



South Bay Model United Nations 2024



Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

ecosoc.sbmunviii@gmail.com

<https://www.southbaymun.com/committees/ecosoc>

Co-Chairs: Henry Hu and Jessica Zhou

Table of Contents

Welcome Message	2
Position Papers	2
Introduction to ECOSOC	3
Topic Overview	3
Past International Action	4
Possible Solutions	5
Questions to Consider	7
Works Cited	8

Welcome Message

Co-Chair: Jessica Zhou

Hey everyone! I'm Jessica and I'm a junior here at Monta Vista. This is my second year doing mun and I've participated in a variety of committees (spec, GA, crisis), but GAs have a special place in my heart. I'm looking forward to hearing everyone's take on this issue and seeing the dynamics between the colonized and the colonizers! I hope everyone has a great time during committee and learns something regardless of skill level. Outside of mun, I enjoy making and watching films, photography, and badly written power fantasy webcomics C:

Co-Chair: Henry Hu

Hi yall! I'm Henry and I'm a sophomore at Homestead. This is also my second year doing MUN. I'm looking forward to reading everyone's ideas regarding the topic and I'm excited to see some thoughtful debate and creative solutions at the conference. I have always loved GAs for the open debate and creative solutions they allow and I hope that this committee will be no different. When I'm not doing MUN stuff, you can find me in a pool somewhere. I also enjoy playing Japanese piano tiles (Project Sekai)

Position Papers

You will not be eligible for any award if you do not submit a position statement.

In order to show your research into your topics, we request that each delegate submit a 2–5 page, typed, and double-spaced position paper, to be emailed as a PDF to ecosoc.sbmunviii@gmail.com by **March 31 at 11:59** for research awards, or by **April 5 at 11:59** for any committee award. Google Drive links will not be accepted. In this research paper, we request that you write three sections: one on an overview of your topic, one on your country or individual's policies as extrapolated from the sources you evaluate, and one on the solution(s) you propose in your topic. We would also like for you to cite your sources in this paper to show that you have performed research.

The heading should look like this (please do not include your name OR your school name in the heading!):

Country Name Committee Name SBMUN VI

If you have any specific questions about position papers, please feel free to email ecosoc.sbmunviii@gmail.com!

Introduction to ECOSOC

The Economic and Social Council, or ECOSOC, is a committee within the general assembly of the UN which handles, as the name suggests, economic and social affairs. The ECOSOC oversees 14 specialized agencies, 10 functional commissions and 5 regional commissions, receives reports from 9 UN funds and programmes, and issues policy recommendations. Some of the specialized agencies include the World Health Organization (WHO), International Monetary Fund (IMF), and United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Topic Overview

Colonialism is defined as the policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically. Colonialism usually involves a large, wealthy, and powerful nation conquering part or all of a weaker nation, overthrowing its leaders, and exploiting the nation for its resources. While colonialism has traditionally been perpetuated solely by countries, recent developments have seen corporations, paramilitary organizations, and terrorist groups participate in colonialism as well.

Beginning in the mid to late 20th century, many nations began the process of decolonization, where they would gradually begin to withdraw their influence and presence from many of the nations they colonized. The United Nations had a large influence on decolonization. After its conception in 1945, the UN established in Chapter XI of the Charter of the United Nations the principles that continue to guide decolonization efforts around the world today. The UN was extraordinarily successful in helping colonized nations achieve independence, successfully

