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

DRAFT REPORT

Introductory Note

The present report is submitted in accordance with operative paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 3029 (XXVII) of 18 December 1972.

Since the session covered in this report represents the latest phase in the work of preparation for a third United Nations Law of the Sea Conference and in order to place the latest developments in perspective, the Committee considers it appropriate to include, as the first part of its report, a brief historical review of its work as well as of the work of the preceding Ad Hoc Committee to Study the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-bed and the Ocean Floor beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction.

I. Historical Background

1. The item concerning the peaceful uses of the sea-bed beyond national jurisdiction was first included in the agenda of the General Assembly in 1967. The General Assembly examined this item at its twenty-second session and adopted resolution 2340 (XXII) establishing an ad hoc Committee, composed of 35 States, to study the peaceful uses of the sea-bed and the ocean floor beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. In this connexion, the ad hoc Committee was requested to prepare a study which would include a survey of past and present activities of the United Nations, and other intergovernmental bodies with regard to the sea-bed and ocean floor, and of existing international agreements concerning those areas; an account of the scientific, technical, economic, legal and other aspects of the item; and an indication as to practical means of promoting international co-operation in the exploration, conservation and use of the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and the subsoil thereof, as contemplated in the title of the item, and of their resources.

The ad hoc Committee at its first session in March 1968, established two working groups of the whole, dealing respectively with economic and technical matters, and with legal aspects. It proceeded on the basis of consensus among its members although no formal decision was taken to that effect.

In its report^{1/} the ad hoc Committee informed the Assembly that all delegations had agreed that the item as a whole required further study and that institutional arrangements should be made by the General Assembly for that purpose. The report referred in particular to the support expressed for the idea of establishing a standing committee which should be a focal point for study of the various related aspects of the item. The ad hoc Committee also reported on its endeavours to secure agreement on a draft Declaration of Principles which was intended for submission to the General Assembly. Final agreement on this issue, however, could not be reached by the close of the final session of the ad hoc Committee's work.

At its twenty-third session, on 21 December 1968, the General Assembly adopted four resolutions, resolution 2467 A, B, C and D (XXIII), establishing the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction and outlining in effect its future work.

The Committee, as established by resolution 2467 A (XXIII), was composed of the representatives of 42 Member States. At its first session in 1969, the Committee decided to organize its work essentially on the same basis as the ad hoc Committee, with the difference that a Legal Sub-Committee and an Economic and Technical Sub-Committee were established to replace the earlier Working Groups of the ad hoc Committee.

At its three sessions that year, as reported to the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly,^{2/} the Committee dealt primarily with the questions posed in resolution 2467 A and C: the elaboration of legal principles and norms for the exploration and exploitation of the sea-bed beyond national jurisdiction; and the establishment of an appropriate international machinery to promote such exploration and exploitation for the benefit of mankind. For this second topic, the Committee received a study prepared by the Secretary-General^{3/} pursuant to resolution 2467 C (XXIII).

1/ Official Records of the Twenty-third session of the General Assembly (A/7230).

2/ Official Records of the Twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly, Supplement No.22 (A/7622).

3/ Ibid., Annex II.

A third subject considered by the committee in 1969 was the question of the reservation exclusively for peaceful purposes of the sea-bed beyond national jurisdiction. Due account was paid to the concurrent international negotiations in the field of disarmament as requested by resolution 2467 A (XXIII). In this connexion an addendum to its report to the Assembly^{4/} was submitted in November 1969, covering meetings on this subject.

The Committee continued to work in close co-operation with the specialized agencies and intergovernmental bodies dealing with problems referred to in this same resolution.

During 1970 the Committee worked intensively on the elaboration of a Draft Declaration to govern the area of the sea-bed and the ocean floor beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. The General Assembly, in resolution 2574 B (XXIV) had requested particularly that the Committee expedite its preparation of a comprehensive and balanced statement of principles designed to promote international co-operation in the exploration and use of the area. However, the Committee was unable to reach complete agreement before the submission of its report to the 25th session of the General Assembly.^{5/} A consensus, however, was achieved on that draft in the course of informal consultations during the General Assembly and at the initiative of the Chairman of the Committee the text was submitted to the Chairman of the First Committee of the General Assembly. It was subsequently adopted as General Assembly resolution 2749 (XXV).

