



FULL TEXT OF AN ADDRESS
BY THE
CHIEF MINISTER OF GIBRALTAR
THE HON J J BOSSANO
TO
THE UNITED NATIONS
COMMITTEE OF 24

11 JULY 1995

CHIEF MINISTER'S ADDRESS TO THE COMMITTEE OF 24 AT THE UNITED NATIONS ON TUESDAY 11TH JULY 1995

1. Mr Chairman, Your Excellencies, once again this year I wish to thank you all for giving me the opportunity to address you on behalf of the people of Gibraltar.
2. Last month, we all celebrated the 50th anniversary of the signing of the UN Charter. The issue of decolonisation has been at the very heart of the work of the UN and of its growth in membership from 51 to 185. Gibraltar has been a part of this almost from the very beginning. In 1946, the UK submitted the name of Gibraltar as an "Administered Territory" with respect to which it would submit reports to the UN in accordance with Article 73 (e.) of the Charter. It has submitted such reports, which have been considered by your Committee, since 1963.
3. Mr Chairman, my Government's decision to pursue the rights of Gibraltarians to self-determination and decolonisation by direct representations before this Committee and the Fourth Committee marked a watershed in the development of the people of the territory in respect of these questions. As I mentioned in my first address to you in 1992, there had been a 25 year gap during which Gibraltar did not seek to put its views to this Committee. This had created the erroneous impression that the Special Committee was insensitive and perhaps even hostile to the aspirations of the Gibraltarians.
4. I am happy to report that there has been a complete turn-round in the situation. This Committee is now clearly seen - as it should be - as one that is responsive to the views of the colonial people. One that welcomes the opportunity to hear such views, so that it is in a better position to address the issue of their decolonisation from the perspective of giving priority to the wishes of the people of the territory over any other factor.
5. As you know, Mr Chairman, we have given the widest possible publicity in the territory to the work of the Special Committee and my appearances before the United Nations in accordance with the provisions of the UN Charter and Resolutions. The impact of this dissemination of information about the programme for decolonisation and the action plan has been such that it has raised expectations among the people of Gibraltar that, at long last, our 31 year struggle to have our right to our land recognised is making headway.
6. Last year, I informed the Committee that the celebrations on Gibraltar's National Day produced an explosion of sentiment by a people that had come of age, expressing the kind of feeling seen in other parts of the

world in the process of decolonisation. They say a picture speaks louder than a thousand words. When you watch the videotapes of National Day 1994, which I am providing, you will immediately recognise what has been a part of your own history for those of you that have experienced the emergence from colonialism. If there were to be a visiting Mission of the Special Committee to join us in our celebrations this coming September, no-one would have any doubts in their minds about the authenticity of our separate identity as a people. So I say to you, come to Gibraltar. Share our National Day with us. You will be left with no doubt.

7. All those who joined us in 1994 - leading politicians from the United Kingdom, Spain, Portugal, South America and Holland - have been convinced by what they saw and have given their support to our cause.
8. What we are seeing in Gibraltar, Mr Chairman, can be described in the words of Resolution 1514 (XV) which recognises that the peoples of the world ardently desire the end of colonialism. It is, in the words of Resolution 1541 (XV) Principle 2 of the Annex, an example of a dynamic state of evolution and progress towards self government. The two key Resolutions that have governed the decolonisation process since its inception.
9. But as well as the internal development, we have taken our case abroad. Not just before the organs of the Fourth Committee and the Special Committee. But also to Geneva, to the Monitoring Committee on the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. To the administering power, to the launch of the Conference on the Dependent Territories. And to the neighbouring country, the Kingdom of Spain.
10. In the last twelve months I have addressed Seminars in the University of Granada, in the Law Faculty, and in an organisation that represents the leaders of the business community in the adjoining province of Andalucia, in a Seminar in Seville. In Madrid, in a national organisation called Club Siglo XXI, representing a cross section of intellectuals from different spheres of the national life of the Kingdom of Spain.
11. On all these occasions, I have attempted to demonstrate to opinion-formers in the neighbouring country the unstoppable drive of the Gibraltarians for recognition of their self determination, for the decolonisation of our country and, at the same time, our desire to live in harmony and in cooperation with the Kingdom of Spain.
12. The increasing awareness of the reality of the cultural identity and separate reality of our people is now gaining ground in the neighbouring country and modifying attitudes towards Gibraltar. Regrettably,

although this is happening in society, there is no reflection of it in official circles where all our efforts to promote the cause of decolonisation and to participate in the eradication of colonialism by the year 2000, internally and externally, have produced increasing hostility from the Government of Spain. They see the efforts of my Government, on behalf of my people, as a threat to their objective of annexing Gibraltar and incorporating it under Spanish sovereignty.

