

ARTICLE 62 (4)

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ARTICLE 62 (4)

TEXT OF ARTICLE 62 (4)

It [the Economic and Social Council] may call, in accordance with the rules prescribed by the United Nations, international conferences on matters falling within its competence.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

1. The material contained in this study supplements that found in the *Repertory* and its *Supplements Nos. 1, 2 and 3*, and relates primarily to the calling of conferences by the Economic and Social Council itself on matters falling within its competence. The arrangement of the material also follows that of *Supplement No. 3*. In one instance, although the conference was formally called by the General Assembly, the initiative and arrangements originated largely in the Council and material thereon has accordingly been included.

I. GENERAL SURVEY

A. General

2. During the period under review, the Economic and Social Council convened five conferences of States and decided to convene a further conference at a later date.¹ It also recommended, during the period under review, that the General Assembly consider the desirability of convening a United Nations conference on problems of the human environment.²

3. The international conferences of States called by the Council dealt with cartography, the standardization of geographical names, industrial development, social welfare, and the replacement of the 1949 Convention on Road Traffic and the 1949 Protocol on Road Signs and Signals.

4. The decision of the Council to recommend to the Assembly the convening of a conference on the human environment stemmed from a report by the Secretary-General³ on relevant work being carried out by the United Nations organizations in that field and, *inter alia*, by the Intergovernmental Conference of Experts on the Scientific Basis for Rational Use and Conservation of the Resources of the Biosphere, convened in Paris in 1968 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) with the participation of the United Nations, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO), as well as the decision of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) to convene a meeting of Governmental Experts on Problems relating to the Environment in 1970 or 1971. In

adopting the recommendation to convene such a conference in 1972,⁴ the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its twenty-fourth session, through the Council, on certain preparatory matters connected therewith. Upon receipt of the report,⁵ the Council submitted further detailed recommendations with respect to the Conference;⁶ those were adopted, with minor modifications, by the Assembly.⁷

B. Rules prescribed by the United Nations

5. In addition to prescribing, as it did in 1963 and 1965,⁸ that not more than one "major special conference" of the United Nations should be scheduled in any one year, the General Assembly at its twenty-first session,⁹ citing its responsibility under the Charter, the Financial Regulations of the Organization and its own rules of procedure for final approval of the annual calendar of conferences and meetings, established on an experimental basis a Committee on Conferences with the function, *inter alia*, of submitting to it at each regular session a calendar of meetings and conferences for the following year for the competent organs of the United Nations. At its twenty-second session, the Assembly approved the calendar submitted to it by the Committee and reaffirmed its decision¹⁰ that any meeting—other than an emergency meeting—not covered by the basic programme for a given year should not be held during that year.¹¹ In 1968 and 1969, the Assembly confirmed this principle, as well as its earlier decisions that, "as a general rule", not more than one major special conference should be scheduled in any one year.¹²

⁴G A resolution 2398(XXIII).

⁵E S C (XLVII), a.i. 10, E/4667.

⁶E S C resolution 1447(XLVII).

⁷G A resolution 2581(XXIV).

⁸See *Repertory, Supplement No. 3*, vol. II, under Article 62 (4), para. 8.

⁹G A resolution 2239(XXI).

¹⁰G A resolution 2116(XX).

¹¹G A resolution 2361(XXII). In this resolution the General Assembly also asked the Committee to submit to it at its next session a definition of the term "major special conference", to which the Committee responded by suggesting that the Assembly adopt a pragmatic approach in each case, when deciding upon the calendar for any particular year (see G A (XXIII), a.i. 75, A/7361, paras. 26-31 (issued separately)).

¹²G A resolutions 2478(XXIII) and 2609(XXIV).

¹See Annex I. Of the six conferences listed in that annex, the first five were called by the Council in the period covered by the *Repertory, Supplement No. 3*; the sixth was called during the period under review, but convened subsequent to it. The Council also requested the Secretary-General (E S C resolution 1314(XLIV)), in consultation with an *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts, to consider the desirability of a second United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names and to report thereon at an appropriate session of the Council. At the same time it performed considerable preparatory work on a draft protocol on psychotropic substances to be submitted to a Conference of Plenipotentiaries called in 1970 (E S C resolution 1474(XLVIII)).

²E S C resolution 1346(XLV).

³E S C (XLV), a.i. 12, E/4553.

****C. Invitations and participation in connexion with international conferences of States**

****1. MEMBER STATES AND NON-MEMBER STATES**

****2. DEPENDENT TERRITORIES**

****3. SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**

****4. INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**

****D. Invitations and participation in connexion with non-governmental conferences**

E. Preparatory and other arrangements

6. In the case of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment,¹³ the preparatory arrangements recommended by the Council¹⁴ and confirmed by the Assembly¹⁵ broadly followed the Council's past practice. According to the draft resolution submitted for adoption,¹⁶ the General Assembly would, *inter alia*, endorse in general the proposals contained in the Secretary-General's report regarding the purposes and objectives of the Conference. It would entrust to the Secretary-General the over-all responsibility for organizing and preparing for the Conference, bearing in mind the views expressed during the Council's debate. It would establish a Preparatory Committee consisting of highly qualified representatives nominated by Govern-

¹³See paras. 2 and 4 above.

¹⁴E S C resolution 1448(XLVII).

¹⁵G A resolution 2581(XXIV).

¹⁶See E S C resolution 1448(XLVII).

ments to advise the Secretary-General, and would request the Secretary-General to set up immediately a small conference secretariat and to appoint, at the appropriate time, a Secretary-General of the Conference. The General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to consult with Governments, specialized agencies and IAEA, and with the Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development, to take account of resolutions of other international conferences in the field, such as the ECE Conference on Problems of the Environment to be held in 1971, and to draw on contributions from appropriate intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. The Assembly would invite States Members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies and IAEA to participate in the Conference and to take an active part in its preparation. It would invite the specialized agencies and IAEA, as well as the Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development, to collaborate closely in the preparations for the Conference. It would also invite intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned to lend every possible assistance. The Secretary-General would be requested, in collaboration with the Preparatory Committee, as part of the preparations for the Conference, to bring to public attention the nature and importance of the problems of the human environment. The General Assembly would decide that the Conference should be of approximately two weeks' duration, and would decide to accept the invitation of the Government of Sweden to hold the Conference in Sweden in June 1972. Finally, the Secretary-General would be requested to submit a brief progress report to the General Assembly, through the Council, at its forty-ninth session.

****II. ANALYTICAL SUMMARY OF PRACTICE**

ANNEX I

List of international conferences of States

1. Fifth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Far East; Canberra, 8-22 March 1967.

Economic and Social Council resolution 1070(XXXIX).

2. United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names; Geneva, 4-22 September 1967.

Economic and Social Council decision at its thirty-seventh session, 1343rd meeting, and at its thirty-ninth session, 1385th meeting.

3. International Symposium on Industrial Development; Athens, 29 November-19 December 1967.

Economic and Social Council resolutions 1180 I (XLI) and 1185 (XLI); General Assembly resolution 2178(XXI).

4. International Conference of Ministers Responsible for Social Welfare; New York, 3-12 September 1968.

Economic and Social Council resolution 1140(XLI).

5. United Nations Conference on Road Traffic; Vienna, 7 October-8 November 1968.

Economic and Social Council resolutions 1082 B (XXXIX) and 1129(XLI), as amended by resolution 1203(XLII).

6. Sixth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Far East, to be held in Tehran, 24 October-7 November 1970.

Economic and Social Council resolution 1313(XLIV).

****ANNEX II**

****Non-governmental conferences**