The other matters the Committee dealt with that year included the economic and technical conditions, rules and requirements for the régime in order to meet the interests of humanity as a whole. The Committee decided to request the Secretariat to prepare an additional study on methods and criteria for the sharing of benefits to be derived from exploitation of the area beyond national jurisdiction. It also reviewed questions of exploration and research in the area, and co-operation in prevent marine pollution which might result from exploration and exploitation.

^{4/} Ibid., Supplement No.22A (A/7622/Add.1)

^{5/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fifth session
Supplement No.21 (A/8021)

The Committee included in its report to the 25th session of the General Assembly^{6/} an account of its consideration of the report submitted to it by the Secretary-General on international machinery^{7/} in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2574 C (XXXV). This resolution had requested the Secretary-General to prepare a study, further to that of 1969, on various types of international machinery, with details as to status, structure, functions and powers, including the power to regulate, coordinate, supervise and control all activities relating to the exploration of its resources for the benefit of mankind as a whole. At its summer session in 1970, the Committee had received a number of working papers in this connexion.

At its twenty-fourth session, the General Assembly adopted several resolutions in connexion with the sea-bed and ocean floor item. One of those resolutions, 2574 A, requested the Secretary-General to ascertain the views of member States on the desirability of convening at an early date a conference on the law of the sea and to report his findings to the General Assembly at its twenty-fifth session. In another resolution, resolution 2574 D, the Assembly declared that, pending the establishment of an international régime including appropriate international machinery, States and persons, physical and juridical, were bound to refrain from all activities of exploitation of the resources of the area and that no claim to any part of the area of its resources would be recognized.

In the conclusion of its report to the twenty-fifth session,^{8/} the Committee stated that although progress over the previous two years had been slower than it had hoped, the progress had been sufficient to maintain confidence in the emergence of a general agreement on the requirements of the international régime which would be embodied in a future treaty. It was obliged to add, however, that many questions of great importance had not been resolved and that to do so would necessarily require more time and effort.

^{6/} Ibid.

^{7/} Ibid., Annex III

^{8/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fifth session, Supplement No.21 (A/8021)

At its twenty-fifth session, the General Assembly considered three additional items which were combined with the sea-bed and ocean floor item, one of which dealt with the Secretary-General's report^{9/} on the views of Member States regarding the desirability of convening a Conference on the Law of the Sea, in accordance with Resolution 2574 A (XXIV).

In addition to the Declaration of Principles adopted at its twenty-fifth session,^{10/} the Assembly adopted Resolution 2750 C under which it decided to convene in 1973, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 3 of that resolution, cited below, a conference on the law of the sea which would deal with the establishment of an equitable international régime - including an international machinery - for the area and the resources of the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and the subsoil thereof, beyond the limits of national jurisdiction, a precise definition of the area, and a broad range of related issues including those concerning the régimes of the high seas, the continental shelf, the territorial sea (including the question of its breadth and the question of international straits) and contiguous zone, fishing and conservation of the living resources of the high seas (including the question of the preferential rights of coastal States), the preservation of the marine environment (including, *inter alia*, the prevention of pollution) and scientific research.

In the same resolution the Assembly decided to review, at its twenty-sixth session and twenty-seventh session, the reports which it instructed the Committee to make on the progress of its preparatory work with a view to determining the precise agenda of the conference on the law of the sea, its definitive date, location and duration, and related arrangements. If the Assembly, at its twenty-seventh session, determined the progress of the preparatory work of the Committee to be insufficient, it might decide to postpone the conference.

^{9/} A/7925 and Add. 1-3.

^{10/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fifth session, Supplement No.28, resolution 2749 (XXV).

