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

WORKING PAPER
ON GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR THE INTERNATIONAL SEA AREA

Submitted by the Chinese delegation

(1) The international sea area denotes all the sea and ocean space beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. The international sea area and its resources are, in principle, jointly owned by the people of all countries.

(2) In order to have access to and from the international sea area for trade and other peaceful purposes, land-locked States have the right to pass through the territory, territorial sea and other waters of adjacent coastal States. Coastal States and adjacent land-locked States shall, through consultations on the basis of equality and mutual respect for sovereignty, conclude bilateral or regional agreements on the relevant matters.

(3) Uses of the international sea area shall not prejudice the legitimate interests of other States and the common interests of all States.

(4) Subject to the provisions of paragraph (3) above, ships and aircraft of all States have the right of navigation and overflight in the international sea area and in the airspace thereabove, provided that they fly the flag or show the insignia of the State to which they belong.

(5) Subject to the provisions of paragraph (3) above, all States have the right to lay cables and pipelines on the sea-bed of the international sea area.

(6) Fishing in the international sea area shall be properly regulated to prohibit indiscriminate fishing and other violations of rules and regulations for the conservation of fishery resources.

* This document supersedes document A/AC.138/SC.I/L.25 and Corr.1 dated 2 August 1973 and 6 August 1973 respectively.

Pending the establishment of a unified international fishery organization, States of a given sea area may set up a regional committee to work out appropriate rules and regulations for the regulation of fishing and the conservation of marine living resources in the international sea area. Fishing vessels of States of other regions may enter the said region for fishing activities provided they comply with the relevant rules and regulations of the region.

(7) The exploration, exploitation and all other activities conducted in the sea-bed, ocean floor and their subsoil of the international sea area shall be governed by the international regime and the international machinery to be established.