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THIRD INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF COLONIALISM

Pacific regional seminar on the implementation of the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism: accelerating action

Denarau, Nadi, Fiji 21 to 23 May 2014

WELCOME ADDRESS BY

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Rear Admiral J. V. Bainimarama. CF(Mill OC+ 1 MCD isso Dec

Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics, Public Service, Peoples Charter for Change and Progress, Information, iTaukei Affairs, Sugar Industry and Lands and Mineral Resources

STATEMENT AT THE PACIFIC REGIONAL SEMINAR ON THE UN SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON DECOLONISATION

Sofitel Resort

\\Y/pd 21st May 2014

Chairman of the Special Committee His Excellency Xavier Lasso Mendoza,

Vice Chairpersons,

Distinguished Representatives and Observers of the Special Committee on Decolonisation,

Excellencies,

This is the fourth time that Fiji has hosted this Seminar over the course of the last 16 years.

On behalf of the Fijian people and the Government of Fiji, Bula vinaka! Welcome back.

Understanding that many different and unique relationships of what we would call colonialism exist, our task is to sort them out and find solutions that are both principled and pragmatic.

In order to do that, I believe we must listen to the people. If they choose independence, we must respect and support their decision; if they choose some form of association, we must support their right to negotiate as equals - the relationship that

best serves their interests. In Fiji, we are neutral about what each person decides, but we are most

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	freedom to determine its own future.	
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	This regional seminar provides an opportunity for	:
	opportunity for	į
	you as delegates and members of the Special	:
	Committee to gain a deeper understanding of the	
	issues that face the 17 territories listed on the UN List	

The Special Committee will then convene in New York next month, where it will address progress in the efforts for self-determination - together with

of Non-Self-Governing Territories.

we have faced over the past quarter century, so I will not linger on them in detail. Suffice it to say that we have only recently emerged from this era of turmoil and strife after a period of reforms and hold loadstabing and the

to the New Caledonian authorities as per the roadmap set out by the Noumea Accord. As would be expected, a number of challenger bear emerged, but Fiji will continue to encourage both sides to work positively within the spirit of the

Agreement towards a result that is seen as legitimate

indulging in rhetoric and rituals." Such fresh and creative approaches must come from you, the delegates and representatives on the Committee.

Having said that, I hope that you will find a little time to enjoy the hospitality and friendliness of the Fijian people, and to explore our country and all it has to offer its guests.

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officially open the 2014 Pacific Regional Seminar on Decolonisation.

Vinaka vakalevu. Thank you.