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Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Dissemination of information on decolonization during the period from April 2021 to March 2022

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, prepared in response to General Assembly resolution [76/104](#) of 9 December 2021, provides a general overview of the activities undertaken and supported by the Department of Global Communications to disseminate information on decolonization, with particular emphasis on the options for self-determination available for the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. Unless otherwise mentioned, it covers the period from April 2021 to March 2022.



I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in paragraph 2 of its resolution 76/104, considered it important to continue and expand its efforts to ensure the widest possible dissemination of information on decolonization, with particular emphasis on the options for self-determination available for the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. To that end, it requested the Department of Global Communications, through the United Nations information centres in the relevant regions, to actively engage and seek new and innovative ways to disseminate material to the Non-Self-Governing Territories. In paragraph 3 of the same resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to further enhance the information provided on the United Nations decolonization website and to continue to include the full series of reports of the regional seminars on decolonization, the statements and scholarly papers presented at those seminars and links to the full series of reports of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. It also stressed that the Department of Global Communications and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs continue to be jointly responsible for maintaining and enhancing the United Nations decolonization website. In paragraph 4, the Assembly requested the Department of Global Communications to continue its efforts to update web-based information on the assistance programmes available to the Non-Self-Governing Territories. In paragraph 5, it requested the Department of Global Communications and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs to implement the recommendations of the Special Committee and to continue their efforts to take measures through all of the media available, including publications, radio, television, the Internet and social media, to give publicity to the work of the United Nations in the field of decolonization.

2. In fulfilling its mandate, the Department of Global Communications worked closely with the Decolonization Unit of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, among other relevant United Nations offices and entities.

3. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic continued to be a challenge during the reporting period. Accordingly, the Department of Global Communications deployed various online tools and platforms to ensure that the work of the United Nations on decolonization received maximum publicity and promotion.

4. The present report, prepared in response to the above-mentioned resolution, covers the period from April 2021 to March 2022, unless otherwise indicated.

II. 2021 Caribbean regional seminar on the implementation of the Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism

5. The Special Committee organized its annual Caribbean regional seminar in the Parish of St. John, Dominica, from 25 to 27 August 2021.

6. The seminar was held under the theme “Charting a dynamic course for decolonization in commencing the Fourth International Decade and in the light of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, through commitment to mandate, collaboration, pragmatism and agility.”

7. A press officer from the Meetings Coverage Section of the Department of Global Communications was deployed to cover the seminar. The press officer worked closely with the Decolonization Unit of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and was also present on the ground assisting the Special Committee on

Decolonization, issuing daily press releases, which were disseminated through the various United Nations communications platforms.

III. Coverage of issues before the General Assembly

8. During the reporting period, the Department of Global Communications issued a total of 50 press releases, in English and French, covering meetings and statements relating to the work of the United Nations on decolonization, including by the General Assembly, its Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) and the Special Committee.

9. For journalists seeking to cover the work of the United Nations on decolonization, the Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit of the Department of Global Communications disseminated information about relevant meetings and events through regular media alerts and provided accreditation and liaison support. The Media Documents Centre distributed statements and resolutions related to those meetings to journalists and members of the media.

A. United Nations websites and social media

10. The “Global issues” section of the United Nations website (www.un.org/en/global-issues/), maintained by the Department of Global Communications, continued to feature the issue of decolonization in the six official languages of the United Nations (www.un.org/en/global-issues/decolonization). During the reporting period, the pages in that section were viewed a total of 88,644 times.

11. In the “Observances” section of the United Nations website, the page for the International Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories (25–31 May; <https://www.un.org/en/observances/non-self-governing-week>) was viewed a total of 21,397 times during the reporting period.

12. The flagship United Nations social media accounts, with over 60 million followers and which are managed by the Department of Global Communications, continued to amplify messaging around decolonization. The accounts, in the six official languages, as well as Hindi, Kiswahili and Portuguese, also promoted related meetings, events and observances. By providing relevant links in their social media posts, the accounts drove traffic to the web pages on decolonization, ensuring that diverse audiences received detailed information about the Organization’s work in the area of decolonization.

13. During the reporting period, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs continued to maintain and update the “United Nations and Decolonization” website in the six official languages (www.un.org/dppa/decolonization). From January to December 2021, the website had a total of 417,542 page views, 249,875 sessions and 200,181 users, a 110.4 per cent, 126.9 per cent and 128.3 per cent increase from 2020, respectively.

