

UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/8047 and Add.1, 2/Rev.1, 3, 4
15 August 1970
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH/RUSSIAN

Twenty-fifth session

REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF A SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM IN THE AGENDA
OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION

QUESTION OF THE BREADTH OF THE TERRITORIAL SEA AND RELATED MATTERS

Letter dated 15 August 1970 from the representatives of Bulgaria,
Syria and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United
Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from our respective Governments, we have the honour to request you to make necessary arrangements to have the question entitled "Question of the breadth of the territorial sea and related matters" included in the provisional agenda of the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly as a separate item.

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, we enclose herewith an explanatory memorandum, which together with this letter may be circulated as official documents of the General Assembly.

(Signed) Milko TARABANOV
Permanent Representative of the
People's Republic of Bulgaria

Rafic JOUEJATI
Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the
Syrian Arab Republic

A.V. ZAKHAROV
Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

1. An important outstanding question in the law of the sea is the breadth of the territorial sea. If the territorial sea were, pursuant to an international agreement, generally extended to twelve nautical miles, the number of straits consisting wholly of territorial sea could be significantly increased and it would thus be necessary to assure the freedom of transit through and over straits used for international navigation. In addition, a number of countries may consider that, if the limit of the territorial sea is established at twelve miles, it may be necessary to accord to coastal States certain special rights in respect of fisheries beyond the territorial sea.
2. It is believed that this group of interrelated issues requires urgent consideration looking towards the conclusion of an international agreement if further international disputes are to be avoided.
3. Consideration of these matters should not delay progress towards agreement with respect to the sea-bed and ocean floor beyond national jurisdiction as well as the limits of that area. A committee of the General Assembly has already made progress on some aspects of this subject.
4. Similarly, the question of pollution, which is already before the General Assembly, will no doubt continue to receive special attention.
5. It is believed that it would be useful for the General Assembly to consider the group of matters falling within the title of the item as indicated in this memorandum with a view to indicating a procedure which might lead to an agreement on these matters generally acceptable to the international community.