The General Assembly re-affirmed the mandate of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction set forth in General Assembly resolution 2467 A (XXIII) as supplemented by resolution 2750 (XXV). Furthermore, it decided to enlarge the Committee by 44 members^{11/}, appointed by the Chairman of the First Committee of the General Assembly in consultation with regional groups and taking into account equitable geographical representation thereon.

The enlarged Committee was instructed to hold two sessions in Geneva, in March and in July-August 1971, in order to prepare for the conference on the law of the sea draft treaty articles embodying the international régime -- including an international machinery -- for the area and the resources of the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and the subsoil thereof, beyond the limits of national jurisdiction, taking into account the equitable sharing by all States in the benefits to be derived therefrom, bearing in mind the special interests and needs of developing countries, whether coastal or land-locked, on the basis of the Declaration of Principles Governing the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor, and the Subsoil Thereof, beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction, and a comprehensive list of subjects and issues relating to the law of the sea referred to in paragraph 1 above, which should be dealt with by the conference, and draft articles on such subjects and issues.

^{11/} The following States were members of the enlarged Committee under this decision: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, France, Gabon, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Liberia, Libyan Arab Republic, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, People's Republic of the Congo, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia and Zaire. One seat on the Committee, allocated to the Group of Eastern European States was unfilled so that the total number of members remained at 85.

The Committee was authorized to establish such subsidiary organs as it deemed necessary for the efficient performance of its functions, bearing in mind the scientific, economic, legal and technical aspects of the issues involved, and was requested to prepare, as appropriate, reports to the General Assembly on the progress of its work. The Secretary-General was requested to circulate those reports to Member States and to observers to the United Nations for their comments and observations. He was also requested to render the Committee all the assistance it might require in legal, economic, technical and scientific matters, including the relevant records of the General Assembly and specialized agencies for the efficient performance of its functions.

The Assembly decided to invite other Member States which were not appointed to the Committee to participate as observers and to be heard on specific points.

Finally, the Assembly invited the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and its Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and its Committee on Fisheries, the World Health Organization, the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization, the World Meteorological Organization, the International Atomic Energy Agency and other intergovernmental bodies and specialized agencies concerned to co-operate fully with the Committee in the implementation of the present resolution, in particular by preparing such scientific and technical documentation as the Committee might request.

At its first session held in Geneva in March 1971, the Committee adopted the text of the following agreement on the organization of its work:

"The Committee shall form three Sub-Committees of the whole.

"The allocation of subjects and functions to the Sub-Committees shall in the first instance be limited to those items on which there is common agreement.

"Treatment and allocation of all outstanding subjects including, inter alia, (1) the precise definition of the area of the sea-bed and the ocean floor and the subsoil thereof beyond the limits of national jurisdiction and (2) peaceful uses of that area shall be left for determination by the Committee. It is understood that the Sub-Committees, in connexion with the matters allocated to them, may consider the precise definition of the area of the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and the subsoil thereof, beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. It is clearly understood that the matter of recommendations concerning the precise definition of the area is to be regarded as a controversial issue on which the Committee would pronounce. The Committee shall also decide on the question of priority of particular subjects, including the international régime, the international machinery and the economic implications of exploitation of the resources of the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and the subsoil thereof, beyond the limits of national jurisdiction, proceeding from resolution 2750 (XXV) and the relevant explanations made on behalf of its co-sponsors.

"On this understanding and in accordance with the mandate of the Committee as defined in resolution 2750 C (XXV), the following subjects and functions shall be allocated to the three Sub-Committees respectively:
"Sub-Committee I:

To prepare draft treaty articles embodying the international régime -- including an international machinery -- for the area and the resources of the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and the subsoil thereof, beyond the limits of national jurisdiction, taking into account the equitable sharing by all States in the benefits to be derived therefrom, bearing in mind the special interests and needs of developing countries, whether coastal or land-locked, on the basis of the Declaration of Principles Governing the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor, and the Subsoil Thereof, beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction, economic implications resulting from the exploitation of the resources of the area [resolution 2750 A (XXV)] as well as the particular needs and problems of land-locked countries [resolution 2750 B (XXV)].

