

2 February 2024

Original: English

---

**Scientific and Technical  
Subcommittee**

**Sixty-first session**

Item 10 of the provisional agenda<sup>1</sup>

Vienna, 29 January–9 February 2024

**Guidelines on international years and anniversaries and related  
General Assembly resolutions**

**Note by the Secretariat**

The present document contains guidelines for proclamation of international years and anniversaries, contained in the annex to the Economic and Social Council Resolution 1980/67 of 25 July 1980, adopted by the General Assembly in its decision 35/424 of 5 December 1980, and related General Assembly resolutions A/RES/53/199 of 15 December 1998 and A/RES/61/185 of 20 December 2006.

---

<sup>1</sup>A/AC.105/C.1/L.412



## 1980/66. Operational activities for development

### *The Economic and Social Council,*

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974, containing the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974, containing the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, and 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975 on development and international economic co-operation,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 32/197 of 20 December 1977, and in particular paragraph 5 (d) of section II, and section V, of the annex thereto,

Mindful of the importance of implementing fully and without undue delay the recommendations contained in General Assembly resolution 32/197,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 33/201 of 29 January 1979,

Reaffirming the continued validity of General Assembly resolutions 2688 (XXV) of 11 December 1970 and 3405 (XXX) of 28 November 1975,

Mindful of its role, in particular under Articles 62 and 66 of the Charter of the United Nations,

Mindful also of the importance of implementing the decision contained in paragraph 7 of its resolution 1768 (LIV) of 18 May 1973,

Having examined the report by the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation on some policy issues pertaining to operational activities for development undertaken by the United Nations system,<sup>70</sup>

Having examined also the report of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination on the work of its twentieth session<sup>71</sup> and the report of the Chairman of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination on the Joint Meetings of the two Committees,<sup>72</sup>

1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation on some policy issues pertaining to operational activities for development undertaken by the United Nations system and the suggested approach to the policy issues contained therein;

2. Recommends that the General Assembly should invite the Secretary-General to transmit the report of the Director-General to the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system;

3. Recommends also that the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session should consider and select issues for appropriate action, in the light of the recommendations contained in the report of the Director-General and the

discussion in the Council at its second regular session of 1980;

4. Invites the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session, taking into account the recommendations of the report of the Director-General and the discussion in the Council at its second regular session of 1980, to consider and agree upon the contents of and the procedures for regular policy reviews in future years, with particular reference to technical co-operation supported by appropriate statistical material, bearing in mind the orientation in the longer term of the operational activities of the United Nations system, as well as their contribution to the implementation of the new international development strategy;

5. Invites the General Assembly to give consideration to grouping within a single analytical framework all types of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, to be accompanied by relevant statistical material, without prejudice to the relationship agreements between the United Nations and the specialized agencies;

6. Invites the General Assembly to request the Director-General to submit reports biennially on future policy reviews of operational activities, paying particular attention to the issues selected by the General Assembly for consideration.

45th plenary meeting  
25 July 1980

## 1980/67. International years and anniversaries

### *The Economic and Social Council,*

Recognizing the contribution that the celebration of international years can make to the furtherance of international co-operation and understanding,

Mindful of the need to consider carefully proposals for the designation of international years and anniversaries,

Recalling its resolution 1368 (XLV) of 2 August 1968, in which it expressed the hope that new proposals for the designation of international years and anniversaries would be avoided except on the most important occasions,

Recalling also its resolution 1800 (LV) of 7 August 1973 and General Assembly resolution 3170 (XXVIII) of 17 December 1973,

Taking note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General on international years and anniversaries,<sup>73</sup> submitted pursuant to Council decision 1979/64 of 3 August 1979, and of the revised guide-lines for future international years contained in paragraph 29 of the addendum to that report,

1. Adopts the guide-lines contained in the annex to the present resolution as its criteria and procedures with regard to future proposals for international years;

<sup>70</sup> See A/35/224 and Corr.1.

<sup>71</sup> Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 38 (A/35/38).

<sup>72</sup> E/1980/75 and Corr.1.

<sup>73</sup> E/1980/64 and Add.1.

2. *Submits* those criteria and procedures to the General Assembly for consideration at its thirty-fifth session;

3. *Invites* the respective legislative organs of the specialized agencies and organizations of the United Nations system to adopt those criteria and procedures;

4. *Also invites* States Members of the United Nations to take those criteria and procedures into account in considering proposals for international years.

*45th plenary meeting  
25 July 1980*

## ANNEX

### Guide-lines for future international years

#### I. *Criteria for the proclamation of international years*

1. The proposed subject of the year should be consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations, as stated in the Charter of the United Nations.

2. The subject should be of priority concern in the political, social, economic, cultural, humanitarian or human rights fields.

3. The subject should be of concern to all or to the majority of countries, regardless of their economic and social systems, and should contribute to the development of international co-operation in solving global problems, with special attention to problems affecting developing countries.

4. The desirability of proclaiming international years and the selection of their themes should in general be determined from the point of view of their possible contribution to solving existing international problems, thus contributing to the strengthening of universal peace.