13. No other Government of any other colonial territory has put as much effort into achieving the right to decolonisation since 1992, as we have done. It is also true that no other colonial territory today faces as difficult a task in securing self-determination either. To meet our aspiration and your objective of eradicating colonialism by the year 2000, we shall need your help.
14. I wish to turn now to relations with the administering power. The Gibraltar Constitution, like that of most British colonies, basically shares political responsibility between the territorial Government for most domestic policies and the administering power for foreign relations. In Gibraltar's case, this has produced unforeseen repercussions in respect of European Union obligations which apply to Gibraltar as the only colony to join the Community in 1973 with the UK.
15. If we were to accept the view that matters arising out of our membership of the European Union are foreign affairs, it would mean a totally regressive step in constitutional terms whittling away at the list of domestic matters and providing the effect of recolonisation, contrary to the provisions of Article 73(b) of the Charter which requires the United Kingdom to develop self government.
16. Following the last General Election, at the formal opening of the seventh House of Assembly of Gibraltar on the 15th February 1992, the Governor of Gibraltar stated:

"The Government is conducting a review of the Gibraltar Constitution Order 1969 with a view to proposing changes to bring it up to date and to reflect developments over the past twenty years in the relationship between Her Majesty's Government in the UK and the Gibraltar Government as well as the evolution of the EC. The Gibraltar Government will seek to initiate early discussions of this complex subject with Her Majesty's Government".
17. The complexity of the subject is such that there has been a continuous exercise since 1992 which has not yet been finalised. The UK Government itself has recognised the difficulties. At the Dependent

Territories Conference of November 1993, the Secretary of State described the situation of Gibraltar, I quote,

"as a particularly difficult one because of this relationship with the EU".

18. Although a broad measure of agreement was achieved in 1993 as to the demarcation between the administering power and ourselves in the area of transposing European Union obligations into the national law of Gibraltar, there are still unresolved questions which need to be finalised.
19. My Government nonetheless, believes it is possible to achieve a mutually acceptable balance which will protect the position of the United Kingdom in respect of its responsibility for Gibraltar in the European Union and at the same time safeguard the autonomy of my Government and does not undermine our constitutional prerogatives.
20. It is clear that the Spanish membership of the European Union since 1986 has been a relevant factor in further complicating matters. We do not underestimate the difficulties faced by the administering power in adequately protecting our interests, faced as it is by constant pressure within the European Union from Spain. Understanding these difficulties, however, cannot lead us to not pressing them to stand up for our rights as they are required to do under Article 73 of the Charter.
21. I know that the main complaint in London about me is that I am too single-minded in putting Gibraltar and its people first in my dealings with the administering power. I have acknowledged that this is the case but make no apologies for it. It is the job which my people have elected me to do.
22. The position of the Spanish Government is unashamedly to make full use of every opportunity within the European Union to bring pressure to bear on the United Kingdom and through the United Kingdom on us. The objective is to limit the development of the national consciousness of the Gibraltarian people and their drive for self determination and decolonisation in flagrant breach of the Kingdom of Spain's responsibility under the United Nations Charter and under the relevant Covenant on Human Rights to which Spain is a State signatory and which has been extended without qualification to the territory of Gibraltar.
23. I would remind the Committee that when Spain objected to the inclusion of the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla in the list of non self governing territories, and refused to make them subject to the reporting requirements of the United Nations to this Committee, she did so

precisely by stating that they did not have a separate identity. The Spanish argument is that the dispute with Morocco is a territorial dispute over Spanish cities. Spain argues that the geography of their location does not make them colonies. The fact that they are integrated within the Spanish nation state; that the citizens of the cities share an identical status with those of the Spanish mainland; that the national laws of Spain apply without distinction as they do in the rest of the national territory; all means that these are not non-self governing territories.