"Sub Committee II:

To prepare a comprehensive list of subjects and issues relating to the law of the sea, including those concerning the régimes of the high seas, the continental shelf, the territorial sea (including the question of its breadth and the question of international straits) and contiguous zone, fishing and conservation of the living resources of the high seas (including the question of the preferential rights of coastal States) and to prepare draft treaty articles thereon. It is understood that the Sub-Committee may decide to draft articles before completing the comprehensive list of subjects and issues related to the law of the sea.

"Sub-Committee III:

To deal with the preservation of the marine environment (including, inter alia, the prevention of pollution) and scientific research, and to prepare draft treaty articles thereon.

"The Bureaux shall consist of a total of 25 members on the principle of equitable geographical distribution, the distribution being as follows:

"Main Committee	Chairman:	Asia
	Vice-Chairmen:	Africa (2)
		Asia (1)
		Latin America (2)
		Western European and others (1)
		Eastern European (1)
	Yugoslavia (1)	
	Rapporteur:	Western European and others
"Sub-Committee I	Chairman:	Africa
	Vice-Chairmen:	Asia
		Latin America
		Eastern European
	Rapporteur:	Western European and others
"Sub-Committee II	Chairman:	Latin America
	Vice-Chairmen:	Africa
		Asia
		Eastern European
		Western European and others
	Rapporteur:	Africa
"Sub-Committee III	Chairman:	Western European and others
	Vice-Chairmen:	Africa
		Latin America
	Rapporteur:	Asia

"It was also agreed that, at the formal meeting, the first item would be the election of the Chairman of the Main Committee, thereafter the election of the Vice-Chairmen and Rapporteur, followed by the election of the officers of the three Sub-Committees."

This agreement was supplemented by a further understanding reached in the closing stage of its summer session held in Geneva in July/August 1971 on certain points which had not been resolved under the terms of the above agreement. The additional text was as follows:

"The question of international régime should receive a certain priority as explained by the co-sponsors of the original draft resolution later adopted as resolution 2750 C (XXV) and as implied in the terms of that resolution. This would mean, in the first instance, the allocation of more time to Sub-Committee I.

"While each Sub-Committee will have the right to discuss and record its conclusions on the question of limits so far as it is relevant to the subjects allocated to it, the main Committee will not reach a decision on the final recommendation with regard to limits until the recommendations of Sub-Committee II on the precise definition of the area have been received, which should constitute basic proposals for the consideration of the main Committee.

"The question of peaceful uses is allocated to the main Committee, it being understood that each of the Sub-Committees is free to consider it in so far as this question is relevant to its mandate."

The Committee held a general debate in the course of 1971 and received a series of working papers, draft conventions, and draft treaty articles relating to various parts of its work. It also had before it the reports^{12/} prepared by the Secretary-General pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 2750 A and B, which respectively dealt with the possible impact of sea-bed mineral production in the area beyond national jurisdiction on world markets, with special reference to the problems of developing countries, and with the question of free access to the sea of land-locked countries and of the specific problems of land-locked countries relating to the exploration and exploitation of the resources of the area.

The report of the Committee for 1971^{13/} comprised sections dealing with the subjects and functions allocated to each of the three Sub-Committees, which for the most part dealt with the debates held in the Sub-Committees as well as with the pertinent documentation. Annexed to the report were a series of draft conventions, draft treaty articles, working papers and draft lists of subjects and issues submitted to the Committee in the course of that year, as well as a number of other documents.

At its 26th session the General Assembly, after considering the report of the Committee, adopted resolution 2881 of 21 December in which it noted with satisfaction the encouraging progress of the preparatory work of the Committee towards a comprehensive conference on the law of the sea, particularly with regard to the elaboration of an international régime and machinery for the area beyond the limits of national jurisdiction.

The Assembly decided to add China to the membership of the Committee and to have four additional members appointed by the Chairman of the First Committee in consultation with regional groups and with due regard to the interests of under-represented groups.^{14/}

The Committee was requested to hold two sessions, one in New York during March and April and one in Geneva during July and August 1972.

