

United Nations  Nations Unies

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Distr. RESTRICTED  
CRS/2013/CRP.9

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

THIRD INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF COLONIALISM

*Caribbean regional seminar on the implementation of the Third International Decade*

I had the opportunity yesterday to thank the Government of Ecuador and the UN Committee for the efficient and friendly organisation of this seminar. That sentiment remains with us.

There was much interesting reflection yesterday on the responsibilities and achievements of the C24. The call by Member States for solidarity with the NSGT's, and the call by the Chair for the people of the NSGT's to be treated with dignity and respect is much appreciated. It is as it should be. But there remains a

If a territory has reached an accommodation with another country with which they are satisfied, what place has the C24 to tell them they should not be satisfied ? If a people has decided of its own free will that it does not wish to seek independence or integration, who is the C24 to tell them they must ? If a territory wishes to be removed from the list of NSGT's free of coercion from others, why should that not be permitted to happen ? There are concerns in the NSGT's that you are simply not listening to us, and what we wish for our countries.

There were calls to think outside the box. But this issue requires not just thinking outside the box, and many years of fine words and speeches, it requires action. It requires action by all parties involved, the NSGT's, the administering powers and the C24, with the wishes and interests of the NSGT's at the forefront and supported by

the C24. Solidarity with the NSGT's means just that, in some cases Member States setting aside their own interests to respect the wishes and dignity of the people of the NSGT's. And if you really want to think outside the box, why not reform the membership of the Committee and add some representatives from the NSGT's.

the natural resources of the Islands belong to the Government and people of the



