

**74<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

**General Debate on Decolonization**

**Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)**

**India Statement**

**By Mr. Deepak Misra, Minister**

15 October 2019

Mr. Chairman,

India welcomes your election as the Chair of the 4th Committee and assures you and the Bureau of our resolute support for furthering the cause of Decolonization during the forthcoming session. We also acknowledge the sincere efforts put in by this Committee to meet its objectives last year.

Mr. Chairman,

2. When the United Nations came into existence in 1945, almost one-third of humanity was confined to Territories that were non-self-governing and were placed under the yoke of colonial powers.

3. As a nation that was once ruled over by a colonial state, India has always been in the forefront of the struggle against colonialism and apartheid since its own independence over seven decades ago.

4. India was actively engaged with the organization of the historic Afro-Asian Conference at Bandung, Indonesia in 1955. Five years later, India was the co-sponsor of the landmark 1960 Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, which was adopted by the General Assembly. The Declaration proclaimed the need to unconditionally end colonialism in all its forms and manifestations.

5. In 1962 India was elected the first Chair of the Decolonization Committee (Committee of 24) that was established to monitor the implementation of the 1960 Declaration and to make recommendations on its application. We reaffirm our commitment to actively support this important Committee to meet its objectives.

Mr. Chairman,

6. Since the creation of the United Nations, more than 80 former colonies have gained their independence and joined the family of United Nations. As a result of sustained efforts by the UN membership, today, fewer than 2 million people live in Non-Self-Governing Territories, according to UN documentation.

7. However, even as seven decades have gone by, the process of decolonization that began with our own independence remains unfinished. In 2011 the General Assembly had to proclaim the current decade, 2011-2020, as the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, a period which is soon coming to an end.

8. There still remain 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories, which are in various stages of the decolonization process on the Agenda of this Committee. We need to step up our efforts to conclude this long-drawn process.

9. The vigorous deliberations and active participation of all members of the C-24 indicates the seriousness with which the Committee continues to strive for progress.

Mr. Chairman,

10. We have one delegation which has a penchant for deviating from the subject being deliberated upon in this august forum and making unwarranted remarks not pertinent to the agenda on hand. It seeks to employ empty rhetoric to serve its distorted agenda and continues to engage in spreading malevolent and unsubstantiated allegations.

11. In this inter-connected world, India strongly believes that pursuing a pragmatic approach towards Decolonization would surely lead to fulfillment of legitimate wishes of the people of Non-Self Governing Territories. The complex challenges facing the present world can only be met by coordinating our responses in a spirit of cooperation and collaboration.

12. We must strive to enhance cooperation with international agencies and actors and channelize resources for the 17 Non-Self Governing Territories. This would surely enable them to build capacities in their just and noble quest towards achieving long cherished goals.

Mr. Chairman,

13. To conclude, India remains committed to the objective of Decolonization and offers her unstinted support to further accelerate the process.

Thank you.