



Resolution 429 (1970)¹

Exploration and exploitation of the sea-bed and the ocean floor and the sub-soil thereof

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Considering the importance which attaches to the exploration and exploitation of the oceans and to research and development concerning the ocean depths ;
2. Considering that the use of the seabed and its sub-soil will be a question of prime importance to mankind in the near future and may create tension between nations and so impair international relations ;
3. Aware of the extreme importance attaching to the rapid establishment of legal rules governing the status of the ocean floor, its use and the mineral and fossil resources it contains ;
4. Convinced that the present uncertainty in this field may cause harm to the cause of peace and that the Council of Europe must consequently assume the special responsibilities which are incumbent upon it in this context and must further the efforts being made within the United Nations Organisation and relevant specialist bodies ;
5. Convinced of the consequent need for a better knowledge of the legitimate interests of governments and of the European nations concerned by these areas and their resources, and for a wider dissemination of information and knowledge on the scientific, legal and political aspects of the exploration and exploitation of the ocean floor ;
6. Conscious also that the hasty and premature convocation of an international conference to revise the 1958 Geneva Convention on the Continental Shelf might jeopardise the possibility of adopting in due course a harmonious regime for the exploitation of such resources ;
7. Considering that the member states of the Council of Europe should consult each other and harmonise their national attitudes with a view to solving the problems raised, either at United Nations level, or within the "regional" framework of European co-operation ;
8. Desirous, therefore, of making a fuller study of the scientific, legal and political problems raised by the exploration and exploitation of marine resources ;
9. Considering that the parliamentarians of the member states of the Council of Europe should immediately be enabled to inform themselves on these problems and to exchange views,
10. Resolves :
 - a. to organise in the autumn of 1970 either in Strasbourg or in another European city, a Symposium composed of those members of each national parliament who are particularly interested in the problems of the peaceful use of the sea and the ocean depths and experts on the subject. The agenda of this meeting would include the legal aspects of exploration, exploitation and peaceful use of the sea, the seabed and the sub-soil thereof ;

1. Assembly debate on 24 January 1970 (19th Sitting) (see [Doc. 2686](#), report of the Legal Affairs Committee). Text adopted by the Assembly on 24 January 1970 (19th Sitting).



- b. to invite the national parliaments to designate the parliamentarians who, by reason of their special competence in this field, will be invited to attend this Symposium ;
- c. to request the Secretary General to assist the Assembly in implementing this resolution ;
- d. to set up an organising committee composed of :
 - the Chairman and Rapporteur of the Legal Affairs Committee ;*
 - the Chairman and two members of the Sub-Committee on Marine Resources and Sea Pollution of the Legal Affairs Committee ;*
 - two consulting experts ;*
 - two representatives of the Secretary General, and instruct it to take the necessary steps to organise the Symposium, bearing in mind the report of the Legal Affairs Committee (Doc. 2686) ;*
- e. to instruct the Legal Affairs Committee :
 - 1. to report to it on the Symposium ;
 - 2. to evaluate the results and to present its final conclusions as soon as possible ;
 - 3. to publish the proceedings of the Symposium ;
- f. to hold a debate on the exploration, exploitation and peaceful use of the sea and the ocean depths as soon as possible.