

**ARTICLE 66 (1)**

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## ARTICLE 66 (1)

### TEXT OF ARTICLE 66 (1)

The Economic and Social Council shall perform such functions as fall within its competence in connection with the carrying out of the recommendations of the General Assembly.

#### NOTE

1. During the period under review, there was no specific reference to Article 66, paragraph 1.<sup>1</sup> Further developments relating to the review and appraisal of the functions of the Economic and Social Council mentioned in the *Repertory* and *Supplement No. 3*<sup>2</sup> are dealt with in section A below in order to bring the information up to date. The headings found in Supplements Nos. 3 and 4<sup>3</sup> are maintained here.

<sup>1</sup>By its decision 1895 (LVII) of 1 August 1974, the Council "took into consideration," inter alia, "Articles 61 to 72", when it decided to change the name of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East to "Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific". However, the Council did not appear to rely specifically on any provisions of Article 66 for its authority to rename this regional commission.

<sup>2</sup>See *Repertory*, under Article 66(1), paras. 1 and 2, and *Supplement No. 3*, vol. II, under Article 66(1), para. 1.

<sup>3</sup>See *Supplement No. 3*, vol. II, under Article 66(1), para. 1; and *Supplement No. 4*, vol. II, under Article 66(1), para. 1.

#### A. General

2. During the period under review, the Economic and Social Council adopted a number of important decisions directed towards enabling it to carry out its functions more fully in the fields of economic, social and human rights.

3. At its fifty-first session, citing the need to enhance its ability to discharge the functions conferred upon it by the Charter, and considering that the participation of a larger number of Member States would strengthen the its representative character, authority, and dynamism, the Economic and Social Council recommended that the General Assembly take "all necessary steps" to amend the Charter to ensure an early enlargement of the Council to 54 members.<sup>4</sup> The Council also decided to enlarge, in the interim period, the membership of its sessional committees and the Committee on Natural Resources to 54 members with effect from 1 January 1972. It requested the Assembly to elect, in addition to the 9 new members of the Council, 27 Member States to serve on its sessional committees.<sup>5</sup> At its twenty-seventh session, the General Assembly adopted an amendment to Article 61 of the Charter enlarging the membership of the Council from 27 to 54 and, pursuant to Article 108 of the Charter, submitted the amendment to Member States for ratification.<sup>6</sup> On 23 November 1973, the General Assembly elected the members of the enlarged Council.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup>E S C resolution 1621 (LI).

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>G A resolution 2847 (XXVI). See this *Supplement*, under Articles 61 and 108.

<sup>7</sup>G A (28), Suppl. No. 30, p. xiv.

4. The Economic and Social Council continued to take a number of decisions regarding the organization and rationalization of the work of the Council throughout the period under review. By its resolution 1623 (LI) of 30 July 1971, the Council arranged its schedule to provide for: an organizational session in January; a session in the second quarter of the year devoted mainly to consideration of social questions and of the reports of subsidiary bodies; a session in the third quarter devoted to economic questions and, in alternate years, to a debate on the implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade; and a brief resumed session during the regular session of the General Assembly to deal with other items not addressed during the regular Council sessions.<sup>8</sup> It furthermore requested that the Secretary-General, in consultation with Council members, develop "a more rational agenda designed to avoid duplication of discussion and to enable the Council to concentrate on policy issues."<sup>9</sup>

5. By the same resolution, the Economic and Social Council invited the Secretary-General, in consultation with delegations, to circulate a more detailed schedule of work for each session and to ensure that the annotated provisional agenda for each session was more informative.<sup>10</sup> It also requested that the Secretary-General take urgent steps to reform the nature, scope and form of documentation submitted to the Council in order to allow governments adequate time to review reports and enable the Council to

<sup>8</sup>E S C resolution 1623 (LI), sect. 1, para. 2.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., sect. 11, para. 3.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., para. 6.

concentrate on issues requiring intergovernmental consideration.<sup>11</sup> According to the Council's guidelines, reports were to be action-oriented and no longer than 32 pages in length, should present clear and precise recommendations identifying issues to be taken into account and were to propose alternative courses of action and their implications. The Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to it only short and concise reports of meetings of experts convened by the Secretary-General. Reports of the functional commissions and subsidiary bodies of the Council were to contain, in addition to a report on the salient points of discussion, a concise summary of recommendations and a statement of issues requiring action by the Council. Subsidiary bodies were to submit any adopted resolutions in draft form for the Council's approval.<sup>12</sup>

6. On 31 January 1970, the Economic and Social Council, recalling General Assembly resolution 2579 (XXIV) of 15 December 1969, adopted recommendations for the establishment of a reconstituted Committee for Programme and Coordination.<sup>13</sup> The CPC, enlarged from 16 to 21 members, would, inter alia, advise and assist the Council in discharging its coordination functions under Articles 58, 63, and 64, and receive continuing authority from the Council to review programmes and procedures for particular sectors on a system-wide basis. Pursuant to its resolution 2008 (LX) of 14 May 1976, the Council consolidated the terms of reference for CPC. The Committee was to function as the main subsidiary organ of the Council and the General Assembly for planning, programming and coordination and was to discharge, inter alia, the following functions: review the United Nations programmes as defined in the medium-term plan; recommend priority guidelines for implementing United Nations programmes; assist the Council in executing its coordination functions; review and appraise, where so recommended by the Council or by the General Assembly, the implementation of important legislative decisions; and study the reports of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, appropriate reports of United Nations organs, annual reports of the specialized agencies and other relevant documents.

