



# United Nations

GENERAL

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## GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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Fourth session

### ACTION TO ACHIEVE OR MAINTAIN FULL EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC STABILITY

#### Note by the Secretary-General

1. The Supplementary list of items for the agenda of the fourth regular session of the General Assembly (A/964), issued on 26 August 1949, includes the following two items bearing on the question of full employment:

"The observance and implementation of Articles 55 and 56 of the Charter and in particular of 55a providing for the achievement of full employment and higher standards of living: item proposed by Australia."

"Action to achieve or maintain full employment and economic stability: item proposed by the Economic and Social Council."

2. In view of the apparent similarity of the subjects suggested by these two items, the Secretary-General has recommended to the General Committee of the General Assembly (A/BUR/118) that "the views of the Australian Delegation be sought by the General Committee as to whether or not these two items could be combined or dealt with simultaneously by the committee to which they will be referred."

3. The Economic and Social Council, in resolution 221 (IX) F, recommended that the General Assembly include in the agenda of its fourth session the question of promoting full employment. In the same resolution the Council also requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly the latest available information on the world economic situation and on national and international action to achieve or maintain full employment. The resolution reads as follows:

"The Economic and Social Council

Recommends that the General Assembly include in the agenda of its fourth session the question of promoting full employment, in accordance with the terms of Article 55 of the Charter;

/ "Transmits

"Transmits to the General Assembly the records of the discussion and decisions on this subject at the ninth session of the Council;

"Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly the latest available information on:

"(a) The world economic situation, concentrating particularly on factors which are critical from the international point of view and drawing attention to international agreements and machinery already in existence which are designed to promote concerted action to maintain full employment and counter the international extension of any recession;

"(b) National and international action to achieve or maintain full employment and economic stability."

4. A brief account of the discussion on this matter at the ninth session of the Economic and Social Council and of the action taken by the Council is to be found in chapter II B of the report of the Council to the General Assembly (A/972\*).

5. The summary records of the discussion on the question of unemployment and full employment at the ninth session of the Economic and Social Council are contained in documents E/SR.328-E/SR.330, E/SR.332-E/SR.337 and E/SR.343.

6. The report which the Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly under resolution 221 (IX) F is now being completed and will be distributed within a few days.

7. In addition to the resolution quoted above, the Economic and Social Council adopted another (221 (IX) E) dealing with the problems of employment and economic stability. This resolution does not call for any action on the part of the General Assembly but is reproduced below for the information of the representatives to the Assembly:

"The Economic and Social Council,

"Having examined the sections of the report of the fourth session of the Economic and Employment Commission dealing with the problems of employment and economic stability,\*\*

"Having noted the communication from the International Labour Organisation transmitting the resolution on unemployment adopted by the International Labour Conference on 1 July 1949, \*\*\*

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\* See Official Records of the fourth session of the General Assembly, Supplement No. 3

\*\* See E/1356

\*\*\* See E/1380/Rev.1

"Having noted further the report prepared by the Secretariat on national and international action to achieve or maintain full employment and economic stability,\* based on the replies of Governments and specialized agencies to the Secretary-General's questionnaire on employment,

"Recalling the obligation undertaken by each Member of the United Nations in Articles 55 and 56 of the Charter to promote conditions of full employment, and

"Considering that, while the recent decline in production and employment in some countries may turn out to be of a temporary character, it is desirable that all countries be prepared to deal with the problem of unemployment as the necessity for such action arises,

"Notes with satisfaction that many of the interested Governments have declared themselves ready to put into effect, if conditions should warrant, such measures for increasing purchasing power and for promoting full employment as are appropriate to their national economies, including, for example, the extension of unemployment insurance, the expansion of social services generally, public works programmes including low cost housing and natural resources development projects, measures affecting the level and methods of taxation, incentives for the encouragement of private capital investment, etc.;

"Urges all Governments, in considering measures for the promotion of full employment, to avoid as much as possible such measures as are likely to result in the restriction of international trade;

"Invites the Secretary-General to appoint a small group of experts to prepare, in the light of the current world economic situation, a report on national and international measures required to achieve full employment, to be issued on the responsibility of the expert group; to give every assistance to the group of experts in the preparation of this report and, in particular, to keep the group informed of work already done or currently being undertaken in this field by the United Nations and the specialized agencies, and to transmit the report to Member Governments;

"Invites the Economic and Employment Commission to examine the report prepared by the group of experts and to submit to the Council at its next session any comments and recommendations for action which seem to it appropriate;

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\* See E/1378.

"Requests the Secretary-General to publish, on a current basis, brief but up-to-date reports on measures taken in various countries for the purpose of achieving full employment; and

"Invites Member Governments to assist the Secretary-General in every possible way in the preparation of such reports."

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