

Reiterating that freedom of information forms an important part of the human rights and fundamental freedoms to the promotion of which the United Nations is dedicated,

Decides to take up at its twenty-third session the consideration of the item on freedom of information.

*1638th plenary meeting,
18 December 1967.*

2337 (XXII). Status of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

The General Assembly,

Recalling that in its resolution 2200 A (XXI) of 16 December 1966 it expressed the hope that the International Covenants on Human Rights and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights would be signed and ratified or acceded to without delay and come into force at an early date,

Noting that according to the report of the Secretary-General, submitted in pursuance of resolution 2200 A (XXI) on the status of ratifications of the Covenants and of the Optional Protocol,⁹ there have been no ratifications of or accessions to any of these instruments and that there have been only nineteen signatures to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, eighteen to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and eleven to the Optional Protocol,

Desiring to accelerate the ratifications of and accessions to the Covenants and the Optional Protocol,

Convinced that the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations would be greatly enhanced by the coming into force of the Covenants and the Optional Protocol,

1. *Invites* States which are eligible to become parties to the International Covenants on Human Rights and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to hasten their ratifications of or accessions to these instruments;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report on the status of the Covenants and the Optional Protocol to the International Conference on Human Rights to be held at Teheran in 1968 and to the General Assembly at its twenty-third session;

3. *Decides* to include this item in the provisional agenda of its twenty-third session.

*1638th plenary meeting,
18 December 1967.*

2338 (XXII). Question of the punishment of war criminals and of persons who have committed crimes against humanity

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 3 (I) of 13 February 1946 and 170 (II) of 31 October 1947 on the extradition and punishment of war criminals, resolution 95 (I) of 11 December 1946 affirming the principles of inter-

⁹ A/6820 and Add.1. See also *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-second Session, Third Committee, 1553rd meeting, para. 53.*

national law recognized by the Charter of the Nürnberg Tribunal and the judgement of the Tribunal, and resolutions 2184 (XXI) of 12 December 1966 and 2202 (XXI) of 16 December 1966, which expressly condemned as crimes against humanity the violation of the economic and political rights of the indigenous population, on the one hand, and the policies of apartheid, on the other,

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolutions 1074 D (XXXIX) of 28 July 1965 and 1158 (XLI) of 5 August 1966 on the punishment of war criminals and of persons who have committed crimes against humanity,

Noting that none of the solemn declarations, instruments or conventions relating to prosecution and punishment for war crimes and crimes against humanity makes provision for a period of limitation,

Considering that war crimes and crimes against humanity are among the gravest crimes in international law,

Convinced that effective punishment for war crimes and crimes against humanity is an important element in the prevention of such crimes, the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, the encouragement of confidence, the furtherance of co-operation among peoples and the promotion of international peace and security,

Noting that the application to war crimes and crimes against humanity of the rules of municipal law relating to the period of limitation for ordinary crimes is a matter of serious concern to world public opinion, since it prevents the prosecution and punishment of persons responsible for those crimes,

Recognizing that it is necessary and timely to affirm in international law, through a convention, the principle that there is no period of limitation for war crimes and crimes against humanity, and to secure its universal application,

Having considered the report of the joint working group of the Third and Sixth Committees on the draft convention on the non-applicability of statutory limitation to war crimes and crimes against humanity,¹⁰

Expressing its regret that owing to the lack of time it has not been possible to complete consideration of and to adopt the convention on the non-applicability of statutory limitation to war crimes and crimes against humanity,

1. *Expresses its thanks* to the joint working group of the Third and Sixth Committee for the work it has accomplished;

2. *Takes note* of the report of the joint working group;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to transmit to Member States the report of the joint working group containing the text of the draft convention adopted by the group and to invite them to submit comments on the draft convention;

4. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to issue to Member States, before the twenty-third session of

¹⁰ The joint working group was established, for the twenty-second session, following consultations between the Chairman of the Third Committee and the Chairman of the Sixth Committee, in accordance with the recommendation adopted by the General Assembly at its 1564th plenary meeting, on 23 September 1967. For the report of the joint working group, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-second Session, Annexes, agenda item 60, document A/C.3/L.1503.*

the General Assembly, a report containing the replies received from Member States in accordance with paragraph 3 above;

5. *Recommends* that no legislative or other action be taken which may be prejudicial to the aims and purposes of a convention on the non-applicability of statutory limitation to war crimes and crimes against humanity, pending the adoption of a convention by the General Assembly;

6. *Decides* to give high priority to the completion of the draft convention on the non-applicability of statutory limitation to war crimes and crimes against humanity, with a view to its adoption at the twenty-third session.

