GCMUN SPECPOL

Letter from the EB

Honourable Delegates,

It is both my honour and responsibility to welcome you to this session of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee, SPECPOL. In this session, we confront a deeply political, and often overlooked, question: How can sustainable financing support the self-determined development of Non-Self-Governing Territories in today's global financial landscape?

As of today, 17 territories remain listed as NSGTs under the United Nations framework. Each of them bears a unique history, but all are connected by a common reality—the absence of full sovereignty, constrained access to development financing, and vulnerability to external shocks ranging from climate disasters to global market shifts. Many remain economically dependent on their administering powers, with limited fiscal autonomy or representation in global financial institutions.

In a world increasingly shaped by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), it is essential to ask: How do we ensure that these territories are not forgotten? How do we reconcile global ambitions for climate resilience, digital connectivity, and inclusive growth, with a financial system that structurally excludes those without sovereignty?

This committee will be tasked not just with discussing solutions, but understanding the limitations imposed by colonial legacies, unequal access to credit and aid, and the legal-political status that prevents many NSGTs from even qualifying for direct financing from global institutions. Delegates will need to weigh the responsibility of administering powers, the role of the international community, and the agency of local NSGT populations.

As Chair, I urge all delegates to approach this agenda with rigour, empathy, and creativity. This is a moment to explore bold financing proposals—from multilateral trust funds and debt-for-development swaps, to green bonds and international diaspora frameworks. Equally, it is a moment to interrogate the political status quo: What does meaningful self-determination look like in 2025, and what financing structures are necessary to support it?

Let us not forget: Sustainable financing is not merely about numbers—it is about dignity, development, and justice. The road to decolonization in the 21st century cannot be paved with political promises alone. It must also be supported by material resources, inclusive systems, and shared global responsibility.

I look forward to passionate debate, informed diplomacy, and resolutions that reflect both technical depth and political will. The floor, delegates, is yours.

With diplomacy and duty, Jai
Melwani & Rockinil Manjrekar
EB, SPECPOL.

Introduction to committee

Honourable Delegates,

Welcome to the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (SPECPOL). As we gather under the agenda “Deliberating an Equitable Framework for Sustainable Finance to Empower Non-Self-Governing Economies,” we confront the enduring legacy of colonialism through a critical yet often overlooked lens: financial exclusion.

Despite sustained UN commitment to decolonization, 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories (NSGTs) remain structurally constrained—not only by their political status, but also by limited fiscal autonomy, restricted access to global financial systems, and climate vulnerability. Sovereignty-dependent financial norms routinely exclude these territories from direct international aid, concessional loans, and development grants.

This session challenges us to go beyond political rhetoric and explore practical, inclusive, and justice-oriented financing mechanisms that empower these territories to pursue sustainable development on their own terms. How can we ensure that financing is not wielded as a tool of dependency but as a catalyst for self-determination?

Let us use this platform to propose bold, institutionally sound frameworks rooted in equity, transparency, and decolonial thought. For in securing sustainable finance, we strengthen not just economies—but also the promise of freedom, dignity, and resilience.

The floor is yours, delegates.

The General Assembly

The UN General Assembly (UNGA) is one of the six organs of the United Nations and is the main policy-making organ of the Organization. Comprising all Member States, it provides a unique forum for multilateral discussion of the full spectrum of international issues covered by the Charter of the United Nations. Each of the 193 Member States of the United Nations has an equal vote.

The UNGA also makes key decisions for the UN, including:

appointing the Secretary-General on the recommendation of the Security Council
electing the non-permanent members of the Security Council approving the UN
budget
The Assembly meets in regular sessions from September to December each year, and thereafter as required. It discusses specific issues through dedicated agenda items or sub-items, which lead to the adoption of resolutions.

About the Fourth Committee

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), Israeli Practices and settlement activities affecting the rights of the Palestinian people and other Arabs of the occupied territories, and International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

Mandate - When it was first created, the Fourth Committee was solely responsible for trusteeship- and decolonization-related matters. However, after independence was granted to all the United Nations trust territories on its agenda, the committee's workload decreased. Consequently, the Fourth Committee was merged with the Special Political Committee, which had been created as a seventh main committee to deal with certain political issues.
The Fourth Committee deals with: items, the effects of atomic radiation, questions relating to information, a comprehensive review of the question of peacekeeping operations, review of special political missions, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East, the report of the Special Committee on Israeli Practices and international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

Working Methods - The Fourth Committee meets every year from late September to mid-November, but also convenes briefly in the spring to adopt any resolutions and decisions relating to peacekeeping passed by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. All 193 member states of the UN can attend its meetings.
Unlike most other United Nations bodies, there is no general debate at the beginning of the committee's work. The committee also allows for petitioners, i.e. civil society representatives and other stakeholders, to address it on decolonization issues. Finally, the committee usually adopts about 30-35 draft resolutions and several draft decisions annually, usually by consensus.

Reporting Bodies - The following bodies report through the Fourth Committee to the General Assembly:

- Committee on Information
- Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS)
- Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34)
- Committee on Decolonization (C-24)
- Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and other Arabs of the Occupied Territories
- United Nations Relief and Works Agency for State of Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)

- United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR)

Non Self Governing Territories

Under Chapter XI of the Charter of the United Nations, the Non-Self-Governing Territories are defined as "territories whose people have not yet attained a full measure of self-government". The General Assembly, by its resolution 66 (I) of 14 December 1946, noted a list of 72 Territories to which Chapter XI of the Charter applied. In 1963, the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (also known as the "Special Committee on Decolonization" or the "C-24") approved a preliminary list of Territories to which the Declaration applied (A/5446/Rev.1, annex I). Today, 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories, as listed below, remain on the agenda of the C-24. Member States which have or assume responsibilities for the administration of such Territories are called administering Powers.