14. In the context of the continuing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the working methods of the Special Committee during its 2021 session, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs continued to keep the general public informed of activities relating to decolonization, in particular those of the Special Committee, the Fourth Committee, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, through the “United Nations and Decolonization” website.

15. In line with the mandate on multilingualism and accessibility, the English animation video on the topic of United Nations and decolonization, from the past to the present, created by the Decolonization Unit of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs was translated, with subtitles, into the remaining five official languages. On 14 June 2021, a teaser of the videos in the six official languages was presented during the second meeting of the Special Committee. In July 2021, following the launch of the five translated animation videos, the website had a total of 17,381 sessions and 15,032 users, representing an increase of 78.8 per cent and 91.5 per cent, respectively, compared with July 2020.

B. United Nations News

16. During the reporting period, United Nations News covered the opening session of the Special Committee in the six official languages, as well as in Kiswahili, Portuguese and Hindi.

17. Throughout the reporting period, United Nations News teams produced several multimedia stories and features, including on the situation of Non-Self-Governing Territories and on the social and economic impacts of climate change, since the vast majority of the Territories are small islands affected of the phenomenon. The coverage also featured the observance of the International Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories (25–31 May).

18. The Department of Global Communications continued to provide live and on-demand coverage of United Nations meetings and events on decolonization issues to broadcasters through United Nations Web TV. In total, 41 live and on-demand videos were made available to a global audience. Among them were meetings of the Fourth Committee, the Special Committee on decolonization and the feature video: “United Nations and decolonization, from the past to the present”. Thirty-seven photos of those events were published on the United Nations Photo website and archived.

19. As part of its digitization project, the Audiovisual Library also digitized 24 films and videos on decolonization and will make them available on its website once catalogued. These items and earlier digitized material are used by broadcasters, researchers, film makers and institutions for news, documentaries and exhibits.

IV. Visitors’ services

20. The Visitors’ Services at Headquarters and the Offices at Geneva, Nairobi and Vienna continued to share informational materials and conduct briefings on decolonization, including on the roles of the Trusteeship Council and the Fourth Committee and on the progress made on decolonization over the past decades. The issue of decolonization is regularly included in the narrative of the guided tours, which in New York includes the Trusteeship Council Chamber, and tour guides refer to the work of the Special Committee in the light of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, of 1960. In New York, for example, tours focusing on Black History Month took place in February 2022, with an emphasis on the issue of decolonization and the growing number of independent Member States joining the Organization in the 1960s.

21. During the reporting period, nearly all tours and briefings in New York were conducted virtually owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

V. Dag Hammarskjöld Library

22. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library maintains and regularly updates two research guides relating to decolonization. These guides, one on the Trusteeship Council (<http://research.un.org/en/docs/tc>) and the other on Decolonization (<http://research.un.org/en/docs/decolonization>), are part of the United Nations Documentation Research Guide series which is available online to the general public. The Library continued to regularly provide research and information services on decolonization and related topics.

23. During the period under review, the Library digitized 2,200 historical documents (a total of 33,800 pages) of deliberations of the Trusteeship Council and 1,300 documents (a total of 8,800 pages) of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee and uploaded them to the United Nations Digital Library, the Organization's electronic repository. To ensure the widest possible dissemination of information on decolonization and enhance its discoverability online, the Library also analyzed and created 151 discovery tags for documents and speeches related to decolonization issues, including those presented at the meetings of the Fourth Committee during the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly.

VI. United Nations information centres and services

24. The global network of United Nations information centres continued to educate the public on the work of the Organization, including on the issue of decolonization, by conducting virtual and in-person briefings, guided tours and Model United Nations, as well as radio programmes in local languages, social media posts and videos.

25. The information centre in Canberra also continued to host a web page entitled "United Nations and decolonization" (<https://un.org.au/useful-links/united-nations-and-decolonization>).

VII. Conclusions

26. In spite of the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Global Communications spared no effort to cover and highlight issues related to decolonization and the objectives of the Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. Working in cooperation and coordination with the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Department utilized its traditional and multimedia platforms to support this issue and the work of the Special Committee, in order to advance decolonization and promote the need for the immediate and full implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.