*1638th plenary meeting,
18 December 1967.*

2339 (XXII). International Year for Human Rights

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 1961 (XVIII) of 12 December 1963 designating the year 1968 as International Year for Human Rights,

Recalling also its resolutions 2081 (XX) of 20 December 1965 and 2217 (XXI) of 19 December 1966 relating to the International Year for Human Rights,

Reaffirming its conviction that the celebration of the International Year for Human Rights, including the holding of the International Conference on Human Rights, will contribute significantly to the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the International Year for Human Rights,¹¹

Having also considered the report of the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on Human Rights,¹²

Bearing in mind the conclusions and recommendations of the International Seminar on Apartheid, Racial Discrimination and Colonialism in Southern Africa, held in 1967 at Kitwe, Zambia, of the Seminar on the Realization of Economic and Social Rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, held in 1967 at Warsaw, Poland, and of recent United Nations seminars on human rights held at Manila, Philippines, at Kingston, Jamaica, and at Helsinki, Finland,

1. *Expresses its appreciation* to those Member States, specialized agencies, regional organizations and national and international organizations concerned that have supplied information on the measures and activities contemplated or undertaken by them in connexion with the International Year for Human Rights;

2. *Welcomes* the measures taken or envisaged by the Secretary-General to co-ordinate activities undertaken in connexion with the International Year for Human Rights and to implement the relevant parts of the programme for the Year set forth in the annex to General Assembly resolution 2217 A (XXI);

¹¹ A/6866 and Add.1 and 2.

¹² *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-second Session, Annexes, agenda item 58, document A/6670.*

3. *Further welcomes* the special activities contemplated or undertaken by other organs of the United Nations in connexion with the International Year for Human Rights;

4. *Invites* Member States, the specialized agencies, the regional intergovernmental organizations and the national and international organizations concerned to continue to intensify throughout 1968 their efforts and undertakings in the field of human rights, including the measures set out in the annexes to its resolutions 2081 (XX) and 2217 A (XXI), and to keep the Secretary-General informed of these efforts and undertakings;

5. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on Human Rights for the work it has accomplished;

6. *Takes note* of the provisional agenda for the International Conference on Human Rights, contained in annex II to the report of the Preparatory Committee;

7. *Expresses the hope* that the Conference will devote particular attention to the adoption of measures to ensure the immediate and complete elimination of all forms of racial discrimination, apartheid and colonialism;

8. *Decides* to modify rule 34, paragraph 1, of the draft rules of procedure of the Conference¹³ to read as follows:

“Decisions of the Conference on all matters of substance shall, unless otherwise decided, be taken by a simple majority of the representatives present and voting”;

9. *Invites* the Council of Europe, the League of Arab States, the Organization of African Unity and the Organization of American States and any other regional intergovernmental organizations particularly concerned with human rights to send observers to the Conference;

10. *Invites* non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council that have a demonstrable interest in the items on the provisional agenda for the Conference and may wish to be present at the Conference to send observers to it;

11. *Invites* other non-governmental organizations that may be interested in sending observers to the Conference to make application to the Secretary-General before 1 February 1968 and requests the Preparatory Committee to consider such applications and to approve them if the non-governmental organizations concerned are of recognized standing, are international in their structure and have a demonstrable interest in the items on the provisional agenda for the Conference;

12. *Decides* to add the following rule to the draft rules of procedure of the Conference:¹³

“OBSERVERS FOR NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

“Rule 62

“Observers for non-governmental organizations invited to this Conference may, with the authorization of the General Committee, circulate through the Secretariat written statements of a general character on questions of human rights which are on the agenda of the Conference”;

¹³ *Ibid.*, annex I.