



## 4th Special Political and Decolonization: Rights of Indigenous people and Neocolonialism in Africa

Hello delegates! My name is Maximus Gregory, and I'll be your head chair for the 4th SPD. Despite it being my third year in the MUN program, head chairing will be a completely new experience for me and I aim to learn a lot. Guessing from the topic, you could probably tell that identity is of great importance to me. As of writing this it's only been, my fourth month here in the United States. Transferring from Indonesia and leaving my family and friends, there's definitely an aspect of alienation. The Model United Nations has been an outlet to speak out and express myself and through that notion I owe this program a great deal. I love politics, the sun, and in my free time I love to read. If you have any questions, I'm pretty chill so please feel to free to email me at [maximusgregory17@gmail.com](mailto:maximusgregory17@gmail.com).

Hi, I'm Farrah Morris, your vice chair for the 4th SPD Committee! I'm a Junior and have been in the MUN program for three years. I also participated in a small MUN program in middle school as well. I love going to all the different schools and meeting new people, as well as debating about topics that I have a lot of passion for. I do partial AP, and I am also in Journalism. I enjoy writing, drawing, and playing video games. I was in self defense for four years and gained my green belt before stopping. I am excited to meet all of you and hearing about your country's opinions and solutions!

*The Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) considers a broad range of issues covering a cluster of five decolonization-related agenda items, the effects of atomic radiation, questions relating to information, a comprehensive review of the question of peacekeeping operations as well as a review of special political missions, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the Report of the Special Committee on Israeli Practices and International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space. In addition to these annual items, the Committee also considers the items on Assistance in mine action, and University for peace biennially and triennially respectively.*

### I. Background

From the *Pelasgians* of ancient Greek to the modern Kawanua tribe in Indonesia, these ethnic groups known as the indigenous people still exist today and face many apparent problems. Most notably, their political rights. Due to the colonial expansion from European powers from the



early 15th century and onwards, different cultures are often forced to clash. These territorial and cultural conflict result in the intentional/unintentional displacement of indigenous populations. Being alienated and forced into a culture and government that weren't theirs, the indigenous people face the issue of political rights. Most of the time, these inhabitants have to conform to the laws, regulations, and influence the state has on their community and land rights. Their lifestyles are marginalized, and differ to the political/economic modern processes of the structure, which sought recognition for indigenous rights. These issues would later yonder into into cultural preservation, land-rights, the ownership of natural resources, their right to self-govern, environmental incursion, discrimination, etc. This would spur a debate on their human rights and the collective rights they are entitled or not entitled to have. It is necessary to promote this prevalent issue, and the designated rights of indigenous people for a more viable, equitable, and prosperous political agenda for states to follow.

## **II. United Nations Involvement**

The United Nations has only recently become more involved with the Rights of Indigenous people and its member states when they declared and march into the future on the path of human rights on the 13th of September 2007. This declaration found its way to the emergence of the UNDRIP, or United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. This would label the protection by governments around the world for the rights of indigenous people. The development of UNDRIP was vastly influenced by indigenous workers and their effort to make sure governments all around the world enforce this declaration. This would later become a living document to emphasize on the common future of humanity.



The adoption of this declaration reflected many years of work, and the expression for 370 million indigenous peoples and their place in our global community. Their contribution to the diversity of our planet, their practices to restore and sustain our world's natural resources, and their knowledge of medicines make them a valuable part of the UN's society. During the vote, 11 countries objected, including Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States but would eventually support the declaration.

The UNDRIP sets out a standard to how governments should respect the rights of indigenous people. Additionally, the ILO Convention 169, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women were proper guides implemented into this convention to enforce other human rights agreements. The document consists of 46 articles that describe these rights governments must enforce.

Currently, the UN continues to enforce this declaration and its an international instrument to advocate for the rights of indigenous people. The framework that establishes and elaborates on new and existing human rights and fundamental freedoms is a continued project the UN still looks to maintain for the prosperity and equity of the people.

### **III. Possible Solutions**

As our world continues to diversify, delegates must tackle the issue of indigenous rights and solve it in a manner where in a society, no group is left behind. The solution delegates are supposed to be relevant around the issues concerning their right to a land, territory, and resources and their access to special measures that include health, education, justice, and the contribution/representation of the indigenous people in relevant bodies. The solutions discussed must also be time-sensitive. Short term solutions can include the attribution of land for the



indigenous people to live in but it will not solve the ultimate goal of this committee, which is to ensure the rights of indigenous people and to include them as a part of our community. The short term solutions should also discuss the importance of how governments should adopt and implement rights, as well as preventing any form of discrimination/injustice. Furthermore, long term solutions are more applicable in this council as it enforces a future society where every individual and group can co-exist. These solutions can vary from the mechanisms and national policies that are implemented in international governments, to the prospect of identifying cultural identities and political status of indigenous peoples. However, delegates must be aware not to remove existing rights of already existing groups in order for the indigenous people to gain rights. Currently, there exists no legislation that defines whether or not the addition of one right removes a right of another. Additionally, the concept of how the indigenous people would overall benefit the community and society surrounding it should be one that isn't overlooked. Another aspect that shouldn't be overlooked is, with the increase of population and the decrease of available land, would there ultimately become a relocation issue, and if so how do delegates propose to overcome it? It is necessary that all delegates define their short and long term solutions. Improving the rights of indigenous people whilst also ensuring the participating nations future prospects, is an agenda that delegates must emphasize if we were to aid and overcome this prevalent issue. While fully satisfying every individual is no guarantee, indigenous issues involving its social and cultural rights calls for a global change for the better sake of humanity.

