



FORUM: Special, Political and Decolonization Committee (SPECPOL)

AGENDA: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

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Esteemed Delegates and Honorable Advisors,

It is my utmost honor and immense pleasure to welcome every single one of you to TTMUN'26.

Ever since its first session in 2015, TTMUN Conferences have been an undeniable portrayal of unity, collaboration, and resilience by the fellow members of the TTMUN Club. As the executive team of TTMUN'26, we have dedicated countless hours to organize the 11th annual session of TTMUN; while doing so, we have maintained the same passion and dedication with every step we have taken to sustain the quality of TTMUN. That being said, as the Secretary-General of TTMUN'26, I would like to thank my fellow executive team members and our remarkable advisor, Vesile Acar, whose support made it possible to organize this conference and host you here at our school on the 27th, 28th, and 29th of April. Yet, beyond its tradition, TTMUN'26 is shaped by its purpose.

Our mission in TTMUN Club is to foster mutual growth in a collaborative environment where we are not only discussing real-world issues but also work towards solutions. Therefore, in correlation with our mission, we have chosen the theme of TTMUN'26 to be "Bridging Divides in Human Rights". The significance of the theme lies in the unfortunate irony of the persistence of human rights violations. Today, our world is witnessing and turning a blind eye to human rights violations that the United Nations was initially established to ensure that the world would never witness and do so again. Acknowledging this, we, the youth shall not only wait for our turn to come tomorrow but shape it today. Hence, as the executive team, we hope for a fruitful conference where everyone, regardless of their role, contributes to the debates, lobbying, and discussions, bearing the urgency of our global reality in mind.

As we embark on this journey, this mission will be in action over the course of three days as the delegates will have the opportunity to be active in one of nine committees of TTMUN'26 with fifteen diverse agenda items that seek to solve the serious issues that our world is facing. While doing so, let's embrace the unparalleled value of collaboration, respect, and empathy for a better future. Finally, I hope that you have an incomparable MUN experience and once again as the Secretary General, I wholeheartedly welcome everyone to the TTMUN'26.

“All my hope is in youth!”

—Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

Yours sincerely,

Derin Halatçı - Secretary General

INTRODUCTION

The process of decolonization stands as one of the most transformative developments in modern international relations. Adopted in 1960, the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV), known as the *Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples*, marked a decisive global commitment to ending colonialism and affirming the right of all peoples to self-determination. It established a clear normative framework that defined colonialism as a violation of fundamental human rights and called for its unconditional and immediate end. In doing so, it transformed decolonization from a political aspiration into an internationally recognized legal and moral obligation.



Despite significant progress since its adoption, the Declaration's implementation remains incomplete. Several Non-Self-Governing Territories continue to exist today, raising complex legal, political, and ethical questions about sovereignty and governance. While many territories have successfully transitioned toward independence or varying degrees of self-governance, others remain in prolonged transitional phases due to economic dependency, geopolitical disputes, or internal divisions among local populations. In some cases, the absence of consensus within these populations complicates efforts to determine a single legitimate political outcome.

This issue is not merely historical; it is ongoing and increasingly complex. Contemporary decolonization is shaped by a range of evolving challenges, including economic sustainability, climate vulnerability, particularly in small island territories, and the strategic interests of administering powers. These factors introduce new dimensions to the implementation of the Declaration, as decisions about political status are no longer based solely on legal principles but also on practical considerations such as long-term viability and security.

Moreover, the interpretation and application of self-determination have become more nuanced over time. While the Declaration emphasizes independence, modern approaches recognize alternative political arrangements such as free association or enhanced autonomy. This reflects a broader understanding that the ultimate goal is not only independence, but also the establishment of stable and representative governance systems that align with the freely expressed will of the people.

