



# General Assembly

Seventy-seventh session

Official Records

Distr.: General  
18 April 2023

Original: English

---

## Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

### Summary record of the 10th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 17 October 2022, at 3 p.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Ponikvar (Vice-Chair) ..... (Slovenia)

### Contents

Agenda item 44: Effects of atomic radiation

Agenda item 55: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of  
Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (*Territories not covered under  
other agenda items*) (*continued*)

---

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be sent as soon as possible, under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, to the Chief of the Documents Management Section ([dms@un.org](mailto:dms@un.org)), and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org/>).

22-23443 (E)



Please recycle



*In the absence of Mr. Al Hassan (Oman), Mr. Ponikvar (Slovenia), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

**Agenda item 44: Effects of atomic radiation**  
(A/77/46 and A/C.4/77/L.5)

1. **Ms. Chen** (Canada), Chair of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, introducing the report of the Scientific Committee on its sixty-ninth session (A/77/46) and accompanying her statement with a digital slide presentation, said that the Scientific Committee had a purely scientific mandate; it did not advise on protection or policies, although States and international organizations drew on its evaluations when developing protection frameworks, legal instruments, policies and programmes concerning the use of technologies employing ionizing radiation.

2. The sixty-ninth session of the Scientific Committee had been attended by more than 180 scientists from 31 member States and 13 observer international organizations. Representatives of five member States had attended online due to pandemic or travel restrictions. At that session, the Scientific Committee had endorsed a new strategy for data collection, analysis and dissemination, discussed its future programme of work for the period 2025–2029 and made significant progress on its current programme of work. There were currently four projects on the Scientific Committee's programme of work. The first, consisting of an evaluation of second primary cancer after radiotherapy, was intended to raise awareness in scientific and medical communities and among national authorities about the fact that successful cancer treatment by radiation might, in some patients, result in a second primary cancer several years later. The second, consisting of an evaluation of public exposure to ionizing radiation, had begun in 2020. A global survey of public exposure had been launched in 2021; some 97 Member States had nominated national contact persons for data collection and 49 countries had submitted data. States that had not yet done so were invited to nominate national contact persons for that purpose. With regard to the third project, consisting of epidemiological studies of radiation and cancer, the expert group had completed a literature search of 561 articles for 25 cancer sites and compiled evidence summaries for 15 out of 25 cancer sites. With regard to the fourth project, namely an evaluation of diseases of the circulatory system from radiation exposure, the Scientific Committee had endorsed the timelines and structure of the evaluation, and a report was expected to be approved in 2025.

3. At its sixty-ninth session, the Scientific Committee had extended the mandate of the ad hoc working group on effects and mechanisms to continue the preparation of the Scientific Committee's programme of work for the period 2025–2029. It had endorsed the data collection strategy of the ad hoc working group on sources and exposure and agreed to establish a new ad hoc working group focused on implementing its predecessor's recommendations to ensure that future surveys of the Scientific Committee were relevant, useful and adapted to changing data sources and uses of radiation.

4. Also at its sixty-ninth session, the Scientific Committee had updated its governing principles, endorsed the implementation of the public information and outreach strategy for 2022–2024 and welcomed Algeria, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Norway and the United Arab Emirates as new States members.

5. The Scientific Committee, while grateful for the contributions of some Member States to the general trust fund, was increasingly concerned about the continued decline in regular budget allocations to engage expert consultants to conduct scientific evaluations. The Scientific Committee's work was fundamental to international radiation safety and informed the decisions of Governments and national and international bodies. Its objectivity, independence, competence and high-quality work must be safeguarded to ensure a strong scientific basis for the protection of current and future generations. The Scientific Committee would be grateful if the General Assembly could encourage Member States to provide voluntary contributions to support its work and the dissemination of its findings in a sustainable manner.

*Draft resolution A/C.4/77/L.5: Effects of atomic radiation*

6. **Mr. Hirji** (Canada), introducing the draft resolution, said that the text reflected the continued shared commitment of delegates to the Scientific Committee and its work.

7. **Ms. Ershadi** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the Scientific Committee's reports had always been valuable to scientific communities and policymakers in improving world peace and public health. The Islamic Republic of Iran had been using radiation sources for more than 90 years and welcomed all consultations between Iranian scientists and the Scientific Committee; all Member States should commit to cooperating with the Scientific Committee in fulfilling its responsibilities.

