



**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/71/L.73,
ENTITLED “REQUEST FOR AN 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 June 2017

Mr. President,

1. I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of 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/71/L.73, entitled “Request for an 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 87, which has been tabled by the Republic of Congo, on behalf of the African Group.

Mr. President,

3. The founding principle of the NAM is based on the rejection of colonialism. The fight for liberation was the major binding factor that drew the newly independent States of Africa, Asia and Latin America together.
4. The support of NAM to the initiatives of decolonization has remained unwavering.
5. As the Third Decade for the Eradication of Colonization approaches its end, the need to free peoples from the shackles of colonialism becomes more pressing and urgent.
6. I wish to recall the position agreed upon by the Heads of State and Government at the XVII Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) held in the Island of Margarita, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on 17 - 18 September 2016 and which was as follows:



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- a. The Heads of States and Governments 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 Heads of States and Governments 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 that the “MPA” was unlawfully established under international law.
 - c. The Heads of States and Governments noted that on 18 March 2015, following proceedings initiated by Mauritius against the United Kingdom under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to challenge the legality of the “MPA”, the Arbitral Tribunal set up under Annex VII to UNCLOS, unanimously ruled that the “MPA” violates international law.
 - d. Cognizant that the Government of the Republic of Mauritius is committed to taking all appropriate measures to affirm the territorial integrity of the Republic of Mauritius and its sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago under international law, the Heads of States and Governments resolved to fully support such measures including any action that may be taken in this regard at the United Nations General Assembly.
7. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), in line with the positions adopted by the Heads of States and Governments during its XVII Summit, held in the Island of Margarita, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on 17 - 18 September 2016, calls on Member States of the Movement to support the action initiated by the African Group under Item 87 of the United Nations General Assembly.

I thank you, Mr. President.