#### **IV. Guiding Questions**



1. Has your country passed a legislation/government act that would either support/go against the rights of indigenous people? If the latter, why, and what improvements can be taken into consideration to fulfill the UN goal
2. Are there any local organizations within your nation that focus on this current issue?
3. Has your country collaborated with any other nations regarding the rights of indigenous people. If not, why and how can barriers be crossed to ensure the rights of the indigenous and maintaining the well-being of both states?
4. How can the rights of indigenous people be enforced in individual nations to ensure their identity and the UN's future prospects
5. What benefit does giving rights to the indigenous people have on your nation?

## **V. Works Cited**

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2. Harry, Osaki. "Colonialism in Africa is still alive and well | Letters." *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 1 Aug. 2017, [www.theguardian.com/world/2017/aug/01/colonialism-in-africa-is-still-alive-and-well](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/aug/01/colonialism-in-africa-is-still-alive-and-well).

## **Neocolonialism in Africa**

### **I. Background**

Throughout history, it is evident that the practice of cultural imperialism has dominated much of the poorer countries. After the second world war, the practice of a continued economic



and cultural relationship with former colonies that had liberated most African countries coined the term neocolonialism.

Kwame Nkrumah (former president of Ghana) created this term and was later used in his book *Neo-Colonialism, the last stage of Imperialism* and later found its way to the introduction of the Organization of African Unity charter.

The term defines itself being, the theory that a state is independent and has the features to establish international sovereignty, while in reality its economic system, and political policies are influenced from the outside. This definition would ultimately describe foreign intervention from the Pan-Africanist movement and later on integrated into the liberation ideologies of Marxist guerilla armies. This theory also coincides with the dependency theory, of which economic neocolonialism branched from. Resources are extracted from poor countries, flowing towards the rich, larger countries to sustain them. This is hidden under the guise of integration into the world economy, rather than extortion.

Oftentimes Western and European countries would exert their power and use the underdevelopment of African colonies to extract resources, minerals and other materials from the colonies. This practice would later shape many colonies political agenda to counter neocolonial agreements with the former colonist countries (seen in Portuguese African colonies of Mozambique and Angola).

Furthermore, former French-African colonies or *Francafrique* denoted positive relations between the colony and its colonizers. This post-independence relationship with France would later integrate France's colonial garrison and monopolies created by multinational companies to exploit



cheap labor and mineral resources. Many colonies would later follow the decolonization process only to still be exploited and influenced by foreign affairs.

While many colonies agree that banding together would effectively push back against neocolonialism, due to poverty, instate fighting, and overall instability prevents them from properly working together.

## **II. United Nations Involvement**

There are several specialized committees in the UN that surrounds around decolonization and issues within the African region.

Charters such as the Charter of the Organization of African Unity assert their rights and powers, free from Western influence and the effects of neocolonialism.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals hope to place economic growth and expansion back into Africa, although Kwame Nkrumah is concerned about neo-colonial trade and the affect it will have on African development.

While the committees are mostly based on decolonization of multiple non-self-governing areas around the world, they still work with African nations in order to find solutions to the issues of colonialism, exploitation of former colonies and the draining of natural resources.

These committees are the greatest form for African countries to push back against exploitation, as they coincide with the Sustainable Development Goals. Their goals are to both aid in decolonization and establishing the seventeen non-self-governing areas, improvement of the sparse regulation on outside trade, and bettering the exploitation of natives.

Overall there are few committees that directly address neocolonialism, and other organ councils have only began to recently address this issue due to the addition of the goal in the SDGs.



### **III. Possible Solutions**

Make sure your solutions match your country's ideas and position, and are innovative.

Solutions on changes in neo colonial trade, the exploitation of cheap labor, and draining of natural resources are expected. These solutions can include that of suggesting a new charter between European and African powers, laws in regulating trade between the African regions and others, or regulation in the extracting of resources and materials in Africa.

Solutions for African countries could include a creation of a foundation for African unity, or region wide regulation laws.

Address the claims of extortion, forced dependency, and exploitation in your solution and how it can be amended.

Refuting neocolonialism should not equate to bashing or degrading other countries, nor should it involve slander. This is unprofessional and delegates will be marked down. This can be applied vice versa for those addressing neocolonialism.

Be creative with solutions, and be mindful of other countries, especially those in the African region as tensions surround this issue.

### **IV. Guiding Questions**

1. What African countries does your country trade with? How is trade conducted?
2. How has your country addressed the issue of native exploitation from foreign countries?
3. Can your country aid in bettering regulation laws?
4. How can your country avoid further imperialism and exploitation?
5. Has your country been accused of exploitation and extortion in Africa?

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