8. Nuclear energy was a clean, sustainable and non-exhaustible energy source that was increasingly needed in everyday life, in the production of electricity, health care, agriculture, crop breeding, industry and food preservation, as well as in scientific and technological research and development as an inalienable right of all nations. At the same time, the technology must be handled safely to protect people, workers and the environment from radiation's harmful effects and to avoid further disastrous nuclear accidents. The role of the Scientific Committee, which was highly regarded internationally, was of paramount importance in that regard. As such, it required highly qualified experts in relevant fields, as well as adequate and predictable funding and sufficient secretariat staffing with balanced geographical distribution. Appropriate administrative measures would enable the Scientific Committee to perform its current functions and preserve its independence.

9. **Mr. Al-tememy** (Iraq) said that, in view of the destructive effects of high radiation levels, genuine collective action should be taken to ensure that it was used only for peaceful purposes and with a focus on long-term effects. His delegation commended the Scientific Committee's work over the years and urged it to ensure that its reports on ionizing radiation reflected the latest developments and outcomes.

10. With regard to the strategy to improve collection, analysis and dissemination of data on radiation exposure, his delegation encouraged all Member States and relevant United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations to provide additional information concerning sources, effects and risks of radiation exposure. It called on the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the World Health Organization (WHO) and other relevant organizations to improve their cooperation with the Secretariat with a view to putting in place arrangements to collect, analyse and publish data on the exposure of patients, workers and the general public to radiation. His delegation appreciated the outreach strategy for 2020–2024 and, in particular, the improvement of the Scientific Committee website and the dissemination of information in all official languages.

11. The issue of radiation was especially important for Iraq. Owing to the conflicts of recent decades, huge numbers of civilians had been affected by radiation. Many had contracted cancers, and many children had been born with disabilities. Environmental disasters and pollution had further exacerbated the situation. Iraqi children were often sent from one hospital to another with strange disorders, skin complaints and deformities, their futures dependent on their response to

chemotherapy. Even healthy children were vulnerable to the effects of pollution. Iraq would support any project aimed at limiting the threat posed by such radiation and drawing on the research of specialized committees. Genuine action should be taken to tackle the effects of radiation and curb its use in times of conflict.

12. **Mr. González Behmaras** (Cuba) said that the Scientific Committee's studies informed national and international standard-setting for protection against ionizing radiation's harmful effects, as well as unplanned events like the accidents in Chernobyl in 1986 and Fukushima in 2011. Regrettably, more than 75 years after the criminal atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, nuclear weapons continued to be a threat. Their total elimination was the only way to guarantee that humanity never again suffered their terrible effects. Cuba remained firmly committed to achieving a world free of nuclear weapons, as demonstrated by its ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in 2018.

13. It was important to maintain and strengthen cooperation between the Scientific Committee and bodies such as the WHO, IAEA and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The joint work of those entities had facilitated the implementation of the Scientific Committee's strategic guidelines, generating visible benefits through the application of technological advances, in particular in health and environmental protection. The contribution of nuclear energy and technology to economic and social development was indisputable. Cuba therefore reiterated that all States had the right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy without discrimination. Serious and wide-ranging cooperation in that regard was the only path to eliminating the potential dangers associated with ionizing radiation.

14. **Mr. Khan** (Pakistan) said that Pakistan had established national regulations for protection against ionizing radiation that were aligned with IAEA safety standards and guiding documents and the findings of the Scientific Committee. It regularly measured radiation exposure among workers in nuclear facilities and patients in cancer hospitals, as well as in the environment.

15. Pakistan looked forward to seeing the outcomes of ongoing evaluations by the Scientific Committee, especially the evaluation of second primary cancer after radiotherapy. His delegation urged the Scientific Committee to address, in its publications based on the analysis of the data collected thus far, the unfounded public perception that nuclear facilities caused cancer among people who lived nearby. To reinforce public

acceptance of nuclear technology, global efforts were needed to draw attention to the beneficial aspects of atomic radiation.

16. **Mr. Camelli** (Representative of the European Union, in its capacity as observer), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Türkiye and Ukraine; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Monaco and San Marino, said that the Scientific Committee's efforts to improve the collection, analysis and dissemination of data on radiation exposure had played an important role in improving international scientific understanding of the potentially harmful effects of ionizing radiation on people and the environment in all exposure situations.