In 1972 the Committee continued its work in accordance with the agreements concluded in 1971 to which reference has been made above. Its report^{15/} submitted to the General Assembly at its twenty-seventh session contained the list of subjects and issues.

^{13/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-sixth session, Supplement No.21 (A/8421)

^{14/} Fiji, Finland, Nicaragua and Zambia. The membership of the Committee was thus increased to 91, one seat remaining unfilled.

^{15/} Official Records of the Twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly, Supplement No.21 (A/8721)

Work of the Committee in 1973

Under resolution 3029 A (XXVII) of 18 December 1972, the General Assembly reaffirmed the mandate of the Committee and requested it to hold two further sessions in 1973, one of five weeks in New York beginning in early March, and the other of eight weeks in Geneva beginning in early July, with a view to completing its preparatory work, and to submit a report with recommendations to the General Assembly at its 28th session and, in the light of the decision to be taken following the review of the progress of the preparatory work, to the Conference. The resolution requested the Secretary-General to convene the first session of the third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea in New York for a period of approximately two weeks, in November and December 1973, for the purpose of dealing with organizational matters, including the election of officers, the adoption of the agenda and the rules of procedure of the Conference, the establishment of subsidiary organs and the allocation of work to those organs. The Assembly decided to convene a second session of the Conference, for the purpose of dealing with substantive work at Santiago, Chile, for a period of eight weeks in April and May 1974, and subsequent sessions, if necessary, as might be decided by the Conference and approved by the General Assembly, bearing in mind that the Government of Austria had offered Vienna as a site for the Conference for the succeeding year. It further decided to review at its 28th session the progress of the preparatory work of the Committee and, if necessary, to take measures to facilitate completion of the substantive work for the Conference and any other action that might be appropriate.

The resolution authorized the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, to make such arrangements as might be necessary for the efficient organization and administration of the Conference and the Committee, utilizing to the fullest extent possible the resources of staff at his disposal, to render to the Conference and the Committee all the assistance they might require in legal, economic, technical and scientific matters and to provide them with all relevant documentation of the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The Assembly decided to consider as a matter of priority at its 28th session any further matters requiring a decision in connexion with the Conference, including the participation of the States in the Conference, and to include in the provisional agenda

of that session, the item entitled "Reservation exclusively for peaceful purposes of the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and the subsoil thereof, underlying the high seas beyond the limits of present national jurisdiction and use of their resources in the interests of mankind, and the convening of a conference on the law of the sea".

The Assembly invited the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency, and other intergovernmental organizations to co-operate fully with the Secretary-General in the preparations for the Conference and to send observers to the conference. It requested the Secretary-General, subject to approval by the conference, to invite interested non-governmental organizations having consultative status with the Economic and Social Council to send observers to the conference.

At its 27th session, the General Assembly adopted two other resolutions (3029 B and C (XXVII)), both of which dealt with studies to be prepared by the Secretary-General. Under the operative section of resolution 3029 B, it requested the Secretary-General to prepare, on the basis of data and information at his disposal, a comparative study of the extent and the economic significance, in terms of resources, of the international area that would result from each of the various proposals on limits of national jurisdiction submitted so far to the Committee.

Under resolution C a similar request was made to the Secretary-General, in connexion with the study to be submitted under resolution B for preparation of a comparative study of the potential economic significance for riparian States, in terms of resources, of each of the proposals.

In the case of the first study, the Assembly invited States, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the specialized agencies and other competent organizations of the United Nations system to co-operate with the Secretary-General in the preparation of such a study. Under both of the resolutions, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit the study no later than the opening date of the summer session of the Committee. It declared that nothing in the resolutions or in the studies would prejudice the position of any State concerning limits, the nature of the régime and machinery or any other matter to be discussed at the forthcoming conference.

The Committee held two sessions in 1973, the first in New York, from 5 March to 6 April, and the second in Geneva from 2 July to 24 August.

The Committee held meetings during this period.

The officers of the Committee during 1973 were as follows:

The membership of the Committee remained the same as in 1972.

