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At a UN Decolonisation Committee seminar, Wilma Reverón, a Puerto Rican lawyer said that the U.S. has made it clear that they do not intend to allow a true exercise of self-determination in Puerto Rico.

Reveron, who favours independence and is an expert on the political case of Puerto Rico at the UN, said the President Barack Obama's response to a local plebiscite held on November 6 confirms that this "was another exercise in futility for the people of Puerto Rico".

"America does not evince the slightest intention of encouraging or permitting a true exercise of self-determination in Puerto Rico, as proven by 114 years of colonialism," she said.

Reveron was invited to participate as an expert in the Regional Caribbean Seminar Committee on Decolonisation of the UN, which started yesterday and ends tomorrow in Quito, Ecuador.

Although 54% of Puerto Rico voters rejected the extension of the current territorial status, Obama has proposed that the government of Puerto Rico should order another plebiscite – to which the federal government allocated \$ 2.5 million- in which the Department of Justice of the United States would be limited to examining the constitutionality of the status alternatives agreed upon.

In her presentation Reverón said Obama's strategy does not recognise the colonial nature of the political relationship of the Island, or the supervision of the international community and does not apply the "procedural and substantive principles of international law".

Furthermore she highlighted the fact that the plebiscite would not be binding to the U.S. government and "does not provide an opportunity for the participation of the Puerto Rican community residing outside Puerto Rico who constitute the majority of Puerto Ricans today."

Puerto Rican Lawyer speaks at the UN Decolonisation Committee seminar

Escrito por MercoPress

Domingo, 02 de Junio de 2013 11:56 -

"To participate in the plebiscite that President Obama now proposed would be playing by United States rules, accepting a process that does not comply with international law and which urges the people of Puerto Rico to a take decision without the precautionary measures provided by international law and education, without proper training and adequate supervision."