17. The European Union welcomed the Scientific Committee's work on public exposure to ionizing radiation from natural and other sources and on medical exposure to ionizing radiation, the latter of which represented by far the largest source of artificial radiation exposure. The European Union was confident that its research projects would provide key information in that regard.

18. The European Union planned to take advantage of synergies with all of its programmes, fostering support for research and innovation and streamlining research and innovation partnerships, including through the European Partnership for Radiation Protection Research (PIANOFORTE), which had been launched in June 2022. Co-financed by the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community, PIANOFORTE would undertake research on improving the use of ionizing radiation in medical applications and radiation detection. PIANOFORTE would be the main driving force in the area of radiation protection and emergency preparedness in the next five years, consolidating a European Union-wide research and innovation community.

19. **Mr. Alvarez** (Argentina) said that Argentina, as a founding member of the Scientific Committee, had always supported its work by offering its experts free of charge, as well as contributions in kind. Such contributions were necessary and welcome, since monetary contributions could undermine the Scientific Committee's perceived independence, which was one of its most prized qualities.

20. Argentina looked forward to the Scientific Committee's timely completion of its evaluation of second primary cancer after radiotherapy, with assistance from experts from his country. The Nuclear Regulatory Authority of Argentina, in cooperation with IAEA, had prepared a paper containing a

recommendation that accidental exposures to radiation during radiotherapy should be monitored.

21. His delegation hoped that the evaluation of epidemiological studies on radiation and cancer would resolve the numerous questions that had been raised concerning radio-epidemiological evaluations of populations exposed to low doses. It urged the secretariat to ensure that the project was conducted in strict accordance with the Scientific Committee's findings on attributing health effects to radiation exposure and inferring risk, set out in its 2012 report (A/67/46, Chap. III), which had been noted with appreciation in paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 67/112. Those findings had been made in response to a request from his Government with a view to addressing certain misconceptions concerning exposure to low doses. It was crucial to make a clear distinction between studies of cohorts exposed to high doses of radiation (for example, at Hiroshima and Nagasaki) and those exposed to low doses and low-dose-rate radiation, for whom it was possibly only to infer theoretical risks.

22. Experts from Argentina were helping the secretariat with the evaluation of public exposure due to ionizing radiation from natural and other sources. The secretariat should ensure that careful quantification was undertaken and avoid mixing intensive magnitudes, such as individual doses, with extensive magnitudes, such as collective doses. The latter should not be presented in isolation, but by magnitude generated. The secretariat should take care to follow the assessment of lung cancer from exposure to radon contained in its report on that subject, contained in the Scientific Committee's 2019 report to the General Assembly (A/74/46, Chap. III, section B).

23. Lastly, his delegation encouraged the secretariat to update the UNEP booklet *Radiation: Effects and Sources*. Experts from his Government had helped produce the Spanish version, and Argentina was committed to providing such assistance for the updated version.

24. **Mr. Muhith** (Bangladesh) said that his country was constructing its first nuclear power plant, which would generate safe, environmentally friendly and economically viable electricity in accordance with the highest IAEA standards. To support its development efforts, Bangladesh had successfully been implementing its nuclear energy programme, with the support of IAEA, including by establishing a regulatory framework and developing a radioactive waste management system. Under its IAEA country programme framework for 2018–2023, Bangladesh had undertaken projects on

improving food security, developing stress-tolerant crop varieties and enhancing cancer management.

25. Cooperation, coherence and synergy within the United Nations system to efficiently deal with the effects of atomic radiation were critical for mandate delivery and for avoiding duplication. In that regard, his delegation welcomed the Scientific Committee's memorandum of understanding with IAEA and its framework of cooperation with WHO. It also welcomed the new approach to outreach activities, including additional social media content to promote awareness of radiation effects. It looked forward to a robust outreach activity strategy after the end of the current one, in 2024. Regarding the future programme of work for 2025–2029, his delegation echoed the Scientific Committee's request to strengthen support for its work and emphasized the need for increased voluntary contributions to the trust fund established by the Executive Director of UNEP.

26. **Mr. Zhao** Haibo (China) said that China developed and utilized nuclear energy in order to ensure safety, bridge the energy demand gap, address climate change and achieve its dual carbon goals. China had been improving its nuclear-related legal and regulatory system, raising the system's overall level of nuclear safety and enhancing its capacity. The country's nuclear power plants and research reactors were in good operating condition and their operational safety indicators were among the world's best.