5. The subject should be one involving action at the international and national levels.

6. The subject should be one for which there is a reasonable expectation that an international year would generate significant follow-up at both the national and the international level in the form of new activities or the strengthening of existing ones.

7. Every effort should be made to ensure that there is an interval of at least two years between international years and a longer interval between years designated for similar subjects.

8. Years should be designated to focus on one subject or on closely related subjects.

9. International years should be proclaimed only when celebrations of shorter duration, such as a month, a week or a day, will not suffice.

10. When a world conference on a particular subject has been or is being separately convened, or when a subject is already of wide international concern and effective organizations and programmes exist to further its ends, an international year should not normally be proclaimed.

#### II. *Procedures preceding the proclamation of international years*

11. A final decision on a proposal for an international year should be taken by the General Assembly, not earlier than one full year after the introduction of the proposal, thus allowing the views of all Member States to be taken into account and allowing the competent organs to make a thorough assessment of the proposal in the light of its practical desirability and the probability of real results.

12. Proposals for international years made under the auspices of organizations within the United Nations system should, before the proclamation of the years, be brought to the attention of the

Economic and Social Council, to enable the Council, in so far as the proposals fall within its competence, to advise on the timing of the proposed years and to evaluate their purpose in the light of the present guide-lines.

13. A year should not be proclaimed before the basic arrangements necessary for its financing have been made and such financing should in principle be based on voluntary contributions.

14. A year should not be proclaimed before the basic arrangements necessary for its organization have been made.

#### III. *Procedures for organizing the celebration of international years*

15. The basic objectives of each year should be clearly defined.

16. In general, there should be a period of two years between the proclamation of an international year and the beginning of that year.

17. Years having economic or social themes should be primarily directed towards promoting international development efforts in practical ways.

18. Measures and activities to be carried out at the international level should complement and support measures and activities at the national level.

19. There should ordinarily be national committees or other mechanisms for preparing for, conducting and following up the international year at the national level.

20. There should be effective co-ordination of the activities of all United Nations organizations and bodies concerned, so as to avoid any duplication of activities.

21. The proclamation of international years and activities connected with them should not lead to a proliferation of posts in the United Nations Secretariat or in the secretariats of other international organizations; furthermore, expenditures should normally be met from existing resources in the regular budget.

22. As a rule, special secretariats established for the celebration of international years should be dissolved immediately upon the conclusion of those years.

#### IV. *Procedures for the evaluation of international years*

23. Each international year should have objectives likely to lead to identifiable and practical results.

24. Procedures for evaluation should be established during the preparatory process and should form part of the implementation and follow-up of each international year.

25. Evaluation should, *inter alia*, assess the activities generated during the year and continuing after the year ends, as well as modifications in ongoing activities attributable to the year, with a view to integrating those activities, if necessary, in regular programmes.

26. Evaluation after the year should be based on reporting arrangements designed especially for the subject of the international year; it should facilitate the follow-up process and it should provide guidance for future international years.

27. Evaluation should be carried out within the budgetary resources provided, and the results of such evaluation should be submitted to the existing appropriate intergovernmental bodies for consideration.

### **1980/68. Co-operation in the uses of the sea and coastal area development**

*The Economic and Social Council,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 1970 (LIX) of 30 July 1975 on the uses of the sea and coastal area development and 2099 (LXIII) of 3 August 1977 on co-operation in coastal area development



## General Assembly

Distr.  
GENERAL

A/RES/53/199  
22 February 1999

---

Fifty-third session  
Agenda item 12

### RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/53/605)]

#### **53/199. Proclamation of international years**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its decision 35/424 of 5 December 1980 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1980/67 of 25 July 1980 and 1998/1 of 6 February 1998,

*Recalling also* its resolution 50/227 of 24 May 1996,

*Reaffirming* the importance of the guidelines for international years and anniversaries, adopted by the General Assembly in its decision 35/424, for the consideration of proposals for the proclamation of international years,

*Recognizing* the need to provide for effective arrangements for the proclamation of international years,

*Decides* that, starting from 1999, proposals for the proclamation of international years should be submitted directly to the Assembly for consideration and action, unless the Assembly decides to bring them to the attention of the Economic and Social Council for evaluation, in accordance with the provisions of the above-mentioned guidelines.

*91st plenary meeting  
15 December 1998*



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
25 January 2007

---

Sixty-first session  
Agenda item 42

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 20 December 2006

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/61/432)*]

### 61/185. Proclamation of international years

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 53/199 of 15 December 1998 on the proclamation of international years and Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/67 of 25 July 1980 on international years and anniversaries and the guidelines contained in the annex thereto, adopted by the General Assembly in its decision 35/424 of 5 December 1980,

1. *Requests* the Secretary-General to draw the attention of the specialized agencies and organizations of the United Nations system to the guidelines for future international years contained in the annex to Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/67, and to make those guidelines available;

2. *Stresses* the need to take into account and apply the criteria and procedures contained in the guidelines in considering future proposals for international years.

*83rd plenary meeting  
20 December 2006*