

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS NEWS

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Library of Congress

UNITED NATIONS

Since the last column, two issues that came before the United Nations Security Council received a considerable amount of press coverage. The exchange of ambassadors on April 17, 1984 between the leaders of the Turkish community in northern Cyprus and the Turkish government precipitated the first crisis. This situation occupied the Security Council's attention early in May, and at a late meeting on May 11 the Council adopted Resolution 550 by a vote of 13 to 1 (Pakistan), with the United States abstaining. This resolution declared the exchange of ambassadors between Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot leadership "illegal and invalid," called for the immediate withdrawal of the ambassadors, and condemned "all secessionist actions." It also repeated a call for all countries not to recognize the "purported state of the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus'" (UN Weekly News Summary, WS/1180, May 18, 1984). The good offices mandate of the Secretary-General was reaffirmed and the Secretary-General was asked to initiate new efforts for a solution to the Cyprus problem. On June 15 the Security Council voted unanimously (S/RES/553) to extend the UN peace-keeping operation in Cyprus for another six months and requested Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar to continue his mission of good offices.

Even more time and attention was devoted at the UN to developments relating to the war between Iran and Iraq. With attacks on ships in the lower part of the Persian Gulf outside the immediate war zone, six Arab states that are also members of the Gulf Cooperation Council brought their complaint about "Iranian aggressions on the freedom of navigation" in the area of their Gulf ports to the Security Council where debate began on May 25 (UN Weekly News Summary, WS/1182, June 1, 1984). The text of a draft resolution on the matter was the subject of intense negotiations. Unlike many issues coming before the United Nations, there was no clear-cut East-West split, and some of the non-aligned countries on the Council were clearly uncomfortable trying to develop a satisfactory resolution. The permanent representative of Iran to the United Nations boycotted the Council sessions, pointing out at a news conference that the draft resolution referred only to Iranian attacks and made no reference to the many vessels hit by Iraq being seen as a threat to international shipping in the Persian Gulf (WS/1182). Various news accounts indicated that other countries also felt the resolution was too one-sided. The resolution as finally passed June 1 (Resolution 552) demanded a halt to attacks on commercial vessels traveling to and from ports of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, declaring that "there should be no interference with ships en route to and from states that are not party to the hostilities"

between Iran and Iraq (WS/1183, June 8, 1984). The vote was 13 in favor, none against, and two abstentions (Nicaragua and Zimbabwe). Although the resolution was tilted toward Iraq because it focused on the Iranian attacks, the wording was changed to include a paragraph aimed at Iraq that called upon "all states to respect, in accordance with international law, the right of navigation" (quoted in the Washington Post, June 2, 1984). Following news of heavy casualties by an aerial attack on the Iranian town of Baneh June 5 and subsequent retaliatory attacks on towns in each country, Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar appealed to both Iran and Iraq June 9 to refrain from initiating any attacks on civilian populations. Both Iran and Iraq conveyed their acceptance of the Secretary-General's initiative and the favorable responses of both countries were welcomed by Security Council members who indicated they would observe developments closely (S/16609-S/16611).

On the question of U.S. appropriations for the United Nations for fiscal 1985, the Senate on June 28 adopted an amendment to the appropriations legislation (H.R. 5712) for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary affecting American assessed contributions to the UN and 11 specialized agencies. This amendment, sponsored by Senators Nancy Kassebaum (Republican--Kansas) and Frank Murkowski (Republican--Arkansas), calls for reduction of all discretionary spending in the bill by four percent (Washington Weekly Report, United Nations Association/USA, X-25, July 3, 1984). This action parallels that taken in the House of Representatives on May 31 and results in reducing the administration's request of 552.6 million dollars for the international organizations and programs account to 501.7 million dollars. With full Senate action on its version of the legislation which was passed by the House May 31, the way was paved for a joint conference to resolve differences between the two versions of the legislation. Both House and Senate versions mandate the four percent reduction in assessed contributions, but neither indicates where the reductions should come. On June 28 the Senate also adopted an amendment sponsored by Senators Robert Kasten (Republican--Wisconsin) and Don Nickles (Republican--Oklahoma) calling for "a full and complete report (to be transmitted to the Congress no later than March 31, 1985) detailing the amount and source of appropriated funds, directly or indirectly, which are provided to the United Nations and its specialized agencies by the United States during the calendar year 1984" (quoted in Washington Weekly Report, X-25, July 3, 1984).

Two bibliographic items relating to the United Nations are also worthy of mention at this point. The first is the appearance of issue number 6 of United Nations Documentation News by the Dag Hammarskjold Library. Although the issue is not dated it was received on June 29, 1984. No issue has been published since number 5, December 1982, and the author was concerned that this useful source of information might have been suspended. I was also pleased to see a new brochure on UNBIS, United Nations Bibliographic Information System, which deals mainly with phase II of the library's automated information system. Ivan Schwartz, chief of the reference and bibliography section at the Hammarskjold Library provided an update on UNBIS at the June 24 meeting of the International Documents Task Force of the Government Documents Round Table (GODORT) at the American Library Association's Annual Conference in Dallas. Several of the bibliographic and textual files are now available online to the UN and mission staff members, with other data bases to be added shortly. Mr. Schwartz indicated that discussions have begun with vendors about external availability of UNBIS, and, according to the draft minutes of the IDTF, "librarians interested in having this kind of access are urged to write to either Mr. Vladimir

Orlov, Director of the Hammarskjöld Library or Mr. E. Wyzner, Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services, United Nations, New York 10017."

INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

Without doubt the most newsworthy development concerning international organizations during the period under review was the Nicaraguan suit against the United States at the International Court of Justice. The ICJ, also known as the World Court, is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. At the UN on April 4 the United States vetoed a draft Security Council resolution calling for an immediate end to the mining of Nicaragua's main ports (S/16463). Following reports that Nicaragua planned to bring its complaint against the United States to the Court, the United States on April 6, informed the ICJ as well as the UN Secretary-General of a "temporary and limited modification" of its acceptance of the Court's compulsory jurisdiction regarding disputes "with any Central American state (or) any dispute arising out of or related to events in Central America" for the next two years. The justification was to prevent a "propaganda spectacular" by Nicaragua and to forestall "protracted litigation of claims and counter claims" (quoted in the Washington Post, April 9, 1984). After numerous disclosures and allegations about the administration's policies in Central America, there was a veritable explosion in the Congress which was considering an administration request for emergency military aid for the U.S. backed Salvadoran army. Both the Senate and the House quickly passed a non-binding "Sense of the Congress" resolution (the Senate on April 10 and the House on April 12) putting Congress on record as opposed to any U.S. funds to "plan, direct, execute, or support the mining of the territorial waters of Nicaragua" (quoted in the Washington Post, April 11, 1984). In the interim, Nicaragua brought its case against the United States to the International Court on April 9. Portions of the case made public that day included the complaint that "the United States of America is using military force against Nicaragua and intervening in Nicaragua's internal affairs in violation of Nicaragua's sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence and of the most fundamental and universally accepted principles of international law" (quoted in the New York Times, April 10, 1984). Nicaragua asked the Court to order the United States to stop supporting operations against it at once and to pay reparations. Although stating that the United States would go to the Court to persuade it not to assert jurisdiction, a State Department official said the government would abide by the Court's decision on the jurisdictional issue. On April 25 the court began public hearings, having rejected the initial U.S. request not to hear the case and the later assertion that Nicaragua had never become a party to the Court statutes. On May 10 the court gave a preliminary ruling, technically an "indication" of "provisional measures." By this it ruled unanimously that the United States "should immediately halt any attempts to blockade or mine Nicaragua's ports" (New York Times, May 11, 1984). It also asserted by a 14 to 1 vote that Nicaragua's sovereignty and political independence "should be fully respected and should not in any way be jeopardized by any military or paramilitary activities... (text quoted in the New York Times, May 11, 1984). Pending a final decision, the Court stated it would "keep matters covered by this order continuously under review" and further decided that "the written proceedings shall first be addressed to the questions of the jurisdiction of the Court..." (IJC Communiqué, number 84/18, May 10, 1984).

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC
AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (UNESCO)

Since the last column where I discussed at some length the announcement by the Department of State of the government's intention to withdraw from UNESCO at the end of 1984, there has not been any marked change in the situation according to the public record. On March 22, 1984 the State Department created a Monitoring Panel on UNESCO made up of 13 individuals. The chairman is James Holderman who is also chairman of the U.S. National Commission for UNESCO and President of the University of South Carolina. According to a State Department press release of March 23 the Panel "will report to the Secretary of State, near the end of the year, on the degree and kinds of change that may have occurred in UNESCO in 1984 with a view to assisting the Secretary in determining whether to recommend that our decision to withdraw from, UNESCO be reviewed" (quoted in Washington Weekly Report, X-12, March 30, 1984). The Panel Charter States that it will meet approximately six times during the duration of the Charter (which is to terminate December 31, 1984 unless renewed or extended) and that these meetings are to be open. The 119th session of the UNESCO Executive Board met in Paris from May 9-23 to discuss the U.S. action and proposals for change contained in an April 2 letter to the Director-General from the British Minister of Overseas Development as well as routine matters. Documents of this session bear the UNESCO symbols 119 EX. According to press reports many feared that there would be a bitter confrontation over America's proposed withdrawal, but the debates were conducted in a relatively calm manner. Although some statements showed real awareness of the need for change, on the whole, after two weeks of debate there were indications that the Executive Board was deeply divided over the kinds of changes that should be made. The United States, with varying degrees of support from other Western countries, is seeking a fundamental reorientation of the Organization, but many of the Third World nations as well as the Soviet Union and its allies appear to be interested in limiting change to "such practical matters as budget and personnel procedures" (New York Times, May 23, 1984). The Director-General announced at the session that he had set up a number of Secretariat working groups to consider reform issues and the Executive Board itself set up a temporary committee of 13 members to consider proposals for change and to report to the September meeting of the Executive Board. The makeup of the Executive Board committee reflects the overall membership of the Organization where Third World countries are in the majority, and it will be interesting to see how far the proposals for change will go. Those who are interested in UNESCO and the question of U.S. membership will have to wait to see what happens at the 120th session of the Executive Board in September. The results of the study carried out by the U.S. General Accounting Office should also be available at about the same time.

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND AND THE WORLD DEBT PROBLEM

The sheer volume of news