guiding 66 formerly colonized nations to their independence. However, while the UN was successful in helping most nations decolonize, it was not successful in addressing the lingering effects of colonization. Issues such as the lingering effects of genocide, political instability, and environmental destruction have all been prevalent in many formerly colonized nations. Concerning the former, the UN estimates that on average, previously colonized nations saw 40% to 60% of their native populations die from war, disease, and a host of other factors, wiping out entire cultures and people in the process. Decolonization failed to address this issue, and any resolution going forward must have in mind solutions and reparations for genocide. Along with failing to address genocide, many decolonization efforts failed to bring stability, with many formerly colonized nations fracturing and lacking strong central governments to maintain control. In many former colonies, terrorist groups have taken control of the government, or the entire nation has been plunged into near constant conflict due to a lack of political stability. The effects of colonizations are seen economically as well, as many colonized nations were left without the capabilities or stability to trade, engage in global commerce, or extract their own natural resources. Along with devastating effects on local populations, the effects of colonization are multifaceted, and many have international consequences. As colonized nations were exploited for their resources, many were deforested, with some nations losing over 60% of their natural vegetation to extremely destructive activities such as strip mining and agriculture. Furthermore, many colonized nations suffer from “waste colonialism,” where wealthier nations export waste products to poorer nations for recycling or disposal. The lingering effects left by decolonization are clear, however colonialism still persists today, in the form of corporate colonialism. Large corporations, especially those concerning the extraction of natural resources, will use their power and influence to exploit weaker nations for their resources and money. In an echo of companies from the past like the British East India Company, large corporations are bribing politicians, monopolizing foreign markets, and in extreme cases using soldiers and assassinating leaders to take power in countries rich in natural resources. It is clear then, that any resolution towards colonialism must be complex and multifaceted, not only concerning the effects of colonialism, but also solutions to mitigate the colonialism which persists today.

Past International Action

Established in 1945, the UN charter principles laid the foundation for addressing colonialism. The charter sought to create and maintain amicable relations between all nations — emphasizing the equality of sovereignty. In 1960, the Soviet Union first proposed a declaration

addressing colonialism. This led to the passing of the UN General Assembly Resolution 1514, also known as the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. This resolution was supported by mostly Asian and African nations, more notably with Australia, Belgium, Dominican Republic, France, Portugal, Spain, Union of South Africa, United Kingdom, and United States abstaining from passing the resolution. Shortly after, the UN established the C-24, or the Special Committee on Decolonization in 1961. The C-24 focused on implementing resolution 1654, which recalled and reaffirmed resolution 1514. In 1988, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 43/47, declaring the First International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, and accelerating the implementation of Resolution 1524 through the development of international plans of action. These plans of action, made in collaboration between nations around the globe, focused primarily on helping colonized nations achieve sovereignty and as a result independence through collaboration between member states, the C-24, and NGOs. These resolutions, especially resolution 1514 and resolution 43/47, were extraordinarily effective in helping nations achieve sovereignty. Since the creation of the UN, over 80 former colonies have gained independence with the help of the UN. However, aside from the efforts mentioned above, overall legislation concerning colonialism has stagnated in the modern era. Most legislation passed since 1988 has consisted of recalls and extensions of resolution 1514, with few actual new proposals being passed. Most action today regarding the effects of colonialism is either undertaken by individual nations or NGOs. When observing the measures taken by individual groups regarding former colonies, most actions seem to revolve around sending aid and money to nations formerly colonized. Nations such as France, the UK, and Germany have pledged to spend a portion of their annual budget, billions and billions of dollars, towards providing aid to former colonies. However, due to the unique economic and political circumstances of these nations, most relief is lost to government corruption and waste. A growing field of study has revealed that for years the vast amount of aid sent to former colonies, specific examples being countries such as Somalia, Afghanistan, and Ghana, was lost as rulers opted to divert aid into personal funds rather than to the public. These factors have largely rendered aid ineffective in providing relief or stability to nations which receive it.

Possible Solutions

When looking at previous UN action regarding colonialism, the most successful pieces of legislation were collaborative agreements with in depth solutions that took into account the needs of all groups. Resolutions such as resolution 1514 were successful because many nations

cooperated in both creation and implementation. Conversely, resolutions enacted without the full cooperation of all nations involved, such as resolution 1747 which attempted to hold free elections in multiple different former colonies, have failed or have been diminished in their effectiveness. It can be concluded that any solutions put forth must be collaborative agreements between all nations involved, and solutions dictated by one or few nations cannot be seen as reliable or long term solutions. Furthermore, it must be emphasized that the traditional method of sending aid to former colonies does not work. Government corruption and conflict guarantees that most aid sent is lost or misused, eliminating the benefit the aid was supposed to provide.

