

# UNITED NATIONS

# NATIONS UNIES

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## SECRETARY-GENERAL'S BULLETIN NO. 63

To: Members of the Staff of the United Nations

Subject: FUNCTIONS OF UNITED NATIONS ARCHIVES

### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Bulletin is to establish certain rules with regard to the preservation of records of the United Nations, and to outline the duties and responsibilities of the Archives Section of Communications and Records Service, Conference and General Services.

### II. DEFINITION

When used in this Bulletin the term "records" includes books, papers, maps, still photographs, motion picture film, sound records, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by the United Nations in connection with the transaction of its business and preserved as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the United Nations or because of the informational value contained therein. Library or museum material made or acquired and preserved solely for reference or exhibition purposes, extra copies of documents preserved only for convenience of reference, and stocks of publications, processed documents, and such other materials as may be mutually agreed with the Archivist are not included within the definition of the word "records".

### III. RESPONSIBILITIES OF OTHER UNITS TO THE ARCHIVES SECTION

As the Archives Section of United Nations shall be ultimately responsible for the keeping of the permanent records of the United Nations, no records may be destroyed without its consent.

Departments and Services of the United Nations shall:

/1. Keep the

1. Keep the Archivist informed as to what records are maintained in their departments, particularly where their functions require the maintenance of records as "working tools": this is to ensure that the Archives may serve as a central source of information on United Nations records;
2. Afford the Archivist or his representative full facilities for surveying their records;
3. Transfer to the Archivist any records specified under IV A below.

#### IV. FUNCTIONS OF THE ARCHIVES SECTION

The Archives of the United Nations shall:

##### A. Have custody of

1. all non-current and certain current records of the United Nations, including, but not limited to

(a) the records of the San Francisco Conference and the Preparatory Commission;

(b) contracts, leases and other agreements of an administrative nature involving obligations of United Nations funds, after the obligations have been liquidated and the Comptroller's books have been audited by the External Auditors appointed by the General Assembly;

(c) treaties, international agreements, conventions, and other documents of a legal nature to which the United Nations and States or other international organizations are parties, or which are concluded under the auspices of the United Nations, or which are transmitted to the United Nations for custody or registration by governments or by inter-governmental or non-governmental agencies, after they have been registered by the Legal Department.

(Photostat copies of all such documents, certified by the Archivist, will be provided for the files of the Legal Department.)

2. all records that may be transferred to the United Nations by

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associated or predecessor agencies;

3. the official "master" copies of all documents issued by the United Nations (in this reference the term "documents" includes printed and processed materials prepared and issued by the Documents and Sales Division) and of verbatim minutes of meetings.

B. Be responsible for making records in its custody available for use by members of the Secretariat, the staffs of Delegations, and other interested persons, subject to administrative regulations and to restrictions imposed by the agencies that produced the records or by the Secretary-General.

C. Establish and maintain liaison with archivists in all offices of the United Nations and with competent officials of Headquarters in order to:

1. advise, upon request, on methods of current records management, in order to facilitate periodic elimination of worthless materials and transfer of non-current records to Archives;
2. effect, with the consent of appropriate officials, the transfer to Archives or the destruction of records no longer needed for current use;
3. ascertain the needs of the various offices for information from the Archives and draw up plans for effectively providing that information.

D. Establish liaison with archivists of associated and other international agencies and with the principal archives agencies of member states, for the purpose of collecting information on records of international agencies, or related research materials, and on methods of archives administration, as well as for the purpose of obtaining documents and records essential to the archives of the United Nations.

E. Be responsible for providing certified true copies of any records in its custody. All certified true copies will bear the signature of the Assistant Secretary-General for Conference and General Services or of an

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official appointed by him for the purpose.

V. OTHER BULLETINS RESCINDED

Insofar as they are inconsistent with the provisions of the present Bulletin, SGB/36, 9 July 1946, and SGB/48, 20 September 1946, are hereby rescinded.

By direction of the Secretary-General

/s/ Byron Price

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Assistant Secretary-General  
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