27. The disposal of nuclear-contaminated water affected global public health, the marine ecological environment and sustainable economic development. In April 2021, the Government of Japan had unilaterally decided to release water contaminated during the Fukushima Daiichi accident into the sea, arousing widespread opposition from the Pacific Rim countries and the Japanese public. For more than a year, the Government of Japan had failed to provide credible information on the reliability of data concerning nuclear-contaminated water, the effectiveness of purification devices and environmental impacts. It had instead pushed ahead with the discharge plan and started the construction of the discharge project, which had been an irresponsible attempt to create a *fait accompli* while ignoring the concerns of all parties. His Government urged the Government of Japan to seriously respond to those legitimate and reasonable concerns, fulfil its international obligations and fully consult with stakeholders, including neighbouring countries, Pacific island countries and relevant international agencies, to find proper disposal methods for the contaminated water in a science-based, open, transparent and safe manner.

28. **Mr. Shevchenko** (Russian Federation) said that the Scientific Committee's assessments were used as a point of reference in determining the best ways to ensure radiation protection for personnel, populations and the environment, and its major scientific reports were in high demand in professional circles. The Russian Federation affirmed its unwavering support for the work of the Scientific Committee, with the understanding that it should remain depoliticized and purely scientific. The addition of Algeria, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Norway and the United Arab Emirates as new members in 2021 was a welcome development. Those countries had previously made significant contributions as observers and now did so as fully fledged members. The participation of countries with relevant scientific expertise in the effects of atomic radiation would continue to increase the quality of the Scientific Committee's work.

29. **Ms. Mitsui** (Japan) said that Japan commended the Scientific Committee's continued work to broaden knowledge and deepen understanding of the levels, effects and risks of exposure to ionizing radiation based on independent and evidence-based scientific research. In the light of the importance of disseminating the Scientific Committee's findings, in particular to the wider public, her delegation welcomed the recent publication of four substantive scientific reports, including a scientific annex on the levels and effects of radiation exposure due to the nuclear accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power station following the great east-Japan earthquake and tsunami, which was an update to the 2013 report on the same subject. In particular, her delegation appreciated the Scientific Committee's outreach efforts to the Japanese public, including the fact that the report and the related website had been made available in both English and Japanese, and the visit by a Committee delegation to Fukushima and Tokyo in July 2022. Japan reaffirmed its long-standing commitment to nuclear safety, even more so following 2011 accident, as well as its continued commitment to and support for the Scientific Committee's work.

30. **Monsignor Quirighetti** (Observer for the Holy See) said that the latest findings on the public exposure and human health effects of the 2011 earthquake, tsunami and nuclear power plant meltdown in Fukushima Daiichi showed the need for early monitoring, consistent measurement and continued tracking of the long-term effects of exposure to radiation. In the case of Fukushima, early monitoring and action to keep irradiated foodstuffs from reaching markets had prevented the ingestion of excess radiation. As more countries expanded their use of nuclear energy,

greater attention needed to be paid to advancing technology to contain nuclear radiation and other negative effects in the event of a nuclear power accident, as well as promoting the safest possible designs for nuclear power plants. His delegation called for greater investment in the Scientific Committee's work to address medical and occupational exposures to radiation and the risk of cancer even from low doses of radiation, especially its research related to medical and occupational exposure.

31. The Holy See commended the entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, the first Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, held in Vienna from 21 to 23 June 2022, and the commitment made by the Russian Federation and the United States of America at the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to pursue negotiations on additional nuclear disarmament measures. The Holy See urged the ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty by those States whose ratification was needed for its entry into force.

32. **Mr. Ahmad** (Observer for the United Nations Environment Programme) said that, in the past three years, the Scientific Committee had published six substantive scientific reports, launched four new evaluations and selected six topics for detailed evaluation and prioritization for the 2025–2029 period. The scope of work and engagement with Member States was increasing significantly, while the regular budget, in particular for consultants, was decreasing, resulting in a reliance on extrabudgetary funding.

33. Without sufficient, assured and predictable resources and a reliable and sustainable level of support from the secretariat, the Scientific Committee was severely constrained in exercising the responsibilities and mandate given to it by the General Assembly. At a time when the use of ionizing radiation was increasing, in particular in the medical field, Member States were considering their future energy options, and public interest in the effects of radiation from past practices, accidents and conflicts was rising, the role and importance of maintaining independent science was as relevant as ever.

