



Recommendation 653 (1972)¹

Legal status of artificial islands built on the high sea

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Recalling its wish to contribute to solving the problems arising from the present-day development of exploration and exploitation of marine and sub-marine resources, and from sea pollution ;
2. Recalling its Recommendations 625 (1971) and 626 (1971) ;
3. Noting that an increasing number of artificial islands are being built on the high seas by natural persons and bodies corporate under private law, for the most varied purposes (oil prospecting, scientific exploration, pirate radio stations, tourist development) ;
4. Considering the obstacles to freedom of navigation and fishing, the dangers of fraud and of infringement of the laws of coastal States, and the risks of pollution and nuisances inherent in the phenomenon of artificial islands ;
5. Considering that these islands do not come under the legal order of any particular State, and that the absence of authoritative international regulations in the matter constitutes a source of conflicts and problems ;
6. Considering that the creation of an artificial island on the high seas amounts to the exclusive occupation of a portion of international public property ;
7. Considering that it would be advisable to try and regulate this situation on a multilateral basis ;
8. Considering the International Conventions of 1958 on the Law of the Sea, and the decision by the General Assembly of the United Nations ([Resolution 2750 \(XXV\)](#) of 17 December 1970) to convene, in 1973, an international conference with a view to revising the law of the sea ;
9. Recalling the action taken by the Council of Europe concerning pirate radio stations and the signature, on 22 January 1965, of the European Agreement for the Prevention of Broadcasts transmitted from Stations outside National Territories ;
10. Considering that it is necessary to subject the creation of artificial islands on the high seas to control, possibly under the aegis of an international organisation, in order to reconcile the general interests of the international community, the national interests of States, especially of coastal States, and the lawful claims of those who build, own and develop these islands,
11. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers ask member States to define a common attitude to the problem of the legal status of artificial islands on the high seas, taking into account the interests of coastal States, and to make joint proposals on this subject at the International Conference on the Law of the Sea in 1973.

1. Assembly debate on 19 January 1972 (16th Sitting) (see [Doc. 3054](#), report of the Legal Affairs Committee). Text adopted by the Assembly on 19 January 1972 (16th Sitting).

