



## General Assembly

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Forty-first session  
Agenda item 66

### QUESTION OF ANTARCTICA

#### Report of the Secretary-General

1. In its resolution 40/156 B of 16 December 1985, the General Assembly invited the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties to inform the Secretary-General of their negotiations to establish a régime regarding Antarctic minerals. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly for consideration at its forty-first session a report containing the replies received from Consultative Parties.
2. In accordance with resolution 40/156 B, the Secretary-General, on 10 February 1986, addressed a note verbale to the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties <sup>1/</sup> and requested them to submit as soon as possible, but not later than 1 May 1986, the replies that their respective Governments were prepared to provide pursuant to the relevant provisions of the resolution.
3. On 30 April 1986, a communication was received from the Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations, acting on behalf of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties with reference to the Secretary-General's note verbale.
4. In that communication, the Permanent Representative of Australia recalled that, before the voting on resolutions 40/156 A and 40/156 B in the First Committee at the fortieth session of the General Assembly "he made a statement on behalf of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties. The statement noted that the insistence of some delegations in putting divisive resolutions to a vote had occasioned decisions by most of the Treaty Parties to take the unusual step of not participating in the voting. The statement also included the following observations:

"It is a matter of great regret to members of the Antarctic Treaty that the tradition of consensus decision-making which has been followed since the question of Antarctica was first inscribed on the agenda of the United Nations at the thirty-eighth session has this year been broken.

"The Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties have been firm in their determination to proceed by consensus and have negotiated earnestly towards that end with Malaysia and some other delegations.

"The Consultative Parties regret that the proponents of the draft resolutions were not prepared to abide by the consensus traditions that had been established in the handling of this item in previous years. They are firmly of the view that consensus offers the only realistic basis for United Nations General Assembly consideration of Antarctica. Accordingly, they will be compelled to reconsider their further participation in this item unless consensus can be restored."

5. In his communication to the Secretary-General, the Permanent Representative of Australia further noted that, "consistent with this statement, the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties remain of the view that consideration of Antarctica in the United Nations should and can realistically proceed only on the basis of consensus. They are therefore not responding to resolutions 40/156 A and B, in the adoption of which they did not participate. They remain willing to provide information about Antarctica to the international community, as they have emphasized in their responses to previous General Assembly resolutions on this item, which were adopted by consensus."

#### Notes

1/ Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, China, France, Germany, Federal Republic of India, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, South Africa, Uruguay, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America.