The challenge for the international community today lies in balancing respect for state sovereignty, the genuine aspirations of local populations, and the requirements of the international legal framework. It must also ensure that decolonization processes are conducted in a fair, transparent, and inclusive manner. As a result, the focus has shifted from

simply achieving independence to ensuring that any outcome, whether independence or another form of self-governance, is sustainable, legitimate, and widely accepted. In this context, the role of the United Nations remains essential in facilitating dialogue, overseeing implementation, and supporting territories in achieving a genuinely self-determined future.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Decolonization:

The process through which colonies achieve independence or self-governance, ending political and administrative control by a foreign power.

Self-Determination:

The right of peoples to freely determine their political status and pursue their economic, social, and cultural development.

Non-Self-Governing Territories:

Territories whose people have not yet attained a full measure of self-government, as recognized under Chapter XI of the UN Charter.

Administering Power:

A state responsible for governing a Non-Self-Governing Territory and obligated to promote its development toward self-governance.

Resolution 1514 (XV):

A landmark UN General Assembly resolution (1960) declared the necessity of bringing colonialism to a speedy and unconditional end.

Administering Powers:

States such as the United Kingdom, France, and the United States are responsible for guiding territories toward self-governance. They influence the pace of decolonization, but their strategic and economic interests may occasionally conflict with full implementation.

Political Freedom and Economic Sustainability:

Refers to the balance between a territory's right to self-governance and its ability to maintain a stable and independent economy. In this issue, it highlights the challenge of achieving independence without creating economic instability or dependency.

Immediate Independence:

The rapid transition of a territory from colonial rule to full sovereignty without a gradual or transitional period. While supported in principle by Resolution 1514, it may be difficult to implement in cases where political or economic conditions are not fully developed.

Realpolitik:

A political approach based on practical and strategic interests rather than idealistic principles. In the context of decolonization, it refers to situations where states prioritize security, economic, or geopolitical interests over fully implementing self-determination.

Decolonization Measures:

Actions and policies taken to implement the Declaration, including referendums, political negotiations, legal reforms, and UN-supervised processes aimed at achieving self-governance or independence.

Local Populations:

The people living in Non-Self-Governing Territories whose political will is central to the principle of self-determination. Their opinions may vary, making it challenging to determine a single collective outcome.

International Legal Framework:

The body of laws and principles established by the United Nations, including the UN Charter and relevant resolutions, that guide the process of decolonization and protect the right to self-determination.

Electoral Processes:

The systems and procedures used to determine the political will of a population, such as referendums or elections. In this issue, their fairness and transparency are critical for ensuring legitimate outcomes.

Political Status Options:

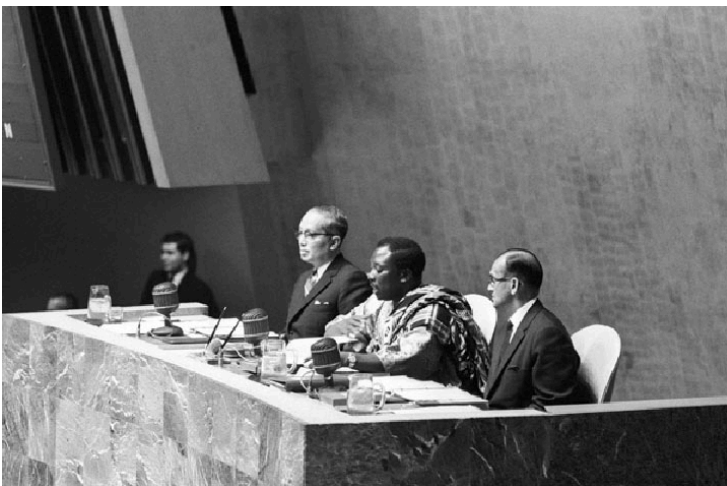
The possible outcomes for a territory's future, including independence, free association, or integration with another state. These options must align with the freely expressed wishes of the people.