With that in mind, any solution put forward must foremost deal with the political instability present in many formerly colonized nations. As previously mentioned, little thought was given towards ensuring stability in former colonized nations. When nations underwent decolonization, the sudden withdrawal of a centralized government created a power vacuum in many nations, causing conflict as different groups attempted to seize power. Going forward, any possible solutions must include solutions towards creating long-term stable governments in formerly colonized nations. Obvious options include the recognition of the legitimacy of certain leaders in former colonies, and the admittance of formerly colonized nations into the UN to provide protections and further legitimacy. Emphasis should also be put on the establishment of free and fair elections to ensure the election of leaders who represent the people. However, other options, including the use of NGOs, may be considered. The biggest issue regarding the climate crisis in former colonies is the lack of testing. Statistically, formerly colonized nations see their environment tested less by agencies such as the UNEP, WMO, etc. A lack of testing increases the risk of environmental hazards growing in severity and size, which is a problem that disproportionately affects former colonies. Solutions must include increased testing, however action must also be taken regarding waste colonialism and the overall reliance on former colonies for raw materials and fossil fuels, the extraction of the latter having a devastating impact on the environment of many former colonies.

Continuing on, establishing stable economies in former colonies goes hand in hand with establishing stable governments. The establishment of stable governments will allow reinvestment into the economy, allowing growth and stability. However, action must also be taken to ensure that capital meant to be reinvested is not lost to government or corporate corruption. Action must also be taken to ensure that nations have the proper infrastructure to

develop functioning and stable economies. The UN could potentially work with existing companies to develop infrastructure, though care must be taken to prevent the creation of monopolies and other anti-competitive actions.

In regards to the issue of genocide, the solution should not so much as deal with preventing genocide, as it should with providing reparations for genocide. While it is true that genocide is currently being committed in numerous formerly colonized nations, most of it is the direct result of the instability of such nations. The issue of preventing current genocide is more likely to be solved by the establishment of stable governments in former colonies rather than through direct UN action and force. Previous incidents such as the Kosovo War have shown that UN military intervention in nations impacted by conflict will inevitably increase the severity of the conflict. Instead of choosing to directly intervene in foreign conflicts and genocides and risk escalation, the UN should instead take action towards providing reparations for communities impacted by genocide during colonialism, while also working towards managing the effects of recent genocide and conflict in former colonies. It should be noted that reparations should likely be sent after nations have developed stable governments and economies in order to decrease the likelihood the reparations are lost to corruption or waste.

While all of these solutions regard managing the effects of colonialism in former colonies, steps must also be taken towards preventing further colonialism today. Thankfully, with almost all nations agreeing to use whatever measures necessary to stop colonialism, the UN can use drastic measures against colonialism today. With most colonialism in the modern era being corporate colonialism, the UN can work with nations to sanction or limit the activities of major corporations currently engaged in the practice. History has already shown that UN action is extremely effective in forcing corporations to obey. While this does not come close to fully addressing the effects of colonialism, any solution that includes the majority of the solutions listed is an important step forward in the fight against colonialism and its effects.

Questions to Consider

1. How has the UN previously addressed colonialism, and what were the limitations or failures in these solutions?
2. What challenges did colonized nations face post-decolonization?

3. In what ways does colonialism continue to shape international relations and power dynamics?
4. Should former colonial powers bear responsibility for the historical injustices and lasting impacts of colonization?

