
Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. C. Torsten W. Örn (Sweden)

1. The item "Declaration and treaty concerning the reservation exclusively for peaceful purposes of the sea-bed and of the ocean floor, underlying the seas beyond the limits of present national jurisdiction, and the use of their resources in the interests of mankind" was included in the provisional agenda of the twenty-second session (A/6680/Rev.1) at the request of the Permanent Mission of Malta, transmitted to the Secretary-General in a note verbale dated 18 August 1967 (A/6695). An explanatory memorandum was attached to the request.

2. At its 166th meeting, on 21 September 1967, the General Committee recommended the inclusion of the item in the agenda (A/6840).

3. At its 1564th meeting, on 23 September 1967, the General Assembly approved the recommendation of the General Committee (A/6850).

4. At its 171st meeting, on 5 October 1967, the General Committee recommended that the item be allocated to the First Committee (A/6840/Add.2).

5. At its 1583rd meeting, on 6 October 1967, the General Assembly decided to reword the item as follows: "Examination of the question of the reservation exclusively for peaceful purposes of the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and the subsoil thereof, underlying the high seas beyond the limits of present national jurisdiction, and the uses of their resources in the interests of mankind"
(A/6850/Rev.1) and approved the recommendation of the General Committee to allocate the item to the First Committee (A/6851/Rev.1) for consideration and report. It was considered at the 1515th and 1516th meetings, on 1 November, the 1524th-1530th meetings, from 8-16 November, and the 1542nd to 1544th meetings, on 7 and 8 December 1967.

6. On 7 December 1967, a draft resolution was submitted by Afghanistan, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Ceylon, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, France, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Japan, Libya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malta, Mexico, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Arab Republic, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, Venezuela and Yugoslavia (A/C.1/L.410) and was subsequently co-sponsored by Bolivia, Kenya, Italy, Peru and Singapore (A/C.1/L.410/Add.1). By the draft resolution, the General Assembly would (1) decide to establish an ad hoc committee composed of ..... representatives of Member States to study the scope and various aspects of the item; (2) request the ad hoc committee, in co-operation with the Secretary-General, to prepare for consideration by the General Assembly at its twenty-third session a study which would include: (a) a survey of the past and present activities of the United Nations, the specialized agencies, the IAEA and other inter-governmental bodies with regard to the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and of existing international agreements concerning those areas; (b) an account of the scientific, technical, economic, legal and other aspects of the item; (c) an indication regarding practical means to promote international co-operation in the exploration, conservation and use of the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and the subsoil thereof, as contemplated in the title of the item, and of their resources, having regard to the views expressed and suggestions put forward by Member States during the consideration of the item at the twenty-second session of the General Assembly; (3) request the Secretary-General: (a) to transmit the text of the resolution to the Governments of all Member States in order to seek their views on the subject; (b) to transmit to the ad hoc committee the records of the First Committee relating to the discussion of the item; (c) to render all appropriate assistance to the ad hoc committee, including the submission thereto of the
results of the studies being undertaken in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 2172 (XXI) and Economic and Social Council resolution 1112 (XL) and such documentation pertinent to the item as may be provided by UNESCO and its IOC, IMCO, FAO, WMO, WHO, the IAEA and other inter-governmental bodies; (4) invite the specialized agencies, the IAEA, and other inter-governmental bodies to co-operate fully with the ad hoc committee in the implementation of the resolution.

7. At its 1544th meeting, on 8 December, the Chairman proposed and the Committee agreed that the ad hoc committee referred to in operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.410 and Add.1) would be composed of the following Member States: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Ceylon, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Iceland, India, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Liberia, Libya, Malta, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Romania, Senegal, Somalia, Thailand, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America and Yugoslavia.

8. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.410 and Add.1) by 95 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

9. The First Committee therefore recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Examination of the question of the reservation exclusively for peaceful purposes of the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and the subsoil thereof, underlying the high seas beyond the limits of present national jurisdiction, and the uses of their resources in the interests of mankind

The General Assembly,

Having considered the item entitled "Examination of the question of the reservation exclusively for peaceful purposes of the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and the subsoil thereof, underlying the high seas beyond the limits of present national jurisdiction, and the uses of their resources in the interests of mankind",

/...
Noting that developing technology is making the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and the subsoil thereof, accessible and exploitable for scientific, economic, military and other purposes,

Recognizing the common interest of mankind in the sea-bed and the ocean floor, which constitute the major portion of the area of this planet,

Recognizing further that the exploration and use of the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and the subsoil thereof, as contemplated in the title of the item, should be conducted in accordance with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, in the interest of maintaining international peace and security and for the benefit of all mankind,

Mindful of the provisions and practice of the law of the sea relating to this question,

Mindful also of the importance of preserving the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and the subsoil thereof, as contemplated in the title of the item, from actions and uses which might be detrimental to the common interests of mankind,

Desiring to foster greater international co-operation and co-ordination in the further peaceful exploration and use of the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and the subsoil thereof, as contemplated in the title of the item,

Recalling the past and continuing valuable work on questions relating to this matter carried out by the competent organs of the United Nations, the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency and other inter-governmental organizations,

Recalling further that surveys are being prepared by the Secretary-General in response to General Assembly resolution 2172 (XXI) of 6 December 1966 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1112 (XL) of 7 March 1966,

1. Decides to establish an Ad Hoc Committee, composed of Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Ceylon, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Iceland, India, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Liberia, Libya, Malta, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Romania, Senegal, Somalia, Thailand, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Arab Republic, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America and Yugoslavia, to study the scope and various aspects of this item;
2. **Requests** the **Ad Hoc** Committee, in co-operation with the Secretary-General, to prepare, for consideration by the General Assembly at its twenty-third session, a study which would include:

   (a) A survey of the past and present activities of the United Nations, the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency and other inter-governmental bodies with regard to the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and of existing international agreements concerning these areas;

   (b) An account of the scientific, technical, economic, legal and other aspects of this item;

   (c) An indication regarding practical means to promote international co-operation in the exploration, conservation and use of the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and the subsoil thereof, as contemplated in the title of the item, and of their resources, having regard to the views expressed and the suggestions put forward by Member States during the consideration of this item at the twenty-second session of the General Assembly;

3. **Requests** the Secretary-General:

   (a) To transmit the text of the present resolution to the Governments of all Member States in order to seek their views on the subject;

   (b) To transmit to the **Ad Hoc** Committee the records of the First Committee relating to the discussion of this item;

   (c) To render all appropriate assistance to the **Ad Hoc** Committee, including the submission thereto of the results of the studies being undertaken in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 2172 (XXI) and Economic and Social Council resolution 1112 (XL), and such documentation pertinent to this item as may be provided by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and its Inter-governmental Oceanographic Commission, the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Meteorological Organization, the World Health Organization and the International Atomic Energy Agency and other inter-governmental bodies;

4. **Invites** the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency and other inter-governmental bodies to co-operate fully with the **Ad Hoc** Committee in the implementation of the present resolution.