There are 17 NSGT's as recognised by the United Nations

American Samoa
Anguilla
Bermuda
British Virgin Islands
Cayman Islands
Falkland Islands (Malvinas)
French Polynesia
Gibraltar
Guam
Montserrat
New Caledonia
Pitcairn
Saint Helena
Tokelau

Turks and Caicos Islands
United States Virgin Islands
Western Sahara

In each case, a ruling UN Member State, often with important allies, has reasons to keep their status as they are. But with a lack of full political autonomy, the peoples of these territories are prone to political instability, the rival claims of neighboring states, and in some cases denial of their own search of self-rule.

Functions of a "state" or nation-state can persist in non-self-governing territories but the roles for implementation are blurred. Generally, these territories have minimal populations due to small, island land areas and concentrated resources. One issue to keep in mind when discussing the Falkland Islands, Gibraltar, and Western Sahara is ownership and claims. The idea of authority is vital to understanding the functions of non-self-governing territories. In the United Nations Fourth committee, decolonization is a concept that corresponds appropriately with non-self-governing territories. Many of these territories function under the premise of colonization, minimal political autonomy.

However, despite not being recognised by the United Nations there are still some territories that represent some characteristics of an NSGT

Somaliland:

Somaliland, historically, the area now comprising Somalia and Djibouti. The name is also used to refer to the Republic of Somaliland, a self-declared independent country in the Horn of Africa.
Following the civil war that began in Somalia in the 1980s and the subsequent overthrow of that country's government in 1991, a government opposition group, the Somali National Movement, secured the region comprising the former British Somaliland. In May 1991 they announced that the 1960 federation was no longer valid and declared their region to be an independent state, henceforth to be known as the Republic of Somaliland. Though not internationally recognized, Somaliland experienced relative stability—a sharp contrast to the civil war that continued to engulf Somalia. Taking advantage of that stability, the Somaliland government was able to rebuild much of the region's infrastructure, which had been damaged by years of warfare.

Since the late 1990s there has been tension between Somaliland and Puntland (an area in the northeastern part of Somalia, which declared itself an autonomous region in 1998). Each disputed the other's claim to the Sanaag and Sool regions, and armed confrontations have periodically ensued.

In 2001, 10 years after breaking away from Somalia, Somaliland still was not internationally recognized as an independent country. Undeterred, the government held a referendum that year, the results of which clearly showed that Somaliland's inhabitants supported the region's claim of independence. As it had in the past, in 2003 the Somaliland government rejected invitations to participate in peace talks aimed at reunifying Somalia, maintaining that its independent status precluded it from being a party to such discussions.

Sustainable Financing

Sustainable financing, in international law, refers to the mobilization, allocation, and utilization of financial resources in a manner that supports long-term economic, social, and environmental development, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. This concept integrates financial sustainability with the broader goals of international legal frameworks such as the United Nations Charter, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and international human rights law. It emphasizes principles such as equity, intergenerational justice, accountability, and transparency in financial decision-making, especially in global development contexts.

In legal terms, sustainable financing is tied to international obligations of states and international organizations to support vulnerable nations and communities, especially those that are not fully sovereign or self-governing. The principle of international cooperation, enshrined in Article 1(3) and Article 55 of the UN Charter, mandates the promotion of higher standards of living and economic progress globally. This principle lays the foundation for the legal and moral obligation of developed nations and international financial institutions to ensure inclusive and sustainable development financing.

The concept becomes particularly significant when applied to Non-Self-Governing Territories (NSGTs)—territories identified by the UN as lacking full self-government and falling under the responsibility of an administering Power. As per Chapter XI of the UN Charter (Articles 73–74), administering Powers have a "sacred trust" to promote the well-being of NSGT inhabitants and ensure their advancement in self-governance, economic development, and respect for cultural integrity.

Sustainable financing in the context of NSGTs involves ensuring that these territories receive adequate, predictable, and accessible financial resources to foster independent, resilient, and diversified economies. International law recognizes that NSGTs often suffer from colonial legacies, such as dependence on extractive industries, lack of infrastructure, and external control of economic resources. Sustainable financing, therefore, is a corrective tool to redress historical economic imbalances and prevent further marginalization.

Legal instruments such as General Assembly resolutions (e.g., A/RES/75/123 and previous resolutions on decolonization and development) emphasize the duty of administering Powers and international financial institutions to integrate NSGTs into the global development agenda. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda (2015) and SDG Goal 17 reinforce the need for inclusive financing mechanisms, including concessional loans, debt relief, capacity-building, and technology transfer, for territories left behind.

Furthermore, international law discourages exploitative financial practices—such as tax evasion, capital flight, or resource extraction without reinvestment—that undermine the economic autonomy of NSGTs. The Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (1960) highlights that any form of colonial economic domination is incompatible with the Charter.

In summary, sustainable financing in international law is not merely about money—it is about economic justice, legal obligation, and inclusive sovereignty. In the case of NSGTs, it serves as a vital bridge toward self-determination, equitable development, and eventual full integration into the international community as sovereign, economically viable states.

QARMA

1) How can sustainable financing be made directly accessible to NSGTs despite their lack of sovereignty?
2) What financial obligations do administering powers have in ensuring development within NSGTs?
3) : How does financial empowerment support the political goal of self-determination for NSGTs?
4) How can NSGTs be equipped with financial literacy, governance tools, and institutional capacity to manage funds?

5) What systems of transparency, accountability, and anti-corruption will govern the disbursal and usage of funds?
6) How can NSGTs access climate-related funding and technologies to respond to environmental vulnerability?