Climate Vulnerability:

The susceptibility of certain territories, especially small island regions, to environmental risks such as rising sea levels and natural disasters. This factor influences political decisions, as sustainability and survival may depend on external support.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples was adopted during a period of intense global transformation, as nations across Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean increasingly challenged colonial domination and asserted their right to self-determination. Following the Second World War, the weakening of European colonial powers, combined with the rise of nationalist movements, created strong momentum for decolonization. In this context, the Declaration marked a turning point by framing colonialism not only as a political system but as a violation of fundamental human rights, thereby placing a clear responsibility on the international community to ensure its elimination.



To support this process, the United Nations established institutional mechanisms such as the Special Committee on Decolonization, also known as the C-24, tasked with monitoring progress and facilitating dialogue between administering powers and territories. Over time, these efforts contributed to the independence of more than 80 former colonies, significantly reshaping the global political

landscape. However, despite these achievements, decolonization has not been fully completed, and a number of Non-Self-Governing Territories continue to remain under varying forms of external administration.

The issue today is therefore no longer centered on recognizing the right to self-determination, but rather on effectively implementing it. In many contemporary cases, the process has become more complex and less uniform than in earlier waves of decolonization. Territories such as Western Sahara, New Caledonia, and French Polynesia demonstrate that decolonization is not simply a matter of granting independence, but involves navigating intricate political, economic, and social realities. Disputes over sovereignty, access to natural resources, and the legitimacy of political institutions often delay or complicate progress, turning implementation into a contested and prolonged process.

One of the key challenges lies in the presence of divided local populations. Within many territories, different groups may support independence, autonomy, or continued association with the administering state. This creates difficulties in determining a single, unified expression of political will, which is essential for the principle of self-determination. As a result, referendums and electoral processes can become highly sensitive and sometimes controversial, especially when questions arise regarding voter eligibility or fairness.

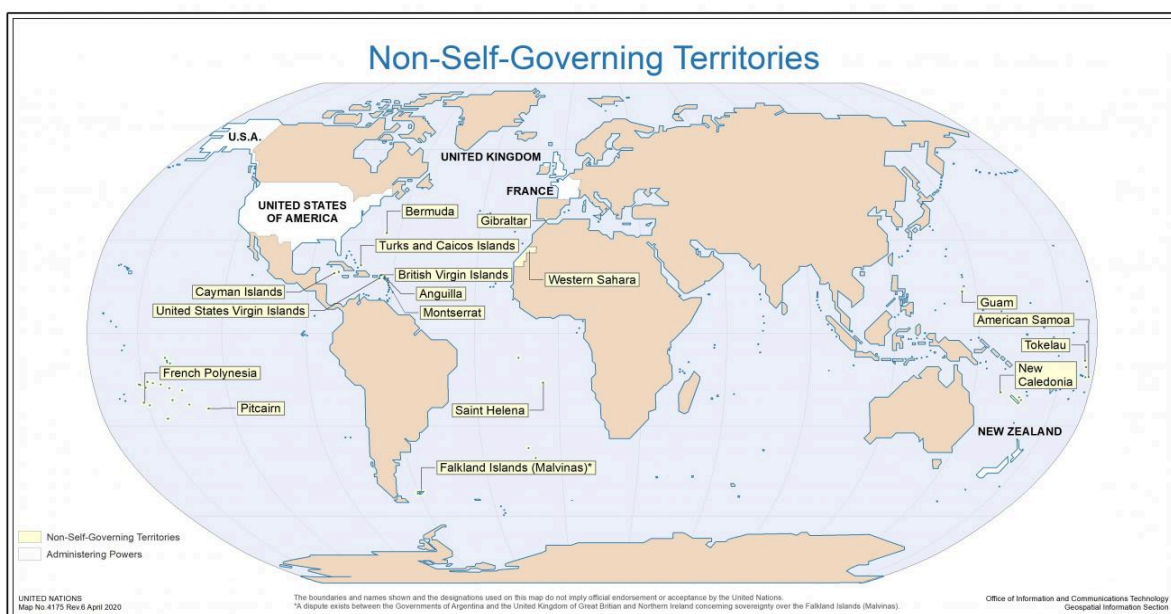
Economic factors further complicate the situation. Many territories remain heavily dependent on their administering powers for financial support, infrastructure, and access to markets. In such cases, immediate independence may pose risks to economic stability, creating a tension between the pursuit of political freedom and the need for sustainable development. This has led to increased consideration of alternative political arrangements, such as free association or enhanced autonomy, as more gradual approaches to self-governance.