Works Cited

- United Nations General Assembly Session -1 Resolution 1514. A/RES/1514(XV). Retrieved 2023-1-8.
- United Nations General Assembly Session 43 Resolution 47. International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism A/RES/43/47 22 November 1988. Retrieved 2023-1-8.
- “Acting High Commissioner: Addressing the Legacies of Colonialism Can Contribute to Overcoming Inequalities Within and Among States and Sustainable Development Challenges of the Twenty-First Century.” United Nations, United Nations, 28 Sept. 2022, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/09/acting-high-commissioner-addressing-legacy-colonialism-can-contribute>. Accessed 8 Jan. 2024.
- Blakemore, Erin. “Colonialism Facts and Information.” Culture, National Geographic, 19 Oct. 2023, www.nationalgeographic.com/culture/article/colonialism#:~:text=Colonialism's%20impacts%20include%20environmental%20degradation,outlast%20one%20group's%20colonial%20rule.
- Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "imperialism summary". Encyclopedia Britannica, 21 Dec. 2021, <https://www.britannica.com/summary/imperialism>. Accessed 8 January 2024.
- Conrad, Joseph. “The Scramble for Africa: St John’s College, University of Cambridge.” The Scramble for Africa , St John’s College, University of Cambridge, www.joh.cam.ac.uk/library/library_exhibitions/schoolresources/exploration/scramble_for_africa. Accessed 8 Jan. 2024.
- Fleck, Fiona. “Children are main victims of trafficking in Africa.” BMJ, vol. 328, no. 7447, 2004, <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.328.7447.1036-b>.
- Getachew, Adom. Worldmaking after Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination. Princeton University Press, 2019. JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv3znwvg>. Accessed 9 Jan. 2024.

- “International Decades | The United Nations and Decolonization.” United Nations, United Nations, www.un.org/dppa/decolonization/en/history/international-decades. Accessed 8 Jan. 2024.
- Michalopoulos, Stelios, and elias Papaionnou. “European Colonialism in Africa Is Alive: By Stelios Michalopoulos & Elias Papaioannou.” Project Syndicate, Project Syndicate, 2 Aug. 2021, www.project-syndicate.org/onpoint/europe-africa-colonial-era-lasting-effects-by-stelios-michalopoulos-and-elias-papaioannou-2021-07.
- Settles, Joshua Dwayne. The Impact of Colonialism on African Economic Development. 1996. University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Supervised Undergraduate Student Research and Creative Work.
- Smit, Christian Reus. “Struggles for individual rights and the expansion of the international system.” *International Organization*, vol. 65, no. 2, 14 Apr. 2011, pp. 207–242, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818311000038>.
- “Special Committee on Decolonisation (Committee of 24).” Special Committee on Decolonisation (Committee of 24) | Coopération Régionale et Relations Extérieures de La Nouvelle-Calédonie, cooperation-regionale.gouv.nc/en/international-cooperation-un-organisations#:~:text=The%20C%2D24%2C%20which%20today,%E2%80%9CNon%20Self%2DGoverning%E2%80%9D%20Territories. Accessed 8 Jan. 2024.
- Tidey, Alice. “Some EU Nations Have Apologised for Their Colonial Past. Is It Enough?” *Euronews*, 20 Dec. 2022, www.euronews.com/my-europe/2022/12/20/some-european-countries-have-apologised-for-their-colonial-past-is-it-enough.
- “United Nations and Decolonization: Past to Present.” United Nations, United Nations, www.un.org/dppa/decolonization/en. Accessed 8 Jan. 2024.
- United Nations General Assembly Session 55 Resolution 146. Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism A/RES/55/146. Retrieved 2023-1-8.
- Varanasi, Anuradha |September. “How Colonialism Spawned and Continues to Exacerbate the Climate Crisis.” *State of the Planet*, Columbia Climate School, 23 Sept. 2022, news.climate.columbia.edu/2022/09/21/how-colonialism-spawned-and-continues-to-exacerbate-the-climate-crisis/.
- Voskoboynik, Daniel Macmillen. “Colonialism Can’t Be Forgotten – It’s Still Destroying Peoples and Our Planet.” *openDemocracy*, openDemocracy, 18 Oct. 2018,

www.opendemocracy.net/en/opendemocracyuk/colonialism-can-t-be-forgotten-it-s-still-destroying-peoples-and-our-pl/.