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COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF THE
SEA-BED AND THE OCEAN FLOOR BEYOND
THE LIMITS OF NATIONAL JURISDICTION

Malta: draft resolution

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 2340 (XXII) of 18 December 1967 and 2467 (XXIII) of 21 December 1968,

Reaffirming the common interest of mankind in the sea-bed and the ocean floor and their subsoil,

Noting that the coastal State exercises over its continental shelf, as defined in the Convention on the Continental Shelf of 20 April 1958, sovereign rights for the purpose of exploring it and exploiting its natural resources,

Considering that the definition of the continental shelf contained in the Convention does not precisely delimit the area over which a coastal State exercises sovereign rights for the purpose of exploration and exploitation of natural resources,

Noting that developing technology is making the entire sea-bed and ocean floor progressively accessible and exploitable for scientific, economic, military and other purposes,

Recognizing that there exists an area of the sea-bed and ocean floor and the subsoil thereof which lies beyond the limits of national jurisdiction,

Believing that the exploration, exploitation and use of this area should be undertaken for the benefit of mankind as a whole, irrespective of the geographical location of States, their level of economic development or technological capability without, at the same time, impairing the freedoms of the high seas,

Convinced of the urgent necessity of preserving from undue encroachment this area of the sea-bed beyond the limits of national jurisdiction,

Without prejudice to the limits of the waters beyond national jurisdiction in accordance with international law or to any determination of the precise limits of the continental shelf which may be agreed upon at a future international conference,

Solemnly declares that:

The sea-bed and ocean floor and the subsoil thereof subjacent to water more than _____ nautical miles from the nearest coast and more than 200 metres deep, disregarding rocks and islands without a permanent settled population, unquestionably are and must remain beyond national jurisdiction;

Requests the Secretary-General to consult with Member States, the International Court of Justice, the International Law Commission, appropriate intergovernmental bodies, including the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, and with the specialized agencies concerned on the feasibility of convening at the earliest practicable date an international conference for the purpose of revising the Convention on the Continental Shelf of 29 April 1958, and of formulating legal norms for the conduct of States in the exploration and use for the benefit of mankind as a whole of the sea-bed and the ocean floor and their subsoil beyond the limits of national jurisdiction;

Requests the Secretary-General to report on this subject to the General Assembly at its twenty-fifth session.
