

**74th UNGA
Third Committee**

**Agenda Item 68: Elimination of racism, racial discrimination,
xenophobia and related intolerance &
Agenda Item 69: Right of peoples to self-determination**

**INDIA STATEMENT
By
Ms. Paulomi Tripathi**

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We thank the Secretary General for his reports under these agenda items and all the briefers for their briefings to the Committee.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the Chair of the G-77.

India is a multi-religious, multi-ethnic and multi-lingual society based on equality and tolerance.

As a country that was under colonial rule for nearly two centuries, India is painfully aware of the detrimental impact of racism and racial discrimination on the society. The scourge of slavery affected millions of Indians who were taken to far off shores as indentured labourers by the colonial powers.

To safeguard against recurrence of such abhorrent practices, the Constitution of India upholds the principle of equality and expressly prohibits discrimination on account of race.

These constitutional provisions are embodied in our legal frameworks including criminal law, and are safeguarded by the judiciary, human rights institutions, civil society and media.

The fight against racism and racial discrimination and decolonization has been corner-stones of India's foreign policy after independence.

Mr. Chairman,

India, as a former colony, has always been in the forefront at the United Nations in supporting the right of peoples to self-determination.

Self-determination in the UN context refers to the rights of people that have been colonized or continue to be under foreign domination. It clearly refers to the peoples of non self-governing territories or trust territories.

The UN has established that the principle of self-determination is a vehicle for decolonization, not a justification for secession or undermining territorial integrity of any Member State.

Substantial progress has been achieved in implementing this agenda, although some situations continue to be unresolved. In this context, India strongly supports to the right of self-determination of Palestinian people.

The agenda of the right of peoples to self-determination, however, has been sought to be misused once again by one delegation, by conflating it with another situation that does not pertain to the decolonization or foreign domination context.

This delegation has been making frantic attempts to gain credibility for its territorial greed and has demonstrated no hesitation in sabotaging this important agenda by callously referring to Jammu and Kashmir, which is an integral part of India.

The truth is that the issue of Jammu and Kashmir has never been on the United Nations 'Right of peoples to self-determination' agenda. A cursory reading of the document contained in A/74/309 makes it clear that the agenda for self-determination, as envisaged by the UN, does not include Jammu and Kashmir.

Even the UNSC resolutions that this delegation has a penchant for invoking, have never framed this as a self-determination issue in the UN parlance.

This Committee, therefore, has been cautious against such attempts of letting this forum being misused for propaganda.

Mr. Chairman,

We firmly believe that the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action continues to provide a comprehensive framework for combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in their contemporary manifestations.

There is increased recognition of the inter-linkages between combating these challenges and securing the full implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. This has further enhanced the relevance of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action in today's context.

In an interconnected world, social media has emerged a platform for amplifying racial hatred and discriminatory ideas what were otherwise fringe opinions. This trend, if unchecked, can challenge social cohesion.

States must intensify efforts to prevent and combat racial hatred and discrimination, taking into consideration the balance between safeguarding freedom of expression and advocacy of hatred leading to racial discrimination and violence. Partnerships with private sector and civil society are critical in this context.

As we prepare to commemorate twenty years of adoption of the Durban Declaration, we need to promote educational measures to enhance national and international consciousness about the legacies of racial discrimination rooted in slavery and colonialism.

We need to focus on harnessing the power of ICTs to foster the values of global citizenship. Online education in civics and history are potent tools that remain underutilized. We can maximize digital dividends by promoting civic education through digital platforms for combating the resurgent trends of racism and racial discrimination.

I thank you.