

Committee: General Assembly Fourth Committee (SPECPOL)

Country: The Kingdom of Belgium

Agenda Item: Neocolonialism in the 21st Century in the West African Region

The Kingdom of Belgium believes that while traditional colonialism ended in the past century, many countries in the West African region still face indirect foreign influence. These influences appear in the form of political pressure, economic control, and military presence by former colonial powers or new global actors. Belgium views neocolonialism as a modern challenge to sovereignty and development and believes that open discussion and equal cooperation are necessary to address it today.

Belgium was historically a colonial power, especially in Central Africa, including the Congo. The colonial period caused great harm to African people, taking away natural resources and leaving behind weak institutions and unequal systems. Although Belgium did not colonize West African nations, it accepts that all former colonial powers must take responsibility today. In recent years, Belgium has made efforts to acknowledge its past mistakes and rebuild stronger ties with African countries based on equal partnerships. Belgium has apologized for colonial crimes and supports discussions on historical justice. It believes that understanding the effects of the past is important in building fair relationships for the future. As part of its development policies, Belgium now prioritizes supporting education, local economies, and peacekeeping missions in the African continent, with a focus on respecting national sovereignty and self-governance.

To fight neocolonialism, Belgium supports African-led solutions. It encourages stronger African regional cooperation, especially through organizations like ECOWAS. Belgium also supports the idea of reviewing foreign investments to make sure they help local populations. African governments should receive support in improving transparency, fair negotiation, and independent decision-making. Foreign actors must respect the choices and cultures of African communities when they cooperate on development or trade. Furthermore, Belgium encourages partnerships that empower local institutions, and it promotes global awareness of Africa's right to define its future without dependency on any external power.

Belgium believes that only through mutual respect, responsible partnerships, and long-term support can neocolonialism be reduced. Helping Africa must not mean controlling it again in new ways. Instead, African voices must be heard, and African leaders must be trusted. Belgium is ready to support a future where African nations grow freely and equally, with dignity and independence.

References:

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