



General Assembly

Distr.: General
23 March 2020

Original: English

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 2019 to March 2020

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, prepared in response to General Assembly resolution [74/112](#) of 13 December 2019, 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 2019 to March 2020.



I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in paragraph 2 of its resolution [74/112](#), 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 Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Global Communications 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 present report, prepared in response to the above-mentioned resolution, covers the period from April 2019 to March 2020.

II. 2019 Caribbean regional seminar on the implementation of the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism

4. The Special Committee organized its Caribbean regional seminar in Saint George's, from 2 to 4 May 2019. Grenada had previously hosted the regional seminar from 9 to 11 May 2018, from 22 to 24 May 2007 and from 17 to 19 June 1992.

5. The seminar was held with a view to accelerating action in the implementation of the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (2011–2020), on the occasion of the Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories.

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

III. Coverage of issues before the General Assembly

7. During the reporting period, the Department of Global Communications issued a total of 37 press releases in English and French, covering meetings, seminars and statements relating to the work of the United Nations on decolonization, including by the General Assembly and its Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), and the Special Committee.

8. 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 relating to these meetings to journalists and members of the media.

A. United Nations website and social media

9. In June 2019, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, in collaboration with the Office of Information and Communications Technology, launched a revamped and more user-friendly website on the United Nations and decolonization (www.un.org/dppa/decolonization). The Department of Global Communications provided guidance on the branding and multilingualism standards for the website prior to its launch.

10. In parallel, from April to September 2019, the Department of Global Communications continued to maintain the legacy website “The UN and Decolonization”. During that period, the site received a total of 196,609 views in the six official languages, before being decommissioned in October.

11. The “Global issues” section of the United Nations website (www.un.org), maintained by the Department of Global Communications, continued to feature the issue of decolonization in the six official languages (www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/decolonization/index.html). During the reporting period, these pages were viewed a total of 76,193 times.

12. 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; www.un.org/en/events/nonselfgoverning) was viewed a total of 7,266 times during the reporting period.

13. The social media accounts of the Department of Global Communications continued to promote issues relating to decolonization in the six official languages, as well as in Portuguese, Kiswahili and Hindi. During the reporting period, these accounts covered the meetings, events and observances in the areas of decolonization. The accounts also helped to drive traffic to the decolonization web pages by providing necessary links on their social posts, thereby ensuring that the audience had more detailed information on the Organization’s work in the area of decolonization.

B. United Nations News

14. United Nations News, across the six official languages, plus Kiswahili, Portuguese and now Hindi, continued during the reporting period to produce varied multimedia stories and features on the issue of decolonization, including the opening session of the Special Committee.

15. In its coverage of the work of the Special Committee in June 2019, United Nations News in Spanish produced on 25 June a story on the Committee expressing regret that the implementation of General Assembly resolutions on the issue of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)¹ had not yet started.

16. United Nations News in French produced a feature story on 23 September 2019 on all the Presidents of the General Assembly from the African continent who represented 12 decolonized countries: Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Ghana, Libya, Namibia, Nigeria, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, as well as Liberia, which was the only free African country to be among the founding members of the Organization.

17. United Nations News in Hindi produced a multimedia story highlighting and explaining the work of various parts of the Organization, including the work of the Fourth Committee.

18. The Department of Global Communications provided live and on-demand coverage of United Nations meetings and events on decolonization issues. Photos of those events were published on the United Nations Photo website. Coverage included the plenary meetings of the Special Committee (11 meetings); the plenary meetings of the Fourth Committee (24 meetings); and a meeting of the organizational session of the Special Committee (1 meeting).

IV. Visitors Services

19. The Visitors Services in Geneva, Nairobi, New York and Vienna shared informational materials and conducted briefings on decolonization, including on the roles of the Trusteeship Council and the Fourth Committee and on the progress made in 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. During the reporting period, the programme reached more than 435,000 visitors across the four duty stations.

V. Dag Hammarskjöld Library

20. The United Nations possesses a wealth of information on decolonization and on the historic role that the Organization has played, together with Member States, in the process. This wealth of information, contained in the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, comprises almost 50 years of documentation on the work of the Trusteeship Council from 1946 to 1993, the Special Committee since 1961 and the Fourth Committee since 1946. The Library has been disseminating such information to Governments, academics, libraries and the public through both physical and digital means, including through the United Nations Depository Library Programme and the United Nations Digital Library, the central repository for United Nations content that was launched in 2017.

21. During the reporting period, the Library, in collaboration with the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, digitized 17,187 documents (105,028 pages) on decolonization, while, as from 2018, digitization efforts have been focused on important Trusteeship Council documents. Additional extrabudgetary funding has

¹ A dispute exists between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas).

been requested with a view to accelerating the rate of digitalization and making sure that all precious historical archives are duly preserved.

VI. Publications

22. The Department of Global Communications, in consultation with the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, worked on a leaflet entitled “Ten frequently asked questions on the United Nations and decolonization”. The leaflet will be accessible in English in electronic format by June 2020, with other official languages to follow.

VII. United Nations information centres and services

23. The global network of 59 active United Nations information centres continued to engage with high school and university students on the issue of decolonization through presentations on the history of the United Nations and its six principal organs, including the role of the Trusteeship Council. Over 1,200 briefings were conducted by the centres during the reporting period. The centres also disseminated information through electronic means, for example, the centre in Canberra, Australia, hosts a web page entitled “United Nations and decolonization” (<https://un.org.au/useful-links/united-nations-and-decolonization/>).

VIII. Conclusions

24. The Department of Global Communications continues to cover issues relating to decolonization and to promoting the objectives of the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. To this end, the Department, in full cooperation and coordination with the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, utilized its various traditional and multimedia platforms to highlight the work of the Special Committee in advancing decolonization and promoting the need for the immediate and full implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.
