

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 19, 1974

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

I am pleased to send to the Congress the 28th annual report on United States participation in the work of the United Nations.

This report, covering Calendar Year 1973, encompasses the wide range of activities carried on by the United Nations and its subsidiary organizations. It demonstrates the growing conviction of United Nations members that many problems of international concern are best resolved through multilateral action, utilizing the machinery of mature international institutions.

In the fall of 1973 the United Nations demonstrated once again its ability to foster peace by the crucial role it played in the Middle East. Following the outbreak of war, the Security Council arranged a ceasefire and deployed United Nations troops to supervise disengagement agreements between Israel and Egypt and, later, between Israel and Syria. We cannot know what might have happened in the absence of such United Nations action. However, it is clear that the efforts of the United Nations, combined with bilateral diplomacy, are still crucial to promoting a just and lasting settlement of the Middle East dispute.

One area of increasing concern is the production and distribution of adequate supplies of food. Our concern with feeding the world can no longer be limited to relief activities in aid of victims of natural disasters. Population growth and better living standards have increased the total demand for food which in turn has increased the demand for energy sources and fertilizer. The pressure of these interlocking demands has pushed against limited supplies and caused spiraling prices. This is a worldwide problem requiring worldwide action for its solution. Secretary Kissinger proposed to the United Nations General Assembly in September 1973 that the organization sponsor a World Food Conference. The General Assembly acted favorably on this proposal and the Conference will be held in Rome in November 1974. The United States also took an active participation in the preparation for the first United Nations Conference on World Population, convened in Bucharest in August 1974.

The Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, which convened an organizational session in December 1973, is another example of how the United Nations can be utilized to attack contemporary world problems. The goal of the Law of the Sea Conference is a comprehensive international convention to govern man's use of the oceans. We need new understandings to govern international navigation, rational management of the ocean's living and non-living resources, and the protection of the life-sustaining processes of the marine environment. Success in the efforts to resolve conflicting claims over ocean jurisdiction would remove a major and growing source of conflict from the international arena.

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The regular economic and social activities of the United Nations' family of organizations continued to absorb over 90 percent of its funds and personnel during 1973. In addition to the traditional operational programs, many special conferences during the year provided opportunities for nations to enlarge their understanding of and work toward consensus on such major international economic and social issues as development assistance, the role of multinational corporations, commodity agreements, and the economic rights and duties of states. Perhaps the most important series of negotiations were those held to carry out the first biennial review and appraisal of the progress toward the goals of the Second United Nations Development Decade. In these negotiations delegations from all parts of the world worked for months to formulate a report that refined the broad measures necessary to improve the world's economic and social situation. The United States played a leading role in these negotiations.

Unfortunately, not all international problems dealt with by the United Nations were successfully approached in 1973. For example, it is generally believed in the United States that terrorism against innocent third parties, including the hijacking of aircraft, is a matter of international concern that calls for international solutions. The divergence of political views among member states, however, has made it impossible to agree on either a general definition of terrorism or a remedy for it. Despite the limit thus placed on the effectiveness of the United Nations forum in dealing with the problem, a start was made in 1973 with the adoption by the General Assembly of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes Against Internationally Protected Persons, Including Diplomatic Agents. On the other hand, neither the International Conference on Air Law nor the Assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organization, which met simultaneously, made progress on measures to improve security for aircraft passengers.

An important part of the United Nations record in 1973 was the admission to membership of the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Democratic Republic, and The Bahamas -- admissions the United States supported. The United Nations has thus become still more representative of the world community.

Our participation in the United Nations reflects our fundamental belief that to assure a peaceful world it is necessary to cooperate with other nations in a multilateral framework on mutually agreed upon activities. This report records the successes and failures, the hopes and frustrations of many of those activities. Above all it records what we tried to accomplish through the United Nations to further the many interests that our citizens and our country share with the world community.

GERALD R. FORD

THE WHITE HOUSE,
September 19, 1974

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