34. It was essential to recall and commend the increased involvement of experts and at the same time recognize the Scientific Committee's need for data on medical, occupational and public exposures from unrepresented regions and from more Member States in line with the new data collection strategy of the Scientific Committee and the Data Strategy of the

Secretary-General for Action by Everyone, Everywhere. It was also essential to strengthen support to the Scientific Committee and stabilize its secretariat in order to enable the Scientific Committee to deliver on its mandate.

35. **Ms. Ukabiala** (Secretary of the Scientific Committee) said that the following delegations had become sponsors of the draft resolution: Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Cyprus, Czechia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Kazakhstan, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Monaco, Montenegro, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Singapore, Slovakia and Thailand.

36. Under the terms of paragraph 23 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to strengthen support for the secretariat in order to adequately and efficiently provide service to the Scientific Committee in a predictable and sustainable manner; to effectively facilitate the use of the invaluable expertise offered to the Scientific Committee by its members; and to report to the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session on those issues. Under the terms of paragraph 24, the Assembly would understand that the current extrabudgetary support was expected to expire by 2023 and that the timely implementation of the programme of work to deliver on the Scientific Committee's mandate would require the provision of additional professional and administrative secretariat services.

37. In order to strengthen support for the secretariat of the Scientific Committee so that it could adequately and efficiently provide service to the Scientific Committee in a predictable and sustainable manner, and taking into account the expected reduction in extrabudgetary resources in 2023, as noted in paragraph 24 of the draft resolution, additional regular budget resource requirements of one P-3 staff member, one General Service (Other level) staff member based in Vienna and resources for consultants would be required in the total amount of \$338,800, starting in 2024.

38. The P-3 staff member would be responsible for data collection and management and for outreach and dissemination of findings, tasks which were currently implemented with extrabudgetary funds. The General Service (Other level) staff member would be responsible for the engagement and management of consultants, which was currently being undertaken by a General Service (Other level) temporary assistant whose post would be funded by voluntary contributions until October 2023. The responsibilities of both the P-3 and the General Service (Other level) staff members directly related to the core mandate of the secretariat of the

Scientific Committee as set out in paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 913 (X).

39. The complexity of the Scientific Committee's evaluations and the volume of literature required to be reviewed had increased significantly, augmenting the demand for consultants. It was estimated that additional consultants would be required for a period of 136 consultant days, with total requirements of \$47,600 starting in 2024, in order to fulfil the Scientific Committee's evaluation work as mandated under paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 913 (X).

40. Consequently, it was estimated that there would be an increase in resource requirements, starting in 2024, under section 14, Environment, and section 36, Staff assessment. For section 14, Environment, resources estimated at \$295,500 would be required starting in 2024 to cover post costs of one P-3 staff member, one General Service (Other level) staff member and consultants.

41. In addition, resources estimated at \$43,300 would be required under section 36, Staff assessment, to be offset by a corresponding amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment.

42. Accordingly, should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, additional resource requirements estimated in the amount of \$338,800 (net of staff assessment) would be included in the proposed programme budget for 2024 under section 14, Environment (\$295,500), and section 36, Staff assessment (\$43,300), for 2024 and each year thereafter.

43. *Draft resolution A/C.4/77/L.5 was adopted.*

44. **Mr. Shaked** (Israel) said that, while his delegation had supported the resolution for the sake of consensus, it wished to dissociate itself from the notion of inviting Iran to become a member of the Scientific Committee. Iran had systematically violated every possible nuclear-related commitment that it had made, and it held a negative track record in the nuclear domain. Now would have been the time to call on Iran to cooperate with IAEA. His delegation's reservation to paragraph 16 pertained only to the proposed membership of Iran, and not to that of the other States mentioned therein.

45. **Ms. Mitsui** (Japan), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the representative of China had incorrectly referred to water treated using the Advanced Liquid Processing System (ALPS) as contaminated water. Her Government's basic policy, announced in April 2021, concerned the discharge of water whose concentrations of radioactive materials would be far below the regulatory standard by diluting further ALPS treated water that had already been sufficiently purified,

not the discharge of contaminated water. Under the policy, the Government of Japan would never approve the discharge of water into the sea without meeting regulatory standards, which were based on international standards. Japan had been discussing the matter in detail, based on scientific evidence and in a transparent manner, at appropriate forums with relevant expertise on the issue, including IAEA. Regarding the handling of ALPS-treated water, Japan had also been taking measures in strict accordance with the relevant international laws and giving due consideration to international practice. The Government of Japan had been explaining the matter to the international community in a highly transparent manner, based on scientific evidence, and would continue to do so.