24. By contrast, Spain has always accepted that Article 73 of the Charter applies to the people and territory of Gibraltar. Resolution 1541 (XV) Principle 4 of the Annex states, I quote,

"Prima facie there is an obligation to transmit information in respect of a territory which is geographically separate and is distinct ethnically and/or culturally from the country administering it."

This makes us a people in our own right. We are not foreign expatriates living in the south of Spain as they continue to describe us. We have a right to our land and we are determined to defend that right.

25. Although there can be no doubt that under international law Gibraltar and its people are a distinct entity from the country administering it, the Spanish Government continues to act as if this were not the case. Thus they oppose Gibraltar's sporting associations taking part in international events. They refuse to recognise the Royal Gibraltar Police's membership of Interpol. Their enforcement agencies will not cooperate with the Gibraltar judicial system. They will not recognise identity documents issued by my Government contrary to European Union obligations. Finally, they will not even allow our dogs to enter international dog shows!
26. This behaviour which my Government condemns is contrary to the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations. It is contrary to Resolution 2131 (XX) of the 21 December 1965 and 2625 (XXV) of the 24 October 1970 which call on Member countries not to apply any form of pressure on the non self-governing territories to deter them from pursuing their right to self-determination.
27. Spain has made no secret of the fact that my appearance before your Committee, my submissions to the Fourth Committee, my address to the Geneva Committee on the Covenant on Human Rights, my participation in the meeting of the I.M.F. as part of the UK delegation, all the attempts of my Government to promote the national identity of my

people in accordance with the UN Resolutions are seen as acts hostile to the Spanish nation.

28. The right of the Gibraltarians to decolonisation cannot be denied to us. The disagreement between the Kingdom of Spain and the United Kingdom over Gibraltar, which was acknowledged to exist by this Committee in 1964, was never intended - nor could it be intended - to be a pronouncement of a doctrine depriving the Gibraltarians from the right to self determination. My Government, whilst defending that right, has sought always to make clear that the demand for recognition of our right as a people is not an act of hostility towards our neighbour.
29. Mr Chairman, the representative of Germany last year in October addressed the Fourth Committee on behalf of the European Union. He said, I quote:
- "The European Union confirms its support for the principle of self-determination and for actions consistent with the Charter aimed at the elimination of colonialism irrespective of the geographical location and population size of the remaining non self-governing territories."
30. I have already mentioned that we are members of the European Union and that the membership of the Union is affecting the colonial relationship between ourselves and the administering power in the ways I have described. As citizens of the Union, the statement by the German Presidency is a statement made in our name as well. He then went on to say with reference to the text provided by the Special Committee, I quote;
- "This text is based mainly on the premise that all the non self-governing territories have failed to exercise their right to self determination solely because this right is denied to them by the administering power".
31. Mr Chairman, how ironic that these statements should be made in the name of the Gibraltarians who are citizens of the Union when precisely it applies specifically to the Gibraltarians who are being discriminated against in this way by having the administering power deny them the right of self determination because of a Treaty dating from 1713.
32. Gibraltar is the only British colony in this situation. The right is not denied because of Spain's claim over the territory. There is also a territorial claim by Argentina over the Falkland Islands. In spite of this, the 1985 Constitution granted to the Island enshrines the inalienable

right to self determination. The only argument used by the United Kingdom in our case is the Treaty of Utrecht of 1713.

33. That argument filters through sometimes in not very noticeable ways. For example, the United Kingdom Statement of October 1994 to the Fourth Committee, which referred to the report of this Committee, said:

"Within the constraints of Treaty obligations we welcomed the acknowledgement that it is ultimately for the people of the Non-Self-Governing Territory to decide their future status."

"Within the constraints of Treaty obligations," was a reference to Gibraltar. Can the United Kingdom honestly argue that there is a constraint arising out of treaty obligations which prevents the same treatment of Gibraltar that is considered by the United Kingdom to be the correct treatment for every other colonial territory?

34. What is this treaty that we are talking about? Is it a treaty that has been signed in the last few years? Is it a treaty that has something to do with the creation of the European Union? Is it a treaty that has something to do with international law? No. It is a treaty that was signed in 1713. The operative paragraph is Article 10 of the Treaty of Peace and Friendship between Great Britain and Spain signed at Utrecht on the 13 July 1713. Article 10 contains the reference to what is to happen to Gibraltar in the future. Where it says, I quote:

"in case it shall hereafter seem meet to the Crown of Great Britain to grant, sell, or by any other means to alienate therefrom the propriety of the said town of Gibraltar, it is hereby agreed and concluded, that the preference of having the same shall always be given to the Crown of Spain before any others."