In addition, external political and strategic interests continue to influence the implementation of decolonization. Certain territories hold military, economic, or geopolitical significance, which can lead administering powers or other actors to prioritize strategic considerations over full implementation of self-determination. In these contexts, the principles of the Declaration may conflict with realpolitik, slowing down or reshaping the process.

Overall, the gap between the Declaration's principles and their practical application highlights the evolving nature of decolonization. The central challenge today is to develop approaches that are both legally grounded and context-sensitive, ensuring that the process remains legitimate, peaceful, and reflective of the genuine will of the people concerned.

CURRENT SITUATION

Today, there are still 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories officially recognized by the United Nations, indicating that the process of decolonization remains incomplete more than six



decades after the adoption of Resolution 1514 (XV). While some of these territories have made measurable progress through referendums, constitutional reforms, or negotiated autonomy arrangements, others continue to face prolonged political deadlock. This uneven progress reflects the ongoing challenges in implementing the Declaration in a consistent, effective, and universally applicable manner.

At the core of the issue lies a persistent tension between three main actors: the administering powers, the local populations, and the international legal framework established by the United Nations. Administering states often emphasize political stability, economic support, and strategic interests, which can influence the pace and direction of the decolonization process. In contrast, local populations are not always unified in their aspirations. Within the same territory, some groups may advocate for full independence, others for greater autonomy, and some for continued association with the administering power. At the same time, international law requires that the will of the people be freely and genuinely expressed. However, determining what constitutes a fair and representative expression of this will remains highly complex in practice.

In several territories, disagreements over electoral processes and representation have become major obstacles to progress. Issues such as voter eligibility, the accuracy and inclusiveness of electoral rolls, and the organization of referendums directly affect the legitimacy of any outcome. Disputes over these procedures can lead to contested results, delays, or even rejection of proposed solutions. Furthermore, the existence of multiple political status options, including independence, free association, or integration, often intensifies divisions within societies, making consensus more difficult to achieve.

Beyond internal political challenges, broader global factors increasingly shape the decolonization agenda. Economic sustainability is one of the most significant concerns, as many territories rely heavily on financial assistance, administrative support, and trade relationships with their administering states. This dependency creates uncertainty about the feasibility of immediate independence and can encourage more gradual or hybrid approaches to self-governance. In this context, decisions about political status are closely linked to considerations of long term economic stability and development.

Environmental factors have also become increasingly relevant. Climate vulnerability, particularly in small island territories, introduces additional challenges to the decolonization process. Rising sea levels, environmental degradation, and limited natural resources not only threaten the physical sustainability of these territories but also shape political decision making. In some cases, continued association with an administering power may be perceived as necessary for ensuring long term resilience and access to resources.

In addition, regional and international security considerations play a significant role. The strategic importance of certain territories, including their geographic location or military value, can influence the willingness of administering powers to fully implement decolonization measures. Issues such as migration control, defense arrangements, and

geopolitical competition further complicate the process, as they introduce interests that extend beyond the territory itself.

As a result, the implementation of the Declaration today extends far beyond the simple transfer of political authority. It requires carefully balancing legal obligations with political realities, economic viability, and environmental constraints. The focus has shifted toward ensuring that any outcome, whether independence or another form of self governance, is sustainable, inclusive, and widely accepted by the population concerned. In this context, the role of the United Nations and the broader international community remains essential in facilitating dialogue, ensuring procedural fairness, and supporting territories in achieving a genuinely self determined future.

