

GENEVA 19 SEPT 2025: At the UN's Palais de Nations in Geneva, Liberation Scotland delivered a historic first event on UN premises (in a meeting room decorated with marquetry gifted by Morocco) with a panel of expert international speakers (legal, constitutional affairs, colonial legacy, human rights, territorial alienation) examining Scotland's constitutional position, under the event title '**Scotland's Right to Self-Determination under International Law**'. Key speakers included Professor Robert Black, Professor Alf Baird, Sara Salyers, Craig Murray, Alex Thorburn and Professor George Katrougalos (Independent Expert on the Promotion of a Democratic and Equitable International Order).



The event attracted a high attendance of UN delegates from many nations and territories (primarily from the African Union and global south) who immediately recognised the historical legacy and current conditions evident in 21st Century Scotland, as the colonial markers associated with long-established dependencies or colonies (including subjugation, displacement, exploitation) and who were eager to engage on this subject and to draw comparisons with their own lived experiences.

Prof. Black's legal revelation that Scotland was not in fact in the 'voluntary partnership' long claimed by the British Government, but rather had been subject to territorial annexation in 1707 by a continuing English state (renaming itself the UK) surprised the event's international participants, who acknowledged the questions that this raises about the representation of the UK by the British Government on the world stage as a voluntary partnership of nations.

Junius Ho (Founder & CEO, IPLSA) opened the event by situating Scotland's case within global decolonisation struggles and emphasised that Scotland's devolved institutions lack permanence and international personality, with the absence of UK ratification of key human-rights instruments and their Optional Protocols leaving the Scottish people without effective remedies.

Prof Robert Black KC demonstrated that the events of 1707 did not create a new state, but rather extended the English state over Scotland. England's executive, legislature and judiciary remained intact, while Scotland's own were dissolved or subordinated.

Professor Black: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8cGi7Q-EcyU&t=539s>

Ms. Ailsa Gray highlighted the economic coercion, and military threat preceding the 1707 Treaty of Union, citing the Alien Act of 1705 and contemporary protests. She argued that "partnership" was a fiction, with Scotland's sovereignty and resources progressively subordinated to English control.

Ailsa Gray: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EPdvVBCWEgE>

Prof. Baird applied post-colonial theory to Scotland's current position, identifying persistent structural indicators of colonisation, including: extraction-based economy with artificially low GDP per capita, cultural marginalisation and erosion of the indigenous Scots and Gaelic languages, demographic displacement over three centuries and "banishment of natives", and a continuing pattern of dependency and external political control.

Alf Baird: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wFZtgZos9A0&t=475s>

Ms. Sara Salyers argued that the Union lacked constitutional legitimacy and amounted to territorial alienation under international law. She emphasised the continuing legal personality of the Scottish Crown, understood historically as the Community of the Realm (the people), and called for international enforcement of Scotland's sovereign rights.

Sara Salyers: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RQZ8zW2lr9k>

Mr. Craig Murray described Scotland's experience as one of long-standing colonial subordination, marked by historical repression of culture and land dispossession. He underlined that, despite being energy-self-sufficient, Scotland's resources remain controlled by London, while Westminster continues to block a new independence referendum and dominant media limit public debate. He observed that Scottish independence would have significant geopolitical implications, including for the UK's nuclear posture and its status as a permanent member of the Security Council, drawing parallels with the succession arrangements following the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

Craig Murray: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8FVLM0hejsg>

Mr. Alex Thorburn reviewed Scotland's historic contributions to concepts of popular sovereignty and collective rights: from the Declaration of Arbroath (1320) and the Claim of Right (1689) to the Common Good tradition. He underlined that the interruption of these traditions after 1707, the continuing fiscal and legal constraints under devolution, and the UK's non-ratification of the Optional Protocols to the ICCPR and ICESCR limit the full realisation of human rights in Scotland today.

Alex Thorburn: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bwgx2BSojXs&t=182s>

Professor George Katrougalos recalled that the principle of self-determination, though resisted in the colonial era, is today recognised as a universal human right. He noted that the 2012 Edinburgh Agreement (which enabled the 2014 independence referendum) demonstrated the dual nature of sovereignty in the 21st century: rooted in national constitutional law yet shaped by international norms of democracy and self-determination. He emphasised that self-determination cannot be separated from the quest for a fairer international order.

The event concluded with a full 75 minutes of Q&A from the attending delegates who recognised Scotland's position and wished to discover more details to compare with their own. The question raised several times by attendees who stressed their recognition of our common circumstances and their own ongoing struggles to decolonise, was how to leverage our commonalities and work together to end colonisation for good.

Audience Q&A: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DWr02z7hCLs&t=2732s>

This engagement represents the start of a wider conversation with the international community (who will ultimately decide Scotland's future) about the true status of Scotland as a non-self governing territory (NGST) as defined by the UN, and hidden from view by the British state for so long. Liberation Scotland is determined to continue to mobilise this international debate and progress our case to the UN Special Committee on decolonisation (C24) during the coming weeks.