But, the Article also lays the following condition, I quote:

"And Her Britannic Majesty, at the request of the Catholic King, does consent and agree that no leave shall be given under any pretence whatsoever either to Jews or Moors to reside or have their dwellings in the said town of Gibraltar."

35. That condition has not been observed. Nobody would argue that it should be. It is clearly a flagrant violation of human rights contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and of the declarations of human rights. But is this a treaty obligation which constrains the United Kingdom, as the administering power, and requires it to discriminate in Gibraltar between Christians, Jews and Muslims? Now, if this particular violation of human rights is not sustainable, how can it be argued that

the reversionary provisions in that same Article which constitute a violation of the human right to self-determination of the people of the non self-governing territory is still valid and can be sustained? That is the treaty of which we are talking.

36. In 1995, this is what deprives my people of their fundamental rights under the Charter of the United Nations. It is, I submit Mr Chairman, an insult to anybody's intelligence to expect this argument to be taken seriously. Yet, that is what is expected. Others have questioned the legitimacy of the argument.

37. I will quote from a book produced in 1983 by Harold Levie entitled "The Status of Gibraltar". Professor Harold Levie is the Emeritus Professor in International Law at the St. Louis University, Law School. Commenting on the Treaty he says, I quote:

"Spain appears to take the position that, unlike other treaties or agreements of past centuries which created colonial situations by giving one country, a colonial Power, the title to territory foreign to and located at a distance from it, there is something sacrosanct about the Treaty of Utrecht, or at least about the reversionary provision of Article X thereof, removing it from the application of the general rules of international law, such as the right of self-determination of peoples, rules which have had applied in granting independence to numerous other colonial territories during the period since the end of World War II; that, unlike those other treaties or agreements which created colonial situations, the status created by Article X cannot be altered, modified, or annulled by joint action of the inhabitants of the colony and the colonial Power; and that the only way the status of Gibraltar can in any way be changed, even with respect to the relationship between the colony and the colonial Power, is by the transfer of title to and sovereignty over Gibraltar by Great Britain to Spain. For some strange reason, or variety of reasons, a large number of the very States to which these rules have heretofore been applied, with the result that they have become independent, sovereign States, appear to agree with Spain. How the colonial situation on Gibraltar differs from that which existed for these former colonies has never been adequately explained."

38. In November 1988, during the 34th Session, the Human Rights Committee, pointed out that the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights had been opened for signature in 1976 and that both Spain and the United Kingdom had become parties to it. Under the Covenant, both countries therefore had to promote self determination in the remaining dependent territories. In Gibraltar's case, the UK was told

that the choice could not be limited to remaining a colony or becoming Spanish because of the Treaty of Utrecht.

39. Following this up, when I presented my case in Geneva last November to the United Nations Committee that monitors the sister 1976 Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, I reminded it of the contents of Article I of the Covenant. The United Kingdom extended that Covenant to Gibraltar without qualification in 1976. We didn't tell them to do it. We didn't force them to do it. They did it freely and voluntarily. Article I, in paragraph 3, says,

"the States Party to the present Covenant, including those having responsibility for the administration of Non-Self-Governing and trust territory, shall promote the realization of the right of self-determination and shall respect that right in conformity with the provisions of the Charter of the UN."

These are mandatory provisions. This is International Law. This doesn't say the UK may, if they feel like it and it is not going to give them any problems. It says - it shall do it. It says - it shall promote, not, it shall deny. How far can you get from promoting something? You are going to the opposite pole if you are denying it. It is equally mandatory on the Kingdom of Spain who also signed without entering a reservation on Gibraltar.

40. The response of the Committee Mr Chairman, was very encouraging. I believe your Committee may not have had this brought to its attention by the administering power since it is not reflected in the Secretariat working paper. One of the members of the Committee, a German Professor of International Law, asked the British Delegate and, I quote:

"My question is very blunt and simple. Does the United Kingdom consider that in 1994, that is about 290 years after the conclusion of the Treaty of Utrecht, the answer you gave is still sufficient? I mean the answer you gave as regards to Gibraltar that any changes to its status must take account of the provisions of the Treaty of Utrecht? We have a Treaty of 1713 and unless Spain agrees to self-determination, there are no options for Gibraltar. I wonder whether this is still the case?"