TIMELINE of EVENTS

Year	Event
1945	The UN Charter introduces the responsibility of administering powers over Non-Self-Governing Territories (foundation for future implementation).
1960	Adoption of Resolution 1514 (XV), establishing the legal basis for decolonization and its implementation.
1961	Creation of the Special Committee on Decolonization (C-24) to actively monitor implementation of the Declaration.
1970	The UN adopts resolutions reinforcing the obligation to implement self-determination principles globally.
1975	The Western Sahara conflict began, becoming a long-standing example of the failed implementation of the Declaration.
1980s–1990s	UN increases involvement in implementation through referendums and peace processes (e.g., Namibia's independence success case).

- 2001–2010** Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism—focus shifts to accelerating implementation.
- 2011–2020** Third International Decade—acknowledgement that implementation is incomplete despite earlier efforts.
- 2013** French Polynesia re-listed as a Non-Self-Governing Territory, showing regression in implementation progress.
- 2018–2021** New Caledonia referendums highlight challenges in implementing self-determination when populations are divided.
- 2020** UN deadline for ending colonialism passes—implementation officially recognized as unfinished.
- Present** Ongoing disputes (Western Sahara, etc.) demonstrate that implementation is hindered by political, economic, and geopolitical factors.

MAJOR PARTIES INVOLVED

United Nations (UN):

The United Nations facilitates dialogue, sets the legal framework for decolonization through resolutions such as 1514 (XV), and monitors progress via reports and debates. It may support referendums or mediation processes, though its effectiveness depends largely on member state cooperation.

Special Committee on Decolonization (C-24):

The C-24 oversees the implementation of the Declaration by reviewing the status of Non-Self-Governing Territories and making recommendations to the General Assembly. It gathers information and organizes discussions, but its impact is sometimes limited by restricted access and a lack of cooperation.

Territorial Governments and Local Populations:

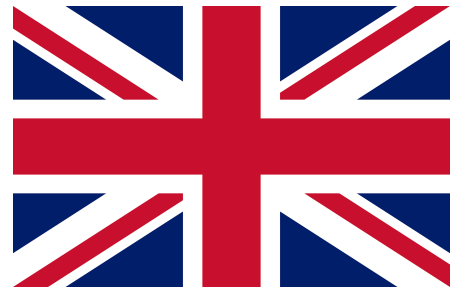
Local populations are central to the process, as self-determination requires their free and genuine consent. However, differing political views within territories can complicate decision-making and delay outcomes.

Regional Organizations:

Regional organizations support decolonization through advocacy and dialogue, often helping to apply regional pressure and encourage peaceful solutions.

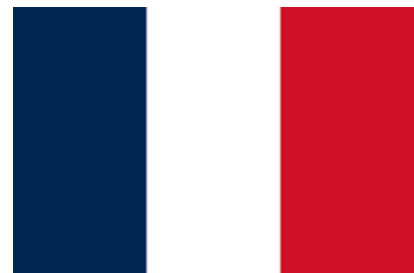
United Kingdom

The United Kingdom is one of the primary administering powers, responsible for several Non-Self-Governing Territories such as Bermuda and the Cayman Islands. While the UK supports the principle of self-determination, it often emphasizes stability and the expressed will of local populations, many of whom prefer continued association. The UK generally advocates for gradual and consensual implementation rather than immediate independence.



France

France plays a significant role as the administering power of territories such as New Caledonia and French Polynesia. It has supported referendums and political dialogue processes, but outcomes have often been contested due to divided public opinion. France tends to promote autonomy and gradual transition models while maintaining strategic and economic ties.



United States of America

The United States administers territories such as Guam and American Samoa. It supports self-governance but often prioritizes security and strategic interests, particularly in the Pacific region. The U.S. generally favors maintaining strong political and military relationships with these territories rather than rapid independence.



Morocco



Morocco is a key party in the Western Sahara dispute, one of the most prominent unresolved decolonization cases. It claims sovereignty over the territory and proposes autonomy under Moroccan governance, while opposing full independence. This position has created ongoing tension with international legal principles of self-determination.

