribbean, the work done in Trinidad and Tobago will promote early identification and an adequate response to human trafficking in the region.

## **H. Universal Postal Union**

80. The Universal Postal Union (UPU) provided the information set out below.

81. As an intergovernmental organization of a technical character and specialized agency of the United Nations, UPU is currently composed of 192 member countries, including 190 sovereign States.

82. With regard to Territories, the relevant provisions of the Acts of the Union apply, in particular with regard to the operation and regulation of international postal services and the due fulfilment of the obligations arising from the Acts. Some of the Territories may also benefit on a regular basis from technical cooperation and other UPU projects.

83. Moreover, UPU reported that a number of Territories had their own designated operators (that is, the governmental or non-governmental entities officially designated by the member country to operate international postal services and to fulfil the related obligations arising from the Acts of the Union on their territory). These include Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, the

Falkland Islands (Malvinas),<sup>1</sup> Gibraltar, Montserrat, New Caledonia, Saint Helena and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

84. In addition, the Territories of Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, French Polynesia, Gibraltar, Montserrat, New Caledonia and the Turks and Caicos Islands currently benefit from a number of information technology solutions and associated services provided by UPU, namely its integrated international mail management solution (International Postal System) and its interoperable Customs Declaration System for the exchange of customs information between designated operators and customs authorities.

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