41. The British Delegation replied as follows, I quote:

"I can only say that the view that is taken by the UK Government and by the Spanish Government is that the particular provision of the Treaty of Utrecht is still operative and still binding and does

present an inhibition on Gibraltar proceeding to independence not to self rule"

Does this mean, Mr Chairman, that the Gibraltarians can exercise self determination provided the choice is between integration, free association or the fourth option recognised by the UN? And that, in that case, it is purely a matter between us and the administering power in which Spain has no say, and that this view is shared by Spain? The result of those deliberations was that the Committee in its final report included for the first time a comment on Gibraltar which I believe the Special Committee needs to take into account. I quote:

"The Committee notes the concern expressed to it about the situation in Gibraltar in relation to the right to self-determination recognized in Article I of the Covenant and calls upon all parties to the existing situation to ensure full respect for all the rights recognized in the Covenant in relation to future developments concerning Gibraltar."

I think that has been the most encouraging response from an organ of the United Nations.

42. Also in November 1994, a similar conclusion was reached in a paper prepared by Fordham University. After an exhaustive research of the legal issues, the author Simon J Lincoln comes to the conclusion that the people of Gibraltar have the right to self determination. He urged the United Nations to disregard the anachronistic reversionary provisions of the Treaty of Utrecht and recognise Gibraltar's fundamental right. I, myself, published a paper in this International Law Journal in May this year, presenting the arguments with which this Committee is familiar. I will be circulating copies to the Committee.
43. There are in fact, Mr Chairman, three versions - not one - of the effect of the Treaty of Utrecht on the process of decolonisation in the case of Gibraltar. One version, the one that the articles that I have just mentioned in the Law Journal refutes, is the view held by the Kingdom of Spain. The Spanish position is that a strict interpretation of the letter of Article 10 of Utrecht prevents the exercise of any choice whatsoever on the part of the inhabitants of the colony. It is the view that the wishes of the people of Gibraltar are irrelevant. The view of the Kingdom of Spain is that Gibraltar is to remain a British colony until it is taken over by Spain. From our perspective, what Spain is saying is that Gibraltar cannot be decolonised; that the only thing that can happen to Gibraltar is that it can have a change of administering powers with the Kingdom of Spain replacing the United Kingdom as the administering power. The proposals by the Spanish Government to the British Government made

in Geneva in 1985 was effectively that the present colonial constitution would continue with the Kingdom of Spain being substituted for the United Kingdom.

44. I think you would agree, Mr Chairman, that one could describe this interpretation as being the hardline option representing the toughest anti self-government position and the strongest denial of the provisions of the Charter, the Covenants on Human Rights and the Resolutions of the United Nations. The Kingdom of Spain claims that this view is shared by the United Kingdom.
45. The most recent occasion when the Spanish position was reaffirmed was last week at a Seminar held in Madrid where Sr Spiteri, the Spanish Government representative attending the Seminar said that we Gibraltarians should be reminded that our birth certificate reads Utrecht. I put it to your Committee, Mr. Chairman, that our birth certificate reads Chapter XI of the UN Charter, which is the same birth certificate that every colonial people had and which gave rise to international recognition of the rights of colonial people.
46. The second version is the one that is reflected in the answer given by the United Kingdom delegation in 1988 to the Monitoring Committee on the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which I have already quoted. That second version was repeated on the 19th April this year in the House of Lords in answer to a Parliamentary question. Baroness Chalker in reply set out the British Government's position on Gibraltar and I quote:
- "Our policy has consistently been that while we support the principle of the right of self determination reflecting the wishes of the people concerned, it must be exercised with other principles and rights in the United Nations Charter as well as other Treaty obligations. In the case of Gibraltar the right of self determination is circumscribed by the Treaty of Utrecht."
47. This second version, instead of eliminating self determination, circumscribes it. What it seems to be saying is it reduces the options and the choices available to Gibraltarians but does not deprive us of any choice whatsoever.
48. There is a third position which is even better. When Douglas Hurd, the Secretary of State, addressed the Dependent Territories Conference organised jointly by the Falkland Islands and ourselves in London in November 1993, he said when he came to the subject of Gibraltar, and I quote:

"Secondly, and perhaps less obviously, independence is not a practical option for Gibraltar without the consent of its neighbour. It does not therefore have unfettered scope to choose its own status."

