

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 3, 1975

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 29th annual report on United States participation in the work of the United Nations.

This report, which covers the Calendar Year 1974, shows how U.S. national interests were affected by the work of the United Nations, its specialized agencies and its special programs. It shows the many ways in which the United States utilized the United Nations to promote world peace, economic progress and social justice. It also shows that at times a majority, unfortunately, took decisions on important political and economic issues without taking into consideration the views of some of the nations most importantly involved.

During 1974, the Third Law of the Sea Conference in Caracas, the World Population Conference in Bucharest, and the World Food Conference in Rome all focused attention on worldwide problems that can be solved only by international cooperation. The United States made constructive contributions to all these conferences.

The report gives special attention to UN efforts designed with U.S. support:

- to keep the peace on Cyprus, in the Middle East and elsewhere;
- to strengthen international arms control and disarmament programs;
- to find a solution to the problem of world food shortages and maldistribution;
- to control population growth;
- to relieve the victims of natural and other disasters;
- to promote international economic and social development;
- to develop more effective procedures to protect human rights; and
- to improve the functioning of the United Nations itself.

Not all the work of the United Nations is cited in this report. Many UN activities of great importance to the United States do not make headlines. This is particularly true of the regular economic, social and service types of activities which account for the employment of more than 90 percent of total UN personnel and the expenditure of more than 90 percent of the funds made available by governments to the United Nations. For example, the World Weather Watch of the World Meteorological Organization, the worldwide smallpox eradication program of the World Health Organization, the work of the International Civil Aviation Organization and the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency -- particularly its application of safeguards to nuclear fuel and the by-products of nuclear plants -- all contribute to the safety, health and well-being of American citizens and those of other nations throughout the world.

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Nevertheless, some of the actions taken by the United Nations in 1974 threaten to distort this positive thrust and make cooperation within the organization more difficult. There was, for example, a clash of interests between the industrialized nations and developing nations. This was particularly evident in the sixth special session of the General Assembly when the majority of developing countries insisted on the adoption of a program of action for a "new international economic order" despite the serious reservations of the industrialized nations about its acceptability and even its workability. Other divisive actions included the invitation by the 29th General Assembly to the Palestine Liberation Organization to participate as an observer in the work of the organization, the discriminatory treatment accorded Israel by UNESCO and the improper suspension of South Africa from participation in the General Assembly. However, by the end of the year there were signs of a growing awareness of the dangers from confrontation and of a willingness to explore the possibilities of conciliation and compromise.

In this 30th anniversary year of the United Nations, the underlying purposes and principles of the Organization remain as valid as when they were first set forth in Article 1 of the UN Charter:

- to maintain international peace and security;
- to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples;
- to achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character;
- to promote respect for human rights; and
- to harmonize the actions of nations.

Despite difficulties, I believe there has been progress toward achieving these purposes. The United States is seeking to promote cooperation among UN members and to discourage confrontation. In our increasingly interdependent world there is no practical alternative to cooperation, and if the United Nations continues on a course of confrontation this can only result in the serious weakening of that body. The United States, for its part, will stand firm in support of the principles embodied in the United Nations Charter.

GERALD R. FORD

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November 3, 1975

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