

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 155 of the rules of procedure

Draft resolution A/C.1/L.632/Rev.1

1. On the basis of data and information at his disposal, the Secretary-General would be in a position to undertake a comparative study of the extent of the international area that would result from each of the various proposals on limits of national jurisdiction, although some problems of interpretation may arise. For this study, the Secretary-General would have to rely on the area calculations contained in the publication, "International boundary study: limits in the seas", No. 46, prepared by the Geographer of the United States Department of State.

2. As to the economic significance of the area in terms of resources, reliable information on the extent and location of sea-bed minerals is still very scanty.

3. Assuming that in the spirit of operative paragraph 3, Governments would immediately put at the disposal of the Secretary-General the necessary information, a sum in the order of $50,000 would be needed to secure the services of high-level experts and the co-operation of various institutions specialized in marine geology in order to produce a report for the summer session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction.
Amendment contained in document A/C.1/L.636

4. This amendment requests the Secretary-General to assess the economic significance for the international community, particularly developing, land-locked, shelf-locked and coastal States, that would result from the establishment of an exclusive economic zone not exceeding 200 nautical miles.

5. The economic significance for the international community and the various States would, of course, vary according to the different types of régimes envisaged. It would appear that this amendment contains at least three sets of problems:

   (a) An assessment of the living and non-living resources within the exclusive economic zone.

   (b) An assessment of the resources of the area beyond the 200 nautical mile limit.

   (c) Various alternatives for the sharing of benefits from the international area.

6. An assessment of living and non-living resources within the exclusive economic zone would represent a major task that the United Nations would have to undertake in co-operation with the Food and Agriculture Organization. Moreover, this task would require additional consultants and probably a longer period of time. The Secretariat would not be in a position to complete a study of this nature before the end of 1973, and the additional cost would amount to approximately $50,000.

7. A tentative list of alternatives for the sharing of benefits from the area beyond the limits of national jurisdiction was prepared by the Secretary-General (A/AC.138/38) and submitted to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction for consideration. Although the Secretary-General is fully aware of the shortcomings of this theoretical and very preliminary study, he nevertheless believes that this is one possible approach on which respective benefits accruing to the international community and the various States could be assessed. The Secretary-General would like to recall that, in presenting that study, he had already cautioned the Committee that he was aware that certain additional parameters might have to be added to those already utilized, in particular in regard to land-locked and shelf-locked countries. This component of the requested study would involve a great deal of computation, and it would require additional funds for consultants, computer programmers and computer time. Tentatively, this additional cost could be estimated at $30,000.

8. Thus, if the amendment contained in A/C.1/L.636 is adopted, the cost of the study would be increased by another $80,000, and its completion could not be expected before the end of 1973.
9. The compilation of geological data concerning the ocean floor in terms of resources requested in this amendment could be prepared on the basis of the on-going work in the Secretariat in connexion with the Economic and Social Council resolution 1641 (LI) and would entail only minor financial implications, which could be absorbed within the regular budget.

Amendment contained in document A/C.1/L.638

10. This amendment requests that the scope of the study be enlarged so as to include the economic implications for coastal States of the various proposals on limits of national jurisdiction. This study would complement that requested in A/C.1/L.632/Rev.1. It would, however, require extensive additional work, inasmuch as economic implications for coastal States would vary greatly from country to country and thus would have to be analysed under a number of categories. A considerable amount of information on the economies of the States concerned will be required. A broad range of weighty and complex issues would have to be analysed, e.g., the importance of resources accruing to coastal States under the various limits proposed and the economic importance for these States of exploration and exploitation in the area beyond the limits of national jurisdiction (such as the logistics of such activities).

11. In undertaking this study, the Secretary-General would have to rely heavily on the information to be obtained from the coastal States themselves. Implementation of this task would require not only close co-operation with the regional economic commissions but additional high-level consultants. Additional costs, including computer programming, use of computer time and additional consultants on near-shore resources may amount to $100,000, and the work could not be finished before summer 1974.

12. All the estimates given above are merely tentative and will have to be studied further after consultations with experts.