

No. 6465

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**AFGHANISTAN, ARGENTINA, AUSTRALIA,  
AUSTRIA, BOLIVIA, etc.**

**Final Act of the United Nations Conference on the Law of  
the Sea, held at the European Office of the United  
Nations, at Geneva, from 24 February to 27 April 1958  
(with annexed resolutions); and**

**Convention on the High Seas**

**Both done at Geneva, on 29 April 1958**

*Official texts: English, French, Chinese, Russian and Spanish.*

*Registered ex officio on 3 January 1963.*

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**AFGHANISTAN, ARGENTINE, AUSTRALIE,  
AUTRICHE, BOLIVIE, etc.**

**Acte final de la Conférence des Nations Unies sur le droit de  
la mer, tenue à l'Office européen des Nations Unies, à  
Genève, du 24 février au 27 avril 1958 (avec résolutions  
en annexe); et**

**Convention sur la haute mer**

**Faits à Genève, le 29 avril 1958**

*Textes officiels anglais, français, chinois, russe et espagnol.*

*Enregistrés d'office le 3 janvier 1963.*

No. 6465. FINAL ACT OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE LAW OF THE SEA, HELD AT THE EUROPEAN OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, AT GENEVA, FROM 24 FEBRUARY TO 27 APRIL 1958. DONE AT GENEVA, ON 29 APRIL 1958

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1. The General Assembly of the United Nations, by resolution 1105 (XI) of 21 February 1957,<sup>1</sup> decided to convene an international conference of plenipotentiaries to examine the law of the sea, taking account not only of the legal but also of the technical, biological, economic and political aspects of the problem, and to embody the results of its work in one or more international conventions or such other instruments as it might deem appropriate. The General Assembly also recommended that the conference should study the question of free access to the sea of land-locked countries, as established by international practice or treaties.

2. The United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea met at the European Office of the United Nations at Geneva from 24 February to 27 April 1958.

3. The Governments of the following eighty-six States were represented at the Conference :

Afghanistan	Cuba
Albania	Czechoslovakia
Argentina	Denmark
Australia	Dominican Republic
Austria	Ecuador
Belgium	El Salvador
Bolivia	Federation of Malaya
Brazil	Finland
Bulgaria	France
Burma	Federal Republic of Germany
Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic	Ghana
Cambodia	Greece
Canada	Guatemala
Ceylon	Haiti
Chile	Holy See
China	Honduras
Colombia	Hungary
Costa Rica	Iceland

<sup>1</sup> United Nations, *Official Records of the General Assembly, Eleventh Session, Supplement No. 17 (A/3572)*, p. 54.

India	Peru
Indonesia	Philippines
Iran	Poland
Iraq	Portugal
Ireland	Romania
Israel	San Marino
Italy	Saudi Arabia
Japan	Spain
Jordan	Sweden
Republic of Korea	Switzerland
Laos	Thailand
Lebanon	Tunisia
Liberia	Turkey
Libya	Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic
Luxembourg	Union of South Africa
Mexico	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
Monaco	United Arab Republic
Morocco	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Nepal	United States of America
Netherlands	Uruguay
New Zealand	Venezuela
Nicaragua	Republic of Viet-Nam
Norway	Yemen
Pakistan	Yugoslavia
Panama	
Paraguay	

4. At the invitation of the General Assembly, the following Specialized Agencies had observers at the Conference :

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations;  
International Civil Aviation Organization;  
International Labour Organisation;  
International Telecommunication Union;  
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization;  
World Health Organization;  
World Meteorological Organization.

5. At the invitation of the General Assembly, the following intergovernmental organizations also had observers at the Conference :

Conseil général des pêches pour la Méditerranée;  
Indo-Pacific Fisheries Council;  
Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission;

Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration;  
International Council for the Exploration of the Sea;  
International Institute for the Unification of Private Law;  
League of Arab States;  
Organization of American States;  
Permanent Conference for the Exploitation and Conservation of the Maritime Resources of the South Pacific.

6. The Conference elected His Royal Highness Prince Wan Waithayakon Krommun Naradhip Bongsprabandh (Thailand) as President.

7. The Conference elected as Vice-presidents Argentina, China, France, Guatemala, India, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, Poland, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Arab Republic, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America.

8. The following committees were set up :

*General Committee*

*Chairman:* The President of the Conference

*First Committee* (Territorial Sea and Contiguous Zone)

*Chairman:* Mr. K. H. Bailey (Australia)

*Vice-Chairman:* Mr. S. Gutiérrez Olivos (Chile)

*Rapporteur:* Mr. Vladimir M. Koretsky (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic)

*Second Committee* (High Seas : General Régime)

*Chairman:* Mr. O. C. Gundersen (Norway)

*Vice-Chairman:* Mr. Edwin Glaser (Romania)

*Rapporteur:* Mr. José Madeira Rodrigues (Portugal)

*Third Committee* (High Seas : Fishing; the Conservation of Living Resources)

*Chairman:* Mr. Carlos Sucre (Panama)

*Vice-Chairman:* Mr. E. Krispis (Greece)

*Rapporteur:* Mr. N. K. Pannikar (India)

*Fourth Committee* (Continental Shelf)

*Chairman:* Mr. A. B. Perera (Ceylon)

*Vice-Chairman:* Mr. R. A. Quarshie (Ghana)

*Rapporteur:* Mr. L. Díaz González (Venezuela)

*Fifth Committee* (Question of Free Access to the Sea of Land-locked Countries)

*Chairman:* Mr. J. Žourek (Czechoslovakia)

*Vice-Chairman:* Mr. W. Guevara Arze (Bolivia)

*Rapporteur:* Mr. A. H. Tabibi (Afghanistan)

*Drafting Committee*

*Chairman:* Mr. J. A. Correa (Ecuador)

*Credentials Committee*

*Chairman:* Mr. M. Wershof (Canada)

9. The Secretary-General of the United Nations was represented by Mr. C. A. Stavropoulos, the Legal Counsel. Mr. Yuen-li Liang, Director of the Codification Division of the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations, was appointed Executive Secretary.

10. The General Assembly, by its resolution convening the Conference, referred to the Conference the report of the International Law Commission covering the work of its eighth session as a basis for consideration of the various problems involved in the development and codification of the law of the sea; the General Assembly also referred to the Conference the verbatim records of the relevant debates in the General Assembly, for consideration by the Conference in conjunction with the Commission's report.

11. The Conference also had before it the comments by Governments on the articles concerning the law of the sea prepared by the International Law Commission, the memorandum submitted by the preliminary Conference of Land-locked States held in Geneva from 10 to 14 February 1958, and preparatory documentation prepared by the Secretariat of the United Nations, by certain specialized agencies and by independent experts invited by the Secretariat to assist in the preparation of this documentation.

12. On the basis of the deliberations, as recorded in the summary records and reports of the committees and in the records of the plenary meetings, the Conference prepared and opened for signature the following *Conventions* (annexes I to IV):

Convention on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone<sup>1</sup> (adopted on 27 April 1958, on the report of the First Committee);

Convention on the High Seas<sup>2</sup> (adopted on 27 April 1958, on the report of the Second Committee);

Convention on Fishing and Conservation of the Living Resources of the High Seas<sup>1</sup> (adopted on 26 April 1958, on the report of the Third Committee);

Convention on the Continental Shelf<sup>1</sup> (adopted on 26 April 1958, on the report of the Fourth Committee).

The Conference also adopted the following *Protocol* (annex V):

<sup>1</sup> This Convention has not yet entered into force.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 82 of this volume.