



Research Report | [GA4]

Forum: Special Political & Decolonization (GA4)

Issue: Discussion on Space Pollution as a Threat to Future Human Space Operations

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Welcome Letter

Greetings in the name of peace and diplomacy!

In a world where exploration and independence are both valued, there exists a need for the world to find the balance between achieving the two. Unfortunately, in this current age, these fundamental ideals are still unreachable for some people, especially due to two issues: Space Pollution and Colonialism. Space pollution increases safety and economical risks towards successful space operations, while colonialisms stop people from fully enjoying their right to self-determinism. This brings into light the need to foster more tight collaborations as member states continue to work towards these issues.

To assist in this endeavor, we, the Board of Dais, have meticulously crafted this document such that delegates will be provided with a brief overview of each agenda. Like the explorers during the Age of Discovery, they are highly encouraged to approach each idea with an open mind and the determination to understand



more. After all, the satisfaction of curiosity leads to a more holistic set of knowledge in the formulation process of sustainable solutions. Above all else, we hope that delegates will be able to embrace the mandate of the GA4 committee as they embody the ideals of diplomacy, innovation, and collaboration in tackling both agendas.

With that, although there is no perfect solution, we hope that by the end of this conference, our delegates will not only have a more diverse perspective on the issues that society is currently facing but also find the drive to translate their concern and ideas into action that will mitigate their impacts. In this era where each member state dreams of achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, every viable solution is worth exploring.

In animo pacis et servitii,

Your Board of Dais,

Eliza and Alex

Background

In the pursuit of more economic power and political influence, empires were driven to explore and conquer foreign lands. This led to what is known as The Age of Discovery between the 15th century to the 17th century, where Europeans started to venture to discover new trading routes, wealth, and knowledge (Briney, 2020). Eventually, these European countries started colonizing the lands they were able to explore. It must be noted that empires have already sought avenues to expand their territories. However, it was only during this period that naval



technology became advanced enough to bring people to farther areas.

There were two major types of colonies: settler and extractive colonies. Settler colonies involved emigrants moving to the new area to live permanently. During the Age of Exploration, it involved Europeans residing and making their living in countries such as but not limited to the United States and South Africa. Although people were able to settle afresh, it often resulted to slavery and abuse especially towards the indigenous populations. On the other hand, extractive colonialism focuses on the gaining of wealth and resources back to one's homeland, either through negotiations or foreign conquest. This was the case for colonial Mozambique when it was under the Portuguese (World 101, 2023).

World war 2 was considered the kickstarter towards decolonization efforts as the people in colonies started to engage in mass demonstrations and national freedom, often due to maltreatment from their colonizers. Today, there are 17 Non-Self Governing Territories that are home to less than 2 million people (United Nations, n.d.). Although this is a significant decrease from the 80 colonies before the decolonization efforts began, the United Nations have emphasized that these states struggle from independence and political development, especially as they also deal with the effects of climate change, shortage in salient resources and more. They have also raised how this committee should find better ways to implement their mandate (unless there is also a need to update such) (United Nations, 2018). There is also a question as to whether the colonizer state is willing to let go of such territory.

In this era, with new global and political superpowers rising, a pressing and



urgent need to ensure each state's right to their own sovereignty emerges. As the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples has proclaimed, *"All peoples have the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development"*, and hence, *"Immediate steps shall be taken, in Trust and Non-self Governing Territories which have not yet attained independence, to transfer all powers to the people of those territories, without any conditions or reservations."*

Definition of Key Terms

Term	Definition
Decolonization	"Process by which countries become independent of the colonizing country" (Britannica, 2024)
Colonialism	"The policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country" (Oxford Languages, n.d.).
Non-self Governing Territories	"Territory 'whose people have not yet attained a full measure of self-government.'" (United Nations, n.d.).
Administering Power	"The authority granted to government departments or agencies to implement and manage the law" (Study Smarter, n.d.).
Self Determination	"The process by which a country determines its own statehood and its own allegiances and government" (Oxford Languages, n.d.).



Major Parties Involved

Non-Self Governing Territories:

These are territories from different parts of the world that have not yet gained their independence. In Africa, this includes Western Sahara in which the people of this territory must still find ways to advance their political state. In the Atlantic and Caribbean region, there are nine non-self-governing territories. All but the United States Virgin Islands are under the influence of the United Kingdom. The UK also has a territory in Europe called Gibraltar. In the Pacific region, there is the American Samoa and Guam (USA), French Peninsula and New Caledonia (France), Pitcairn (UK), and Tokelau (New Zealand). All these territories have unique circumstances that serve as barriers towards the decolonization process.

United Kingdom:

The United Kingdom currently holds power over the majority of the Non-Self-Governing territories, especially in the Atlantic and Caribbean region. Each British territory has its own constitution, but a governor or commissioner is appointed by the UK. Nevertheless, they are completely subjected to the UK parliament's will. For example, if the UK wants to establish a certain law in a certain territory, they will be able to do so (Waitzman, 2023). However, the UK has affirmed that they are dedicated to respect and defend the rights of the people in each territory. The UK is also currently under dispute with Argentina regarding sovereignty over the Falkland Islands.

United States:

According to Werner-Simon (2022), the USA rules over and imposes second-class citizen status on five territories, two of which are not listed in the official UN list of non-self-governing territories: Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), American Samoa, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. These territories only have a silent or non-voting delegate/resident commissioner in the U.S. House of Representatives, which sheds light on the deprivations and differences when compared to U.S. states.



France:

France holds two territories among the UN list of non-self-governing states, namely French Polynesia and New Caledonia. French Polynesia has stated that it is not in a colonial situation but there is still a need to address justice from France's nuclear testing (United Nations, 2018). With New Caledonia, France currently shared responsibility for their relationship. People in New Caledonia have a right to vote in elections and have a say in political matters. So far, in the conducted referendum, the people had voted to remain part of France.

New Zealand:

Under New Zealand is Tokelau, a territory that has not voted on its political/self-determination status. There is belief that the reason behind this is confusion on the distinctions between two terms: self-government and self-determination. As of now, all people in Tokelau are considered New Zealand citizens.

Timeline

Date	Description of Events
15th Century to 17th Century	Age of Exploration: Europeans started exploring and colonizing foreign territories.
1945	The United Nations Trusteeship Council was established to facilitate and monitor the decolonization processes of 11 specific "Trust Territories".
1960	The General Assembly adopted the "Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples", which affirmed the right for self-determination and the speedy and unconditional end of colonialism.



1963	The General Assembly updated the list of 64 territories where the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples” applies.
1990-2000	The General Assembly proclaimed the first international Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.
November 1, 1994	The Trusteeship Council suspended its operations
2020	The General Assembly adopted resolution 75/123 as the most recent International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.
2024	17 Non-self governing territories remain

Possible Solutions

- **Possible Solution 1:** Assessment of Progress and Strategies

- Member states may consider taking stock of the progress in dismantling colonial structure in former colonies, including examining the extent in which they have achieved political independence, brought back indigenous culture, and addressed systematic inequalities from colonial rule.
- Member states may also assess the approaches used in decolonization (e.g. international diplomacy, armed struggle, etc.).

- **Possible Solution 2:** Bridging the Gap between Policy and Implementation

- Member states must find a way to more effectively implement



proposed solutions towards the decolonization process while respecting the sovereignty of each member state.

Useful Resources:

Administrative Power: Influence, Control. (n.d.). StudySmarter. Retrieved April 29, 2024, from

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