



**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 SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO CONSIDER DRAFT RESOLUTION A/73/L.84, ENTITLED “ADVISORY OPINION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE ON THE LEGAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE SEPARATION OF THE CHAGOS ARCHIPELAGO FROM MAURITIUS IN 1965”

New York, 22 May 2019

Madam President,

1. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has the honor to take the floor on behalf of the 120 Member States comprising the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).
2. At the outset, I would like to express our appreciation to you for convening this plenary meeting, which is devoted specifically to the consideration of draft resolution A/73/L.84, entitled “Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Legal Consequences of the Separation of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius in 1965”, under Agenda Item 88, which has been tabled by the Republic of Senegal, on behalf of the African Group.

Madam President,

3. The rejection of colonialism is amongst the founding principles of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). The fight for liberation was the major binding factor that drew together the newly independent States of Africa, Asia and Latin America.
4. The support of NAM to the initiatives of decolonization has remained unwavering. Since its official establishment in 1961, the Member States of the Movement have reaffirmed over and over again the validity and relevance of their principled positions concerning the right to self-determination of peoples under foreign occupation and colonial or alien domination.
5. As the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonization approaches its end in 2020, the need to free peoples from the shackles of colonialism becomes more pressing and urgent.

Madam President,



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6. Allow me to recall the latest position agreed upon by the Ministers of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) at their XVIII Mid-Term Ministerial Conference, held in Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan, in April 2018, and which was as follows:
 - a. The Ministers reaffirmed that the Chagos Archipelago, including Diego Garcia, which was unlawfully excised by the former colonial power from the territory of Mauritius in violation of international law and UN Resolutions 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960 and 2066 (XX) of 16 December 1965, forms an integral part of the territory of the Republic of Mauritius.
 - b. The Ministers noted with grave concern that despite the strong opposition expressed by the Republic of Mauritius, the United Kingdom purported to establish a “marine protected area” (MPA) around the Chagos Archipelago, further infringing the territorial integrity of the Republic of Mauritius and impeding the exercise of its sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago, as well as the exercise of the right of return of Mauritian citizens, who were forcibly removed from the Archipelago by the United Kingdom. In this regard, they welcomed the ruling of the Arbitral Tribunal in the case brought by the Republic of Mauritius against the United Kingdom under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) that the “MPA” was unlawfully established under international law.
 - c. The Ministers further noted of the adoption by the UN General Assembly on 22 June 2017 of resolution 71/292 requesting an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the legal consequences of the separation of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius in 1965 and of the subsequent Order of 14 July 2017 of the ICJ inviting the United Nations and its Member States to make written submissions to the ICJ.
 - d. The Ministers encouraged Member States of the Movement to contribute to the ICJ advisory proceedings by making submissions in support of the decolonization of Mauritius and by participating in the oral hearings, which took place in 2018.
7. In this context, we seize this opportunity to welcome the clear and unambiguous Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice delivered on 25 February 2019 on the legal consequences of the separation of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius in 1965, pursuant to the UN General Assembly resolution 71/292, and call on the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to bring to an end its administration of the Chagos Archipelago as rapidly as possible.



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8. To conclude, the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), in line with their principled position on matters concerning decolonization and moved by the solidarity that characterizes them, call on Member States to support the action initiated by the African Group under agenda item 88 of the General Assembly, as a means to support the prompt completion of the process of decolonization of the Republic of Mauritius.

I thank you, Madame President.