46. **Mr. Ghelich** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his delegation was grateful to the Chair of the Scientific Committee and the representatives of Cuba, China, the Russian Federation and others for extending a warm welcome to new members, including the Islamic Republic of Iran. While his country attached great importance to the work of the Scientific Committee, which promoted a wider knowledge and understanding of the risks posed by atomic radiation to human beings and the environment, it reaffirmed that the Scientific Committee should shield itself from any attempt to politicize its merely technical merit.

47. In response to the unfounded allegations made by the representative of the Israeli regime, his delegation reiterated that no political justifications or pretexts should be used to deprive interested countries, including his own, of the opportunity to participate actively in the work of the Scientific Committee or of the benefits of exercising the peaceful use of nuclear energy, which was an inalienable right of the people.

48. Regarding the effects of nuclear activities, he reiterated that promoting the full realization of the inherent right of States parties to develop and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes was a key component and one of the fundamental objectives of international endeavours in that domain. Each country's choices and decisions with regard to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy should be respected and protected. For its part, the Zionist regime of Israel not only benefited from unrestricted nuclear cooperation with certain nuclear-weapon States as a State not party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, but had also assassinated several innocent nuclear scientists, and attacked and continued to threaten to attack safeguarded peaceful nuclear facilities in Iran. Furthermore, in flagrant violation of international law and all relevant United Nations resolutions, Israel continued to perpetrate

malicious, illegal and illegitimate acts in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and to carry out sabotage, cyberattacks and kinetic attacks against other countries.

**Agenda item 55: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples** (*Territories not covered under other agenda items*) (continued) (A/77/23 (chap. XIII))

*Draft resolution IV: Question of American Samoa*

49. *Draft resolution IV was adopted.*

*Draft resolution V: Question of Anguilla*

50. *Draft resolution V was adopted.*

51. **Mr. Brown** (United Kingdom) said that his Government was joining the consensus on the draft resolutions concerning the eight British Overseas Territories in order to demonstrate its full support for the right to self-determination. However, the Special Committee should recognize that the relationship between the United Kingdom and its Overseas Territories had been modernized in a manner that was acceptable to both parties and that reflected the particular circumstances of the small island territories. As the United Kingdom was always prepared to discuss any proposals for change from any of its territories, the existing relationships might evolve. Nevertheless, the Overseas Territories on the Committee's list enjoyed a large measure of internal self-government and had all freely chosen to maintain their links to the United Kingdom for a modern partnership based on shared values and the right to self-determination.

*Draft resolution VI: Question of Bermuda*

52. *Draft resolution VI was adopted.*

*Draft resolution VII: Question of the British Virgin Islands*

53. *Draft resolution VII was adopted.*

*Draft resolution VIII: Question of the Cayman Islands*

54. *Draft resolution VIII was adopted.*

*Draft resolution XIII: Question of Pitcairn*

55. *Draft resolution XIII was adopted.*

*Draft resolution XIV: Question of Saint Helena*

56. *Draft resolution XIV was adopted.*

*Draft resolution XV: Question of Tokelau*

57. *Draft resolution XV was adopted.*

*Draft resolution XVI: Question of the Turks and Caicos Islands*

58. *Draft resolution XVI was adopted.*

*Draft resolution XVII: Question of the United States Virgin Islands*

59. *Draft resolution XVII was adopted.*

*Draft resolution XVIII: Dissemination of information on decolonization*

60. *A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Türkiye, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe.



*Against:*

Israel, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

*Abstaining:*

France.

61. *The draft resolution was adopted by 143 votes to 3, with 1 abstention.*

62. **Mr. Brown** (United Kingdom) said that his delegation had voted against the draft resolution. The obligation it placed on the Secretariat to publicize decolonization issues represented an unwarranted drain on the scarce resources of the United Nations and was therefore unacceptable.

63. **Mr. Alvarez** (Argentina) said that the draft resolution should be interpreted and implemented in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Special Committee on decolonization, which expressly recognized that the question of the Malvinas Islands was a special and particular colonial situation involving a sovereignty dispute between the United Kingdom and Argentina, as the only two parties, over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas. It had been established that the way to resolve that dispute was through the resumption of bilateral negotiations with a view to achieving, as soon as possible, a just, peaceful and lasting settlement that took into account the interests of the inhabitants of the Islands.

