



**CHAIR OF
THE COORDINATING BUREAU
OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT**



**STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED BY THE DELEGATION OF THE
BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA, ON BEHALF OF THE NON-
ALIGNED MOVEMENT (NAM), DURING THE RESUMED SESSION 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 (C-24), ON THE QUESTION OF PUERTO RICO**

New York, 18 June 2018

Mr. President,

1. It is an honor for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to take the floor on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) during this resumed session 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 (C-24).
2. At the outset we would like to express our sincere appreciation to you and other members of the Bureau and the Committee as whole for the hard work and much valuable efforts put into the issue of decolonization; one to which the Movement has historically attached particular importance.

Mr. President,

3. In relation to the Question of Puerto Rico, which has been in the agenda of this Special Committee for over 40 years, the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) reaffirm the validity and relevance of their principled position, particularly the right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence, on the basis of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960.
4. Moreover, the Member States of the Movement reiterate their unwavering support to the resolutions on Puerto Rico, many of which have been adopted by consensus within the framework of this Special Committee, and call for their expeditious implementation. In addition, they seize this opportunity to make vows for the adoption of yet another resolution on Puerto Rico this year, by consensus, as in previous years, and taking into account our position on this issue.

Mr. President,



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5. During the XVIII Mid-Term Ministerial Conference of the Movement, held in April 2018, in Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan, the Ministers, while reaffirming their determination to work actively to have the UN General Assembly to consider the question of Puerto Rico in all its aspects, expressed their concern that the present political subordination of the Puerto Rican people impedes their sovereign decision-making regarding their serious economic and social problems, including the present fiscal crisis, insolvency of the government of Puerto Rico, and the need to restructure the public debt, as well as regarding the humanitarian crisis resulting from the effects of hurricanes Irma and Maria, which has aggravated the already serious economic and social problems, resulting in a rise in poverty levels in Puerto Rico from 45% to around a 60% of the population, which has caused massive migration and has seriously impaired efforts to achieve a sustainable economic development.
6. Similarly, at that time, the Ministers expressed their concern with legislation adopted in the U.S. Congress to impose a fiscal control board over the Government of Puerto Rico, which will effectively infringe upon the limited power of the Government of San Juan over its budget and fiscal and other affairs. In addition, they urged the Government of the United States of America to return to the Puerto Rican people the occupied land and installations of Vieques Island and the Roosevelt Road Naval Station, who constitute a Latin American and Caribbean nation.
7. To conclude, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) calls on the Government of the United States of America to assume its responsibility to expedite the process that will allow the Puerto Rican People to fully exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence.

I thank you, Mr. President.