

Recommendation 797 (1977)¹

UN Conference on the Law of the Sea

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having regard to the fact that the 3rd UN Law of the Sea Conference, after five sessions, has not so far reached firm conclusions or produced any international convention or agreement ;
2. Considering that the sixth and conceivably last session of the conference will take place from 23 May until 15 July 1977 ;
3. Considering that the conference is dealing with an extremely wide range of issues such as territorial waters, fishing zones, exclusive economic zones, the exploration and exploitation of the sea bed and ocean floor beyond these zones, shipping rights, peaceful settlement of disputes, and so on ;
4. Concerned about the unilateral action which many nations, including Council of Europe member states, are taking, for instance by extending their territorial waters or by proclaiming exclusive economic and fishing zones ;
5. Fearing that the sea and its resources may become a source of major international conflict if no adequate solutions at world-wide level are found in the framework of the United Nations ;
6. Recalling the recourse made by several member states to the 1957 European Convention on the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes in the matter of delimiting the continental shelf ;
7. Concerned about the lack of agreement among several Council of Europe member states on vital issues such as fishing, and the exploration and exploitation of oil resources in the continental shelf ;
8. Noting that the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe has not so far initiated discussions with a view to concerting the positions of Council of Europe member states on at least some of the most salient issues at the agenda of the UN Conference,
9. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers :
 - 9.1. convene, before the sixth session of the UN Conference, an "ad hoc" meeting of representatives of the member states of the Council of Europe, with a view to concerting and reconciling their positions in the negotiations at the 3rd UN Conference on the Law of the Sea ;
 - 9.2. examine the possibilities of ensuring that any disputes arising between member states in the context of the conclusions of the UN Conference on the Law of the Sea shall be settled by means of the 1957 European Convention for the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes with such modifications, if any, as may be appropriate ;
 - 9.3. give careful consideration to the status of off-shore operations, paying particular attention to the conditions of employment and the social security measures applicable to workers therein ;
 - 9.4. insist on the importance of member states ratifying the International Conventions on Shipping Lanes and Marine Pollution drawn up by other international organisations.

1. Assembly debate on 24 and 25 January 1977 (20th and 21st Sitings) (see [Doc. 3910](#), report of the Legal Affairs Committee). Text adopted by the Assembly on 25 January 1977 (21st Sitting).

