

REPERTORY OF PRACTICE OF UNITED NATIONS ORGANS

SUPPLEMENT No. 7

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Volume IV

ARTICLE 56

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ARTICLE 56

TEXT OF ARTICLE 56

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

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

1. During the period under review there were no decisions or discussions¹ that interpreted or referred to Article 56 in a manner which differed substantially from that described in the previous *Repertory* studies on this Article and which would require a treatment under the Analytical Summary of Practice. The study is therefore limited to an account of the manner in which Article 56 has been referred to in those decisions, contained in the General Survey. Decisions in the economic, social and human rights fields in which reference has been made only in a general way to obligations of Members under the Charter and where no clear connection² with Article 56 can be established,³ are not dealt with in this study, nor are merely incidental references⁴ to Article 56 in discussions included.

¹ In its decisions 1983/184 of 29 July 1983, 1985/200 of 26 July 1985 and 1987/179 of 8 July 1987 the Economic and Social Council, *inter alia*, decided each time to discontinue for further periods of two years summary records for its sessional committees (First (Economic) Committee, Second (Social) Committee and Third (Programme and Co-ordination) Committee).

² It is to be noted that 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 or discussion in which only a general reference has been made to obligations of Members under the Charter. See the *Repertory*, vol. III, study of Article 56, footnote 1.

³ See, for example, G A resolutions 40/64 A of 10 December 1985, 40/97 A of 13 December 1985, 40/114 of 13 December 1985, S-14/1 of 20 September 1986, 41/39 A of 20 November 1986, 41/117 of 4 December 1986, 41/133 of 4 December 1986, 41/152 of 4 December 1986, 41/155 of 4 December 1986, 41/162 B of 4 December 1986, 42/14 A of 6 November 1987, 42/102 of 7 December 1987, 42/115 of 7 December 1987, 42/121 of 7 December 1987, 42/145 of 7 December 1987,

2. The types of action taken for the “achievement of the purposes set forth in Article 55” are dealt with in the *Repertory* and its *Supplements* under Article 55. Questions concerning the relationship of Article 56 to domestic jurisdiction and to reports on steps taken to give effect to recommendations of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on economic, social and human rights matters are dealt with in the *Repertory* and its *Supplements* under Article 2 (7) and Article 64, respectively.

I. General Survey

3. As in the past, only a few decisions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council contained references to Article 56.⁵ In most cases the reference was made in the preambular paragraphs,⁶ whereas in some cases the reference was included in the operative part of resolutions.⁷ In two cases reference was made to Article 56 in international human rights instruments adopted during the period under review.⁸ All resolutions were made in the context of the achievement of the purposes set forth in Article 55 and related primarily to questions of economic development,⁹ social progress,¹⁰ and human rights.¹¹ In all cases reference was made to the Article through quoting it in part.

4. During the period under review, there was no elaboration of the meaning of the word “pledge” in the decisions of the United Nations. It may be noted that in a decision, which paraphrased Article 56, the words “duty to co-operate”, and “duty to take steps, individually and collectively” have been used.¹²

**II. Analytical Summary of Practice

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

42/165 of 11 December 1987, 42/209 C of 11 December 1987, 43/113 of 8 December 1988, 43/124 of 8 December 1988, 43/130 of 8 December, 43/155 of 8 December 1988, 43/156 of 8 December 1988 and 43/188 of 20 December 1988. A number of resolutions dealing in particular with country situations and alternative approaches and ways and means within the United Nations system for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms continued to urge States to co-operate with either the Commission on Human Rights or the respective mechanism created for monitoring the human rights situation in a given country. See *Supplement No. 6*, vol. IV, study on Article 56, para. 11, and for example G A resolutions 40/124 of 13 December 1985, 40/137 of 13 December 1985, 40/139 of 13 December 1985, 40/140 of 13 December 1985, 40/141 of 13 December 1985, 40/143 of 13 December 1985, 40/145 of 13 December 1985, 41/131 of 4 December 1986, 41/156 of 4 December 1986, 41/157 of 4 December 1986, 41/158 of 4 December 1986, 41/159 of 4 December 1986, 42/119 of 7 December 1987, 42/135 of 7 December 1987, 42/136 of 7 December 1987, 43/125 of 8 December 1988, 43/137 of 8 December 1988, 43/139 of 8 December 1988, 43/151 of 8 December 1988 and 43/159 of 8 December 1988; E S C resolutions 1985/40 of 30 May 1985, 1986/36 of 23 May 1986, 1987/60 of 29 May 1987 and 1988/38 of 27 May 1988.

⁴ See, for example, G A (40), 3rd Com., 36th mtg., para. 14; G A (40), 6th Com., 45th mtg., para. 47; G A (41), Plen., 54th mtg., pp. 11, 37 and 92; G A (41), 3rd Com., 61st mtg., para. 186; G A (43), 3rd Com., 52nd mtg., para. 70; G A (43), 6th Com., 42nd mtg., para. 17 and E S C 1987, Plen., 7th mtg., p. 6.

⁵ G A resolutions 40/64 G of 10 November 1985 (Annex), 40/178 of 17 December 1985, 41/128 of 4 December 1986 (Annex), 42/49 of 30 November 1987 and 43/90 of 8 December 1988; E S C resolution 1988/46 of 27 May 1988 and E S C decision 1985/181 of 25 July 1985 (Annex).

⁶ G A resolutions 42/49 of 30 November 1987 and 43/90 of 8 December 1988; E S C resolution 1988/46 of 27 May 1988.

⁷ G A resolution 40/178 of 17 December 1985; E S C decision 1985/181 of 25 July 1985 (Annex).

⁸ G A resolutions 40/64 G of 10 December 1985 (Annex) and 41/128 of 4 December 1986 (Annex).

⁹ E S C decision 1985/181 of 25 July 1985 (Annex) and G A resolution 40/178 of 17 December 1985.

¹⁰ G A resolution 42/49 of 30 November 1987 and E S C resolution 1988/46 of 27 May 1988.

¹¹ G A resolutions 40/64 G of 10 December 1985 (Annex), 41/128 of 4 December 1986 (Annex) and 43/90 of 8 December 1988.

¹² G A resolution 41/128 of 4 December 1986 (Annex).