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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: towards the achievement of the**

*A Time of Change for the United Kingdom Overseas Territories?*

**Introduction**

The ten United Kingdom Overseas Territories under the purview of the Special Committee are, to varying degrees, facing significant social, economic and environmental challenges, the likes of which have not been seen for at least a generation, and perhaps longer. In recent decades, with the notable exception of the volcanic eruption on Montserrat twenty years ago, there has been relative social, economic, environmental, and political stability in the Territories.

Similarly the academic community which has written on the Territories has highlighted the advantages of their particular status. Baldozzino has argued

that non-sovereignty offers "the best of both worlds" with the support of a

## **Brexit**

Since the UK's accession to the EU, the EU has been a key partner for the Territories, and in recent years the bonds between them have strengthened in several key respects – in relation to trade, aid, free movement of citizens, and policy dialogue.

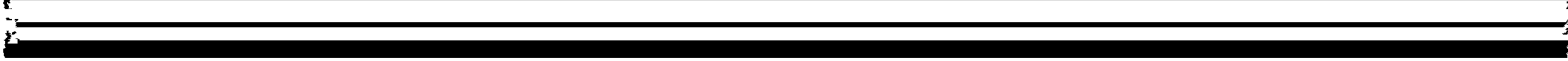
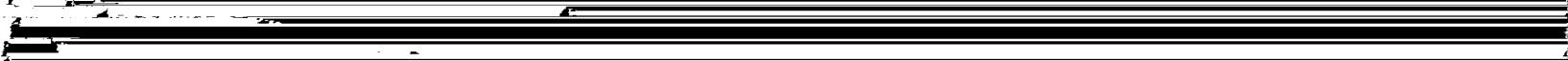
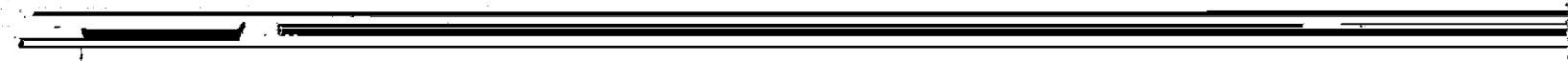
None of the Territories were in favour of Brexit, and of course with the exception of Gibraltar, none had a voice in the decision to leave the EU.

Currently, the Territories are pushing the UK Conservative government to

One concern was the Territories lack of access to reconstruction funds. They were frustrated by not being able to benefit from funds from the UN donors conference in November 2017. Blondel Cluff noted:

[We] witnessed \$1.4 billion being awarded to Barbuda and Dominica,

and we could not attend. Not until the meeting on 11/11/17.



establish publicly accessible registers of the beneficial ownership of companies, which had support from Labour, but also crucially a handful of Conservative MPs.

### **Recalibrating relations**

The UK's decision to leave the EU, in particular, has initiated a set of

specific forces in the relationship between the UK and the EU.

possibility of benefiting in some way with these organisations' existing agreements with the EU.

There are Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) between the EU and CARIFORUM and Southern African Development Community (SADC); an initialled EPA with West Africa; and an interim EPA with countries in the Pacific. So potentially the Territories in the Caribbean, St Helena, Tristan da Cunha and Ascension, and Pitcairn could be accommodated in the regional EPAs. This would mean creating an arrangement that was not directly tied to the UK, and so would require some flexibility on the part of the EU, the regional trading blocs, and the UK that would need to endorse any deals. But such agreements would tap into existing relations and networks.

## Conclusion

This paper has provided a snap-shot of some of the serious issues facing the Territories, which are putting a degree of pressure on relations with the UK.