Algeria



Algeria strongly supports the right to self-determination, particularly in the case of Western Sahara. It backs the Polisario Front and advocates for a UN-supervised referendum to allow the Sahrawi people to decide their future. Algeria emphasizes strict implementation of international law.

RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTS

- [UN General Assembly Resolution 1514 \(XV\) \(1960\)](#)
 - **End of colonialism and right to independence.**

- [UN General Assembly Resolution 1541 \(XV\)](#)
 - **Framework and options for self-determination.**

- [UN Charter \(Chapter XI\)](#)
 - **Duties of administering powers toward territories.**

- [Reports of the Special Committee on Decolonization](#)
 - **Status updates and recommendations on decolonization.**

SOLUTION ALTERNATIVES

1. Strengthening Self-Determination Mechanisms

Ensuring fair and transparent referendums is essential for achieving legitimate and widely accepted outcomes. This requires equal political participation, accurate and inclusive voter registration systems, and impartial oversight by international actors. In many cases, disputes arise from unclear electoral procedures or questions of representation, which can undermine the credibility of the process. Strengthening institutional frameworks, including independent electoral bodies and legal safeguards, can help prevent such disputes and increase public trust. Technical assistance from the United Nations can further support territories in organizing credible and internationally recognized self-determination processes.

2. Enhancing UN Involvement

The United Nations can play a more active and consistent role in supporting the implementation of decolonization through mediation, observation missions, and fact-finding efforts. Increased UN involvement helps ensure neutrality and reinforces adherence to international legal standards. In situations where dialogue between parties is limited or tensions are high, the presence of UN representatives can help facilitate communication and reduce mistrust. Additionally, regular reporting and engagement with the General Assembly can maintain international attention on unresolved cases and encourage accountability among stakeholders.

3. Promoting Economic Sustainability

Reducing economic dependency is a key factor in making self-determination both realistic and sustainable. Many Non-Self-Governing Territories rely heavily on their administering powers for financial support, infrastructure, and trade. Development programs, investment in education and infrastructure, and access to international markets can help strengthen local economies. By improving economic resilience, territories are better positioned to make independent political decisions without facing immediate instability. Long-term economic planning is therefore essential to ensure that political transitions do not lead to economic decline.

4. Encouraging Dialogue Between Parties

Sustained and constructive dialogue between administering powers and local actors is essential for resolving disagreements and advancing the decolonization process. Inclusive negotiations allow different perspectives within the territory to be heard and considered, particularly in cases where populations are divided over their preferred political status. Dialogue platforms supported by the United Nations or regional organizations can help

address sensitive issues such as governance, resource management, and political representation. Continued communication reduces tensions and increases the likelihood of reaching peaceful and mutually acceptable solutions.

5. Flexible Political Arrangements

Alternative models such as autonomy or free association provide more adaptable and context-sensitive solutions to decolonization challenges. Not all territories may be prepared for immediate full independence, and in some cases, transitional or hybrid arrangements may better reflect the needs and preferences of the population. A case by case approach allows for flexibility in addressing the unique political, economic, and social conditions of each territory. This ensures that the outcome of the process aligns not only with international legal principles but also with practical realities and long-term stability.

USEFUL LINKS

Decolonization overview and framework: <https://www.un.org/en/decolonization>

Implementation and C-24 activities: <https://www.un.org/dppa/decolonization>

Decolonization debates and resolutions: <https://www.un.org/en/ga/fourth>

Duties toward territories: <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-11>

History of decolonization process: <https://www.un.org/dppa/decolonization/en/history>

UN documents and resolutions: https://digitallibrary.un.org/search?ln=en&cc=Voting%20Data&facet_1=General%20Assembly&sf=year&so=d&rg=50

Self-determination and civil rights: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-civil-and-political-rights>

Economic and social rights: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-economic-social-and-cultural-rights>

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