



BANGLADESH

Statement under General Debate on all Agenda Items on Decolonisation at the Fourth Committee of the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly

Statement by: Mr. Faiyaz Murshid Kazi, Minister Counsellor

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Mr. Chair,

At the outset, please allow me to congratulate you and other members of the Bureau on your election. You may count on our delegation's full support in discharging your responsibilities.

The subjection of peoples to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation constitutes a denial of human rights and fundamental freedom, runs contrary to the Charter of the United Nations, and undermines international peace and security.

The Constitution of Bangladesh stipulates our nation's unequivocal support for "*oppressed peoples throughout the world waging a just struggle against imperialism, colonialism or racialism*". Along this line, our Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in his maiden speech at the UN General Assembly in 1974 had said, and I quote, "The right to self-determination which the Charter of the United Nations promised could be redeemed only through the supreme sacrifice of millions of valiant freedom fighters in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The struggle still continues against the illegal occupation of territory by aggression, against the use of force to negate the legitimate rights of peoples, and against the practice of

racial discrimination and apartheid...The process of decolonization, through greatly advanced, has yet to reach its ultimate goal” unquote.

Bangladesh continues to reaffirm its full support for the aspiration of peoples under foreign occupation and colonial domination to exercise their right to self-determination in accordance with the United Nations Charter and relevant UN resolutions.

Mr. Chair

The Declaration of Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries had been adopted in 1960. Till date, we have 17 non-self-governing territories around the world. We reaffirm our support for the UN’s continued efforts towards decolonization pursuant to the underlying premise of the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism designated for 2011-2020. With less than two years left before the conclusion of the decade, we join other delegations in calling for an objective assessment of what has been achieved during this period so far and what needs to be done to further accelerate efforts towards fulfilling the targets set out in the General Assembly resolution 65/119. To this end, we underscore the importance of the work of the UN Special Committee on Decolonization, i.e. C-24. We take particular note of C-24’s recent visit to one of the non-self-governing territories to have a close understanding of the preparations for the upcoming referendum there. We join C-24 in thanking the concerned Administering Power for facilitating the visit. We also note with interest the invitation received by C-24 to visit same other non-self-governing territories.

In this connection, we recall the responsibilities of the Administering Powers under the UN Charter and relevant UN resolutions for promoting the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the peoples of the non-self-governing territories. We urge the Administering Powers to extend their cooperation to C-24 in discharging its mandated responsibilities, and where applicable, facilitate the Committee’s field missions in the territories under their administration. We further recommend the Administering Powers to develop time-bound programmes of work on a case-by-case basis pursuant to the relevant UN Resolutions and C-24 mandate, and regularly comply with their reporting obligation under Article 73(e) of the UN

Charter. In certain cases, meaningful dialogue and cooperation among the parties concerned should help find peaceful and lasting solutions to protracted impasse.

The comprehensive and ambitious 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development states, and I quote, “further effective measures and actions to be taken, in conformity with international law, to remove the obstacles to the full realization of the right of self-determination of peoples living under colonial and foreign occupation, which continue to adversely affect their economic and social development as well as their environment.” In our shared commitment to “leave no one behind”, the UN must continue to work towards meaningfully addressing the challenges faced by peoples of non-self-governing territories and territories under foreign occupation in their legitimate political, economic, social and educational advancement.

In this context, we particularly highlight the need for educational and training assistance for the students of non-self-governing territories. We appreciate those Member States that have made scholarships available to the inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories, and request others in a position to do so to follow suit. We share concerns over particular vulnerability of many of the non-self-governing territories to frequent natural disasters and climate change impacts. We urge C-24 and other concerned UN fora to accord due attention to this aspect.

Mr. Chair

To conclude, Bangladesh reaffirms its support for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to a sovereign, viable and contiguous state with East Jerusalem as its capital, in the framework of a Two-State solution.

I thank you.