

Old conflict

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By Guillermo Alvarado

The government of Argentina again demanded this week before the UN Decolonization Committee that sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands, as well as other island territories in the South Atlantic, which have been under illegal occupation by the United Kingdom since the 19th century, be returned to its country.

During a special meeting, Foreign Minister Santiago Cafiero called on London to listen to the international community and resume negotiations to find a peaceful solution to the dispute. They should not be afraid of peace, said the South American nation's official.

He added that this is not only an Argentine demand, but a worldwide clamor because today, he explained, there are a total of 17 colonial situations pending a solution, of which ten, that is to say the majority, involve the United Kingdom.

The conflict began on January 3, 1833, just over 189 years ago, when British military forces occupied the Malvinas, expelled the local authorities, which had been established in 1829, preventing their return.

In an act of vulgar piracy, the occupants prohibited the settlement of Argentines from the mainland.

Throughout the years, the European power settled there colonies with British inhabitants, in addition to taking advantage of the natural resources, in particular the oil and mineral reserves.

The United Nations qualifies the so-called "Malvinas Case" as a special and particular decolonization situation where, unlike other processes, the principle of self-determination of peoples, as London intends to impose, is not applicable.

This means that the current inhabitants of that territory are not in themselves a people victim of foreign occupation, but part of the colonial power itself and therefore the only ones who can claim legitimate sovereignty are the Argentines.

A high point in this conflict was the 1982 war, when the army of the South American country tried to evict the British, but was defeated in an unequal confrontation, where the occupants counted on the support of the United States, which ignored its continental commitments.

In this regard, Chancellor Cafiero pointed out that military victories do not generate rights and the problem remains unresolved. The Minister wondered if there are countries entitled to violate the UN Charter and demanded the international community to act, or be accomplices of a double standard.

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