

# 🕊️ From the Pacific to the Highlands — Advancing the Global Right to Self-Determination at the UN HQ

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On 9 June 2025, **Justice pour Tous Internationale (JPTi)**, alongside its strategic partner, the **International Probono Legal Services Association (IPLSA)**, delivered two oral interventions before the **Special Committee on Decolonization (C-24)** at United Nations Headquarters in New York. Representing the voices of the colonially subjugated, JPTi spoke on the persistent denial of self-determination in **French Polynesia** and **New Caledonia**—while highlighting the emerging imperative to extend these same legal principles to the case of **Scotland**.

🗣️ **French Polynesia:** In the **morning session**, **Matilde Pacheco** emphasized that, despite internal governance mechanisms, French Polynesia remains a Non-Self-Governing Territory. France retains full control over foreign policy, defence, monetary policy, and constitutional interpretation. JPTi reminded the Committee that **Resolution 67/265 (2013)** rightly recognized these unresolved colonial conditions and called on France to meet its obligations under **Article 73(e)** of the UN Charter. JPTi further condemned the cultural and ecological consequences of nuclear testing and the ongoing marginalization of indigenous Polynesian identities.

📺 Watch the French Polynesia statement: [https://youtu.be/F9yHclW\\_Kfk](https://youtu.be/F9yHclW_Kfk)




Full video on UN WebTV:

 Full statement: Available here.

09.06.2025 C-24 - JPTi Statement - Question of French Polynesia.pdf


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 **New Caledonia:** In the **afternoon session**, **Ambassador Craig Murray** addressed the violent unrest in New Caledonia as a consequence of long-standing disenfranchisement of the **Indigenous Kanak people**. France's retention of core sovereign powers—particularly over the judiciary and the territory's vital **nickel industry**—contradicts Resolutions **1514 (XV)** and **1541 (XV)**. JPTi urged the UN to recognize that recent unrest cannot be divorced from colonial conditions and called for a cessation of practices such as the forced transfer and detention of Kanak activists to mainland France.

 Watch the New Caledonia statement: <https://youtu.be/ZZbD-tPCS8g>



Full video on UN WebTV:

 Full statement: Available here.

09.06.2025 C-24 - JPTi Statement - Question of New Caledonia.pdf


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## Scotland: A Parallel Case for UN Action

Building on two comparative legal memoranda submitted by JPTi along side with the Liberation Scotland movement, we assert that **Scotland** meets the same legal thresholds as French Polynesia and New Caledonia for recognition as a **Non-Self-Governing Territory**. Despite devolution, Scotland remains constitutionally subordinate to the **United Kingdom**, lacking sovereign powers over defence, currency, foreign affairs, and constitutional law. The **UK Supreme Court's 2022 ruling** that Scotland cannot hold a binding referendum without Westminster's consent exemplifies the structural denial of legal self-determination.

Scotland's experience mirrors those of UN-recognized colonial territories in key ways:

- The 1707 Treaty of Union and its ratifying Acts were never effectively implemented. **Scotland** did not become a partner within a new, unified British state; rather, it **was annexed** into an unchanged English constitutional framework, concealed by the symbolic renaming of England as the *"Kingdom of Great Britain."*
- Consequently, Scotland was territorially subsumed, its sovereignty extinguished, and **its institutions dissolved or subordinated**. This has led to enduring consequences, including cultural suppression, economic underdevelopment, demographic distortion, and constitutional subordination.
- The 'union' between Scotland and England **is a legal fiction**.
- Like the Kanak and Polynesian peoples, the Scottish people face the **systemic suppression of indigenous languages (Gaelic and Scots)** and **institutional erasure of cultural identity**, coupled with **economic dependency**, especially in the management of **North Sea resources**, which remain under exclusive UK control.
- Most importantly, **Scotland lacks international legal personality**, is not permitted to conduct foreign affairs, and has no access to internationally supervised referenda—conditions which the UN has consistently interpreted as indicative of continuing colonial status.

 JPTi affirms that the **principle of self-determination applies universally**—not selectively. It is a legal right, not a political favour. We therefore call upon the C-24 and the General Assembly to open formal consideration of Scotland's status under Resolutions **1514 (XV)**, and **1541 (XV)**, just as was done for French Polynesia in 2013 through Resolution **67/265**.


To help you better understand the process, we want to explain how the United Nations (UN) handles decolonization, particularly through the Special Committee on Decolonization, also known as the C-24.

The C-24 has very strict rules. Only regions already on the UN's official list of “Non-Self-Governing Territories” (NSGTs) are allowed to be discussed during its meetings. At this moment, Scotland is not on that list, which means no one is currently allowed to speak about Scotland’s case during C-24 sessions.

For Scotland to be added to the list, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) must first adopt a resolution that officially recognizes Scotland as a territory to be decolonized. This resolution must go through the UN’s Fourth Committee, which deals with political and decolonization issues. The good news is that, unlike with referendums where consent from the UK Government (Westminster) is required, the UN process does not require such consent. What is needed instead is one country—a member of the United Nations—to sponsor and introduce this resolution. That alone is enough to begin the formal process.

This is where Craig’s work becomes essential. He is currently identifying and reaching out to countries that may be willing to take that first important step for Scotland. At the same time, he is also working closely with the peoples of New Caledonia and French Polynesia, who are already on the UN’s list and are actively working toward exercising their right to self-determination. Their experience serves as the closest and most relevant example for Scotland’s path.

In the meantime, the most helpful thing you can do is to spread awareness. Share this information widely, and if you are active on social media, please like, share, and repost our updates. This builds momentum and shows the world that people care about Scotland’s right to choose its future.

 **Justice pour Tous Internationale** remains committed to **international legal integrity, equity in the decolonization process**, and the **dignity of all peoples**. Whether in **Nouméa, Papeete**, or **Edinburgh**, the struggle for sovereignty must be met with **principled resolve**. **JPTi and its partners condemn all forms of violence**, calling on all parties in dispute to resolve their differences **through peaceful means and structured dialogue at the negotiation table**, in full conformity with international law and the spirit of the United Nations Charter