



UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.135/22
24 June 1968

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

AD HOC COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE PEACEFUL USES
OF THE SEA-BED AND THE OCEAN FLOOR BEYOND
THE LIMITS OF NATIONAL JURISDICTION

LETTER DATED 30 MAY 1968 FROM THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE
UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL
ORGANIZATION ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL*

I acknowledge with thanks receipt of your letter of 19 April. As I offered in my letter of 7 February, I am now sending under separate cover some additional information which, in my view, is definitely related to the terms of resolution 2340 (XXII).

This information pertains first of all to legal aspects of various peaceful uses of the ocean floor. In this connexion, UNESCO, jointly with the Inter-governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO), undertook some time ago to compile all available information concerning legal problems associated with manned and unmanned ocean data stations. Since various ocean platforms will undoubtedly make part of engineering complexes related to exploitation of mineral resources of the ocean floor, the information assembled in the document IOC/INF-108, March 1967, may be of particular interest to the Ad Hoc Committee and its Working Group on Legal Aspects.

Secondly, no safe exploitation or any other activities in the open ocean are possible without having a timely and reliable forecast of the surface ocean conditions and information on currents and other environmental characteristics in the deeper layers of the ocean. The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission has just inaugurated a long-term operational project: "Integrated Global Ocean Station System" which is an oceanic counterpart of the "World Weather Watch" of

* The Secretariat has requested that copies of the documents referred to in this communication should be provided for the members of the Ad Hoc Committee. These copies will be made available to delegations upon receipt.

the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). This project, the purposes of which are described in document IOC/B-37, April 1968, will be implemented by IOC in co-operation with WMO and with support from UNESCO and other interested organizations.

Thirdly, related to various peaceful uses of the ocean floor are questions of scientific instrumentation and man's penetration and work under water. I am sending copies of some pertinent IOC resolutions and some technical documentation which has become available in connexion with these resolutions. The problems treated in these documents - an underwater laboratory and deep-sea tide gauges - are merely examples of the kind of activities which IOC co-ordinates and UNESCO promotes and supports. Further examples could be given.

Finally, among the documents sent is to be found the Summary Report of the Fifth IOC Session, where pages 16 to 19 reflect the discussion on legal aspects of scientific research at sea. Annex X to this report also gives the recommendations of the first meeting of the IOC Working Group on Marine Pollution as well as information on the types of pollutants affecting the oceans (see IOC resolutions V-6 and V-19).

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission was requested by the Ad Hoc Committee to prepare for it a working paper on scientific aspects of the ~~subject-matter of resolution 2340 (XXII)~~. This document is at present in preparation and will be made available to the Ad Hoc Committee at its second session.

I should be grateful if the information contained in this letter and in the documentation mentioned above could be brought to the attention of the Ad Hoc Committee.

(Signed) René MAHEU
