

ARTICLE 56

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TEXT OF ARTICLE 56

All Members pledge themselves to take joint and separate action in cooperation with the Organization for the achievement of the purposes set forth in Article 55.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

1. The present study contains a brief review of the decisions taken by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council during the period covered by this *Supplement* in which Article 56 was referred to or its language paraphrased.

I. GENERAL SURVEY

2. As in the past, only in a few decisions of the General Assembly and the Council was there reference to Article 56. Most of those references were made in the preambles of resolutions and relate primarily to questions of human rights and economic development. Decisions in the economic, social and human rights fields which contained no reference to Article 56, but referred in a general way to the obligations assumed by Members under the Charter, are not dealt with here.¹ However, as noted in the *Repertory*,² since Article 56 contains a general pledge relating to the achievement of the purposes set forth in Article 55, it cannot be said with certainty that the pledge in Article 56 has not been taken into account in those decisions which contain only a general reference to obligations of Members under the Charter. It should be noted that, in the study of Article 55 in this *Supplement*, which deals, *inter alia*, with the types of action taken for the "achievement of the purposes set forth in Article 55", the section on international co-operation is pertinent to this study.

¹ Similarly, following past practice, incidental references to Article 56 in discussions are not dealt with in this study. For examples of such references, of which there were a few during the period covered, see G A (XIV), Plen., 813rd mtg., para. 32; G A (XV), Plen., 992nd mtg., para. 235; G A (XVII), Spec. Pol. Com., 334th mtg., para. 8; G A (XX), Plen., 1394th mtg., para. 47; G A (XX), 3rd Com., 1355th mtg., para. 45. See also G A (XIV), Annexes, a.i. 61, A/4147 and Add. 1; ICJ, *Reporis 1960*, p.16.

² See *Repertory*, vol. III, under Article 56, footnote 1, and also paras. 1-3.

II. ANALYTICAL SUMMARY OF PRACTICE

The scope of the pledge to take joint and separate action in co-operation with the Organization

A. JOINT AND SEPARATE ACTION IN CO-OPERATION WITH THE ORGANIZATION

3. In resolution 1421 (XIV) entitled "Strengthening and development of the world market and improvement of the trade conditions of the economically less developed countries", the General Assembly recommended that "all Member States should, individually and jointly, continue their efforts to promote and extend mutually beneficial trade between all States, regardless of their economic systems". At the same session, the General Assembly, in recommending the establishment of a commission for industrial development, was mindful of the aim expressed in the Preamble of the Charter to employ

international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples, and "of Articles 55 and 56 of the Charter".³ In the decision taken at its fifteenth session on concerted action for the economic development of economically less developed countries, the General Assembly recalled that "Member States have pledged themselves to take joint and separate action" to promote higher standards of living.⁴ At its fifteenth and eighteenth sessions, the General Assembly recommended that the flow of capital and technical assistance to the developing countries be accelerated. In the resolution adopted at the fifteenth session,⁵ the first preambular paragraph read as follows: "*Bearing in mind* the responsibilities laid upon Member States

³ G A resolution 1431 (XIV).

⁴ G A resolution 1515 (XV).

⁵ G A resolution 1522 (XV).

by Article 55 of the Charter of the United Nations to promote higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development, and by Article 56 to take joint action in co-operation with the United Nations for the achievement of these purposes". Resolution 1938 (XVIII) adopted at the eighteenth session contained in its preamble a clause practically identical with that of resolution 1431 (XIV) concerning the establishment of a commission for industrial development, mentioned above. In resolution 1775 (XVII) on the fifteenth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the General Assembly recalled "its resolution 217 D (III) of 10 December 1948, recommending Governments of Member States to show their adherence to Article 56 of the Charter of the United Nations by using every means within their power solemnly to publicize the text of the Declaration". At its eighteenth session, in making recommendations on activities in the field of industrial development, the General Assembly was "*Mindful...* of the provisions of Articles 55 and 56... which place upon the Organization the responsibility for promoting higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development".⁶

B. GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS ON THE QUESTION OF RACE CONFLICT

4. In the resolutions on the question of race conflict in South Africa resulting from the policies of *apartheid* of the Government of the Union of South Africa, the General Assembly referred specifically to its earlier decisions which cited Article 56. In resolution 1598 (XV) adopted at its fifteenth session, the General Assembly, considering its several earlier decisions in which it had declared that racial policies

⁶ G A resolution 1940 (XVIII).

designed to perpetuate or increase discrimination were inconsistent with the Charter and with the pledges of Members under Article 56 of the Charter, *inter alia*, deprecated policies based on racial discrimination as reprehensible and repugnant to human dignity and called upon the Government of the Union of South Africa once again "to bring its policies and conduct into conformity with its obligations under the Charter". In resolution 1663 (XVI) adopted at its sixteenth session, the General Assembly, after a preambular clause similar to the one referred to above, *inter alia*, condemned policies based on racial superiority and urged "all States to take such separate and collective action as is open to them in conformity with the Charter to bring about an abandonment of those policies".

C. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1164 (XLI)

5. The Economic and Social Council at its forty-first session recommended to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution on the question of the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including policies of racial discrimination and segregation and of *apartheid* in all countries, with particular reference to colonial and other dependent countries and territories; in its preamble, the General Assembly recalled "the obligation of all Member States under Article 56 of the Charter of the United Nations to take joint and separate action in co-operation with the Organization for the achievement of the purposes set forth in Article 55, which include the promotion of universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedom for all, without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion".⁷

⁷ This draft, contained in E S C resolution 1164 (XLI), was adopted by the General Assembly in a modified form as resolution 2144 A (XXI).