*Draft resolution XIX: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples*

64. *A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique,

Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Türkiye, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

*Against:*

Israel, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

*Abstaining:*

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Niger, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland.

65. *The draft resolution was adopted by 103 votes to 3, with 37 abstentions.*

66. **Mr. Brown** (United Kingdom) said that his delegation continued to find some elements of the draft resolution unacceptable and had therefore voted against it once more. It nonetheless remained committed to modernizing its relationship with its Overseas Territories while fully taking into account the views of the peoples of those Territories.

67. **Ms. Henderson** (Australia) said that Australia had once again abstained from the draft resolution owing to the inclusion of paragraph 14 calling upon the administering Powers to terminate military activities and eliminate military bases. In abstaining, her delegation affirmed its objection to that paragraph but also acknowledged its support for other elements of the draft resolution, as well as for the right of peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories to self-determination. Australia recognized the sovereign right of nations to defend the Territories that they administered, which did not necessarily run counter to the interests of the peoples of those Territories. In fact, in many cases, it was beneficial. In the Pacific region alone, France, Australia and New Zealand had coordinated humanitarian and disaster responses using forces based in New Caledonia and French Polynesia. Those same forces helped to counter illegal fishing and organized crime, providing further benefit to the region and its people. Her

delegation reiterated its call for the unacceptable wording of paragraph 14 to be removed from future resolutions.

68. **Mr. Alvarez** (Argentina) said that visiting missions could be sent only to Territories to which the right to self-determination applied. It was clear from the doctrine of the Special Committee that such missions could not be sent to Territories where there existed a sovereignty dispute recognized as such by the United Nations. That position, as evidenced in the regional seminars of the Special Committee and its declarations that visiting missions must be sent on a case-by-case basis and carried out in compliance with relevant United Nations resolutions, was also in line with General Assembly resolution 850 (IX), which had, moreover, established the requirement that any visiting mission must be approved by the General Assembly.

69. **Mr. Brown** (United Kingdom), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the United Kingdom had no doubt about its sovereignty over the Falkland Islands and South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands and surrounding maritime areas of both territories, or regarding the right of the Falkland Islanders to self-determination. Consequently, no dialogue on sovereignty was possible unless the Falkland Islanders so wished. The 2013 referendum had sent a clear message that the people of the Islands did not want a dialogue on sovereignty. Those wishes should be respected.

70. **Mr. Alvarez** (Argentina), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his delegation reiterated the statements made by the President of Argentina at the General Assembly on 20 September 2022 (A/77/PV.4) and by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Argentina at the meeting of the Special Committee on decolonization on 23 June 2022 (A/AC.109/2022/SR.7). The Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas were an integral part of the national territory of Argentina and, being illegally occupied by the United Kingdom, they were the subject of a sovereignty dispute between the two parties, which was recognized by a number of international organizations. That illegal occupation had led the General Assembly to adopt 10 resolutions on the issue, all of which recognized the existence of the sovereignty dispute and called on the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom to resume negotiations with a view to finding a peaceful and lasting solution to the dispute as soon as possible. For its part, the Special Committee on decolonization had repeatedly adopted resolutions in the same vein, most recently the resolution adopted on 23 June 2022.

71. The principle of self-determination, which the United Kingdom used as the basis for its refusal to resume negotiations on sovereignty, was inapplicable to the dispute in question, as affirmed in the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Special Committee. The 2013 vote held in the Malvinas Islands was simply a unilateral action undertaken by the United Kingdom, devoid of any legal value; it in no way changed the essence of the question of the Malvinas, it did not resolve the sovereignty dispute and it had no effect on the legitimate rights of Argentina.

72. The solution to the sovereignty dispute was not dependent on the results of a vote in which British citizens had been asked whether they wished to remain British. Allowing the British inhabitants of the Islands to arbitrate in a sovereignty dispute to which their own country was a party distorted the right to self-determination of peoples, given that, in the case of the Malvinas Islands, there did not exist a people within the meaning of international law. The interests and way of life of the inhabitants of the Malvinas Islands were adequately addressed by resolutions of the General Assembly and by the Constitution of Argentina. Argentina reaffirmed its legitimate sovereignty rights over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, which were an integral part of its national territory.

*The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.*