The following Member States participated in the work of the Committee as observers: Bahrain, Barbados, Bhutan, Botswana, Burma, Central African Republic, Costa Rica, Cuba, Democratic Yemen, Dominican Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, Ireland, Israel, Jordan, Khmer Republic, Laos, Malawi, Mongolia, Niger, Oman, Portugal, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Togo, Uganda and United Arab Emirates.

The meetings of the Committee were attended by representatives of the International Atomic Energy Agency and of the specialized agencies - the International Labour Organisation, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and its Committee on Fisheries, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and its Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization and the World Meteorological Organization, as well as of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the United Nations Environment Programme. Representatives of several of these organizations made statements to the Committee.

Mr. Constantin A. Stavropoulos, Under-Secretary-General and Legal Counsel, was present at the meetings of the Committee.

Pursuant to an invitation extended by the Committee, the representative of the International Hydrographic Organization attended meetings of the Committee and made a statement to the Committee.

At the 98th meeting on 30 July 1973, the Secretary-General of the Permanent Commission of the South Pacific made a statement to the Committee.

In accordance with requests made by the General Assembly at its 27th session, and contained in resolution 3029 B and C, the Secretary-General submitted a report on the economic significance, in terms of sea-bed mineral resources, of the various limits proposed for national jurisdiction.^{16/}

Pursuant to operative paragraphs 2 and 3 of resolution 2750 A (XXV), the Secretary-General submitted a progress report on recent developments relating to sea-bed mineral resources.^{17/}

In accordance with a request made at the 93rd meeting of the Committee, the Secretary-General also submitted to the Committee at its summer session a report on examples of precedents of provisional application, pending their entry into force, of multilateral treaties, especially treaties which have established international organizations and/or régimes.^{18/}

In accordance with a further request made at the 93rd meeting of the Committee, the Secretariat prepared a master file of documents pertaining to the Committee, together with relevant documents of the specialized agencies.

Also, at the request of the Committee, the following reports and studies were made available by FAO to the members: Review of the status of some heavily exploited fish stocks (FAO Fisheries Circular No. 313); Sedentary, migratory and intermingling species, their habitat and distribution (FAO Fisheries Circular No. 148 - Revision 1); Limits and status of the territorial sea, exclusive fishing areas, fish conservation areas and the continental shelf (FAO Fisheries Circular No. 127/Rev.1).

At the beginning of its first session in 1973, the Committee discussed certain proposals and suggestions of its Chairman regarding the organization of its work. As summed up by the Chairman, the discussion produced a consensus to the effect that the existing terms of reference of the Sub-Committees should remain essentially unchanged, and that the Committee itself would exercise overall political guidance and take the final decisions in any matter related to the co-ordination of the work of the Sub-Committees. In accordance with this decision, a revised version of the Chairman's proposals and suggestions (A/AC.138/L.13/Rev.1) provided the basis for the allocation of items on the list of subjects and issues.

^{16/} A/AC.138/87 and Corr.1

^{17/} A/AC.138/90

^{18/} A/AC.138/88

In the course of its first session, the Committee held weekly meetings to hear progress reports on the work being carried out by the Sub-Committees and their Working Groups. It also heard a number of general statements, several of which appraised the development of the preparatory work and the prospects for the Conference, in addition to offering various suggestions in this regard. At the end of the session, the Committee requested its Chairman to undertake informal consultations with the various regional groups, and with individual members, on questions relating to arrangements for the Conference.

The Committee proceeded in similar fashion at the second session. At its 94th meeting, it decided to reproduce as a Committee document the "Declaration of Addis Ababa" (A/AC.138/89) on questions of the law of the sea adopted by the Organization of African Unity on 24 May 1973. It heard further general statements on the subject of preparations for the Conference and on various issues involved in the preparatory work. It also heard statements on the relationship of that work, particularly as regards prevention of pollution, to developments in the Council of the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO); on the reports of the Secretary-General under resolutions 3029 B and C (A/AC.138/87); on nuclear tests held in the South Pacific and elsewhere; and statements introducing new texts of draft treaty articles.