PERMANENT MISSION OF BELIZE
UNITED NATIONS | NEW YORK

Statement delivered by Kenrick Williams on behalf of the Permanent Mission of Belize to the United Nation to the Fourth Committee on Agenda items 52-56 on Decolonization

October 9, 2026

Mr. Chair,

Belize aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Central American Integration System (SICA).

The right of peoples to self-determination is sacrosanct. It affirms that all peoples may freely determine their political status and pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

For Belize, this right is the foundation of our independence and our place among the community of nations.

Nelson Mandela reminded us that ordinary men and women are the real makers of history. As he said: *"Their participation in every decision about the future is the only guarantee of true democracy and freedom."*

That conviction must guide our work: the people concerned must be at the heart of every process to determine their future.

Over the past few days, we have heard representatives and petitioners from Non-Self-Governing Territories, some listed since 1946—eight decades ago. One representative recalled first coming to this Committee as a young man, seated behind his Chief Minister, and returning over the years as Chief Minister himself.

His account reminds us that unfinished decolonization is measured not only in resolutions and reporting cycles, but in lifetimes and generations.

Mandela's words challenge us to listen—and to act. The participation of peoples must shape both the process and its outcome.

Belize therefore supports the work of the Special Committee on Decolonization, the C-24, and calls for accelerated, concrete progress towards completing the decolonization of the remaining territories, consistent with the Charter and relevant United Nations resolutions.

We make this call in solidarity with our Pacific and Caribbean brothers and sisters as they seek to realize their political aspirations. We note the constitutional negotiations between the United Kingdom and the British Virgin Islands. We encourage continued constructive dialogue, with United Nations support, grounded in the freely expressed wishes of the people.

We make the same call for the people of Western Sahara, whose decolonization remains unfinished. Belize reiterates its call for the United Nations and the international community to enable the Sahrawi people finally to exercise their right to self-determination and freely decide their future. We stress that the situation of the Sahrawi refugees cannot be reduced to a humanitarian issue or the indefinite management of their displacement, but must be addressed at its root. They, too, must be the makers of their own history.

Mr. Chair,

An inalienable right does not diminish with the passage of time. But every generation left waiting challenges our commitment to uphold it.

At this critical juncture for multilateralism, completing the unfinished work of decolonization is a test of the United Nations' credibility and purpose.

Belize calls for renewed resolve, meaningful cooperation and measurable progress.

Let us ensure that the people who have come to this Committee can shape their own future—and that the next generation inherits the freedom to choose, rather than the burden of unfinished decolonization.

Thank you.