49. Mr Chairman, scope of choice is not the same thing as legal right. And therefore, here we have a definition which is not tied to the Treaty of Utrecht. If there were no Treaty, does the possibility of a large hostile neighbour not create a limitation on the scope of exercising unfettered choice, notwithstanding our legal rights? Was it not the case that Belize, for many years, failed to exercise its right to self determination and independence because of the constraint created by a territorial claim from neighbouring Guatemala? Is it not the case that the Falkland Islanders may feel constrained by a claim from Argentina to exercise self determination, even though in their case the United Kingdom has repeatedly stated that they are entitled to this and indeed enshrined in their Constitution in 1985?
50. General Assembly Resolution 46/181 declaring the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism in paragraph 2 states:
- " 2. Declares that the ultimate goal of International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism is the free exercise of the right of self determination by the peoples of each and every remaining non self-governing territory in accordance with Resolution 1514 (XV) and over the relevant Resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly."
51. If we are one of those contained in the reference to each and every remaining territory, is this not a refutation of the arguments of the Treaty of Utrecht?
52. Mr Chairman, since 1992 I have limited my annual presentation to providing your Committee with the views of my Government and the activities we have undertaken to progress our own decolonisation. This year I am going one step further.
53. At the Trinidad Conference in which I participated, at your invitation, we considered jointly, with members of this Committee, the options open to the seventeen remaining non self-governing territories. It appears to me axiomatic, Mr Chairman, that my participation in that Seminar was on the premise that Gibraltar had options. The point that I have made today and the point that I made at the Seminar is that the most powerful and positive contribution that the Special Committee can make in Gibraltar's case, if we are genuinely to progress to decolonisation before the end of the decade, is to express a view on the

constraints, if any, on the Treaty of Utrecht. I made it clear at the Seminar in Trinidad and Tobago that in my submission this week I would be making a formal request for your Committee to give consideration to this issue. The Seminar, in its final report to you, has suggested that you should take on board this request and give it consideration.

54. I believe that if your Committee is asking my Government and my people to consider the options for decolonisation open to them so that they can exercise self determination in choosing between those options between now and the year 2000, then we need to know what your Committee believes those options are.
55. If your Committee feels that as far as its terms of reference are concerned it has to be guided by the Charter of the United Nations, the Covenants on Human Rights and the Resolutions, particularly 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV), and not by any consideration of the Treaty of Utrecht, then it is important for us to know that.
56. If your Committee feels that it cannot express a view, one way or the other on the Treaty of Utrecht, then we would wish to have from you an indication as to what is the appropriate forum within the United Nations system to make a ruling on this matter. Obviously, if the Spanish interpretation of the Treaty of Utrecht were valid, then effectively, as I have demonstrated, we would be saying that it is impossible to decolonise Gibraltar. If that is indeed the case, there seems to me, Mr Chairman, little point in retaining it on the list of non self-governing territories requiring eventual decolonisation since such a result is impossible because of the Treaty of Utrecht.
57. Needless to say, we are totally convinced that this interpretation cannot be correct. My Government is of the firm conviction that the case we have presented is irrefutable. We have marshalled our arguments in the earnest belief that this Committee could not possibly accept that it had to take account of the terms of the three hundred year old Treaty in addressing its responsibilities for Gibraltar and its people.
58. I put it to your Committee, Mr Chairman, that what I am asking you to do in expressing a view on the relevance of the Treaty of Utrecht is no more than what you are required to do by the mandate that you have in respect of the implementation of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. The report by the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly in November 1991, at its 46th Session, states,

"The international community should seek to enable the people of each Non-Self Governing Territory to exercise its inalienable right to self-determination and decide its future political status with complete knowledge and awareness of the full range of political options available to it, including independence."

59. Mr Chairman, I started off by making a reference to this year's 50th anniversary celebration. When I took part in the celebrations in the UK, the Prime Minister reminded us of the founding of the UN when Winston Churchill said:

"We must make sure that the World Organisation does not become an idle name, does not become a shield for the strong and a mockery for the weak".

60. That is what we expect of the UN, and I would add we have no doubt that there is a shield for the weak in the decolonisation process, and that your Committee is that shield."
61. I very much welcome any questions Members of the Committee may wish to put to me on this or any aspect of this year's submission.