7. By its resolution 1643 (LI) of 30 July 1971, the Economic and Social Council invited ACC to maintain under constant review measures recommended for ensuring the effective implementation of agreements entered into between the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency. The Council also requested that ACC give priority to the study of uniform and coordinated measures to promote productivity and efficiency in the United Nations system, and that ACC present annual reports to the Council addressing systems operations.

8. During its fifty-third session, the Economic and Social Council established a working group to review the terms of reference of all of its committees, commissions and other

subsidiary bodies and to consider whether their functions could be consolidated so as to reduce their numbers.<sup>14</sup> After having considered the report of the working group,<sup>15</sup> the Council, convinced of the need to streamline its work programme to achieve better consideration of substantive issues, decided to concentrate its attention on a limited number of major policy issues and initiatives.<sup>16</sup> It requested its subsidiary bodies to highlight only those specific questions on which action at the Council level was required, thus enabling it to take expedient, appropriate and necessary action. The Council requested the Secretary-General, in preparing its work programme, to arrange the Council's agenda items in an integrated manner so that similar issues could be addressed in one debate.<sup>17</sup> The Council concentrated its attention in alternate years on: (a) the review and appraisal of the International Development Strategy; and (b) the other areas requiring policy guidance. It also proposed further reviews of the terms of reference of its subsidiary bodies, the restructuring of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the existing agreements between the United Nations, the specialized agencies and IAEA<sup>18</sup>

9. At its fifty-eighth session, the Economic and Social Council adopted new, comprehensive rules of procedure.<sup>19</sup> These new rules included, inter alia, provisions for the participation of, and consultation with, specialized agencies (rule 75), and observer status for authorized representatives of certain non-governmental organizations (rule 81).

10. In its resolution 32/197 of 20 December 1977, the General Assembly endorsed the conclusions and recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System. The Ad Hoc Committee recommended, inter alia, that the Council should concentrate on: (a) formulating and discussing policy recommendations for international economic and social issues; (b) monitoring and evaluating the implementation of overall strategies, policies and priorities in the economic, social and related fields; (c) ensuring the overall coordination of activities in those fields; and (d) conducting comprehensive policy reviews of the operational activities of the agencies and other organs of the system in conformity with the priorities established by the General Assembly.

11. In addition, the Ad Hoc Committee recommended<sup>20</sup> that the Economic and Social Council should organize its work on a biennial basis and hold shorter, more frequent subject-oriented sessions throughout the year. The Committee also recommended that the Council should assume direct responsibility for performing the functions of some of its subsidiary bodies, either by eliminating those bodies or by amending their terms of reference. It recommended that the mandates of intergovernmental committees should be redefined, streamlined or discontinued, that those of the

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., sect. III, para. 1.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., sect. III. Measures to improve the documentation of the Council were the subject matter of numerous actions during the period under review. See, e.g., E S C resolutions 1623 (LI), 1624 (LI), 1770 (LIV) and 1894 (LVII); E S C decision of 30 July 1970 (XLIX), pp. 28-29; E S C decision of 28 July 1972 (LIII), pp. 24-25; E S C decision of 7 August 1973 (LV), p. 34.

<sup>13</sup>E S C resolution 1472 (XLVII) and Annex A thereto (recommendation contained in chapter III of the final report of the Enlarged Committee for Programme and Coordination, E/4748 and Corr. 1, paras. 20-36). See also *Supplement No. 4*, under this Article, para. 4.

<sup>14</sup>E S C resolution 1730 (LIII).

<sup>15</sup>E/5259. See also E/AC.62/9 (1975).

<sup>16</sup>E S C resolution 1768 (LIV).

<sup>17</sup>E S C resolution 1807 (LV).

<sup>18</sup>E S C resolution 1768 (LIV). Additional actions addressing the rationalization of the Council's work, programming and coordination include: E S C resolutions 1894 (LVII), 1906 (LVII), 1907 (LVII), 1920 (LVIII), 2039 (LXI), 2071 (LXII), 2098 (LXIII); and E S C decisions 65 (ORG-75) and 162 (LXI).

<sup>19</sup>E S C resolution 1949 (LVIII). See also this *Supplement*, under Article 72(1).

<sup>20</sup>G A resolution 32/197.

functional commissions should be redefined and, where necessary, that their functional responsibilities should be regrouped. The Committee discouraged the creation of new subsidiary bodies and encouraged the participation to the extent possible of all States Members of the United Nations in the work of the Council. It recommended that the Secretary-General and the executive heads of the specialized agencies participate more actively in the work of the Council.

12. The Economic and Social Council took steps to implement General Assembly resolution 32/197 at the end of the period under review.<sup>21</sup>

**\*\*B. Decisions of the Economic and Social Council relating to recommendations of the General Assembly not addressed to the Council**

<sup>21</sup>See *E S C decisions 1978/11, 1978/12, 1978/94 and 1978/97.*