

of international water resources by transmitting to the Secretary-General, for systematic collection, analysis and distribution, periodic information concerning activities, projects and programmes of those organizations:

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General, within existing budgetary and manpower resources:

(a) To establish within the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development a support function for the collection, analysis and periodic distribution of information concerning the activities, programmes and developments of interested international river and lake organizations;

(b) To prepare a manual on the technical and managerial aspects of the development, use and protection of international water resources, drawing on the competence of the organizations of the United Nations system, as required;

(c) To organize periodically interregional seminars, and to facilitate the exchange of personnel, concerned with specific technical and managerial aspects of the development, use and protection of international water resources;

3. *Urges* the regional commissions to consider, at the request of the Governments concerned, and whenever appropriate, the promotion of training activities for the preparation of qualified cadres of managers, administrators and technicians needed for the development, use and protection of international water resources.

*41st plenary meeting  
24 July 1981*

### **1981/82. Utilization of subsurface space**

*The Economic and Social Council,*

*Deeply concerned* by the problems of population, urbanization and overcrowding and the need to provide people with food, water and fuel,

*Recognizing* the potential of subsurface space for, *inter alia*, the storage of water, energy, food and other commodities, as well as for water supply, sewage handling and the conservation of energy,

*Taking into account* the experience of the use of subsurface space already available in many parts of the world,

*Requests* the Secretary-General to compile a report on the utilization of subsurface space, with particular reference to the potential benefits to the developing countries, bearing in mind the mandate of the Committee on Natural Resources and drawing upon documentation already available, to be considered by the Committee at its eighth session.

*41st plenary meeting  
24 July 1981*

### **1981/83. Control and limitation of documentation**

*The Economic and Social Council,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 1979/1 of 9 February 1979, 1979/41 of 10 May 1979 and 1979/69 of 2 August 1979,

which set out, *inter alia*, a number of practical measures designed to reduce the volume of documentation, to ensure its timely circulation in all the working languages of the Council and to improve the format and presentation of Secretariat reports dealing with economic, social and related matters, and approved revised guidelines for the format and contents of the reports of the subsidiary bodies of the Council,

*Taking into account* General Assembly resolutions 33/56 of 14 December 1978 and 34/50 of 23 November 1979,

*Deeply concerned* that, despite the above-mentioned measures and the considerable progress made in reducing the length of each document submitted by the Secretariat to a maximum of thirty-two pages, there has been a marked increase in the total volume of documentation requested by intergovernmental and expert bodies, in addition to some extremely serious delays in the submission and circulation of documentation,

*Conscious* of the marginal progress made by both the Council and its subsidiary bodies in streamlining their agendas and programmes of work and in reducing requests for documentation,

*Aware* that the problems related to the control and limitation of documentation are closely linked to the establishment of a rational calendar of conferences and meetings,

*Convinced* that it is desirable to rationalize and improve the calendar, agenda and programme of work of bodies in the economic and social fields by, *inter alia*, considering some items or questions on a biennial or triennial basis, or by ensuring a better distribution of items or questions between the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council,

*Reaffirming* that intergovernmental and expert bodies should keep their requests for documents to the minimum compatible with the efficient conduct of their work and within the limits of the resources available to the Secretariat,

1. *Expresses its deep regret* at the extent to which its work at the second regular session of 1981 was impeded by the late arrival or non-availability of documents;

2. *Reaffirms* the provisions of its resolutions 1979/1, 1979/41 and 1979/69;

3. *Decides* to carry out a thorough review, at its organizational session for 1982, of its agenda and programme of work, with a view to rationalizing and improving them, as well as a review of the documentation requested under the existing legislative authority with respect to items in the biennial programme of work of the Council, in order to determine whether any of it is redundant, has lost its usefulness or could be issued at less frequent intervals;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit, together with the draft basic programme of work of the Council for 1982-1983, proposals for the consideration of some items or questions on a biennial or triennial basis and suggestions for ensuring a better distribution of some items or questions between the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and to indicate the implications thereof, including desirable changes in the

calendar of conferences, in order to ensure the timely availability of documentation;

5. *Instructs* the subsidiary bodies of the Council to take urgent measures to streamline their agendas and programmes of work and to bring about a substantial reduction in their requests for documents, bearing in mind the duration and the cycles of their meetings, and to report to the Council on measures adopted, taking strictly into account the guidelines set forth in the pertinent resolutions and decisions of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to bring to the attention of intergovernmental and expert bodies, before decisions are adopted, any request for documentation that exceeds the ability of the Secretariat to prepare and process on time and within its approved resources;

7. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to ensure the strict observance of the thirty-two page limit for documents and the reduction of their average length;

8. *Reaffirms*, for a further period of two years, the provision concerning the discontinuance of summary records for certain subsidiary bodies, contained in subparagraph (b) of its resolution 1979/69, as revised by its decision 1980/133 of 2 May 1980;

9. *Decides* to consider, at its organizational session for 1982, the possibility of discontinuing, for an experimental period of two years, the provision of summary records for its sessional committees and their replacement by reports reflecting the course of the discussions;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that documentation is effectively disseminated to the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies on time and simultaneously in all the working languages, in accordance with rule 13, paragraph 4, of the rules of procedure of the Council;

11. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to inform the Bureau of the Economic and Social Council, eight weeks prior to the beginning of each regular session, of the state of preparedness of the documentation for that session, in order to enable the Bureau to make appropriate recommendations to the Council on its agenda and organization of work;

12. *Recommends* that the General Assembly should undertake, on a priority basis at its thirty-sixth session, a thorough examination of the overall problem of documentation in the United Nations, under the item entitled "Pattern of conferences: report of the Committee on Conferences", and also recommends that it should entrust to the Committee on Conferences the question of a review of the calendar of conferences and meetings for the next biennium, with particular reference to the

economic and social fields, with a view to adjusting the calendar to the servicing capacities within the Secretariat, taking into account the problems that are occurring with regard to the timely submission and dissemination of documentation, and should request the Committee to report thereon to the Economic and Social Council at its first regular session of 1982;

13. *Invites* the Secretary-General, in relation to the recommendations in paragraph 12 above, to submit to the General Assembly and the Committee on Conferences appropriate recommendations on the problem of documentation, with particular reference to the economic and social fields.

*41st plenary meeting  
24 July 1981*

#### **1981/84. Revitalization of the Economic and Social Council**

*The Economic and Social Council,*

*Having heard* statements by its President and by several of its members on the need to revitalize the Council as the principal organ of the United Nations under the Charter in the economic and social fields,

*Confirming* its resolution 1622 (LI) of 30 July 1971,

*Bearing in mind* General Assembly resolution 32/197 of 20 December 1977 and the consultations being held pursuant to General Assembly decision 35/439 of 16 December 1980, concerning the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system,

1. *Decides* to accord primary importance to the subject of the revitalization of the Economic and Social Council;

2. *Requests* the President of the Economic and Social Council to hold the consultations he deems to be in the best interests of an early resolution of this important issue, including consultations with the President of the General Assembly, in the light of the opinions expressed in the Council at its second regular session of 1981, and to report to the Council at its resumed second regular session of 1981;

3. *Decides* to convey the views of the Council, in the light of the report of the President of the Council and of the discussions at its resumed second regular session of 1981, to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session;

4. *Requests* Governments to co-operate fully with the President of the Economic and Social Council in the pursuit of his consultations and to accord this matter their priority attention at a senior policy level.

*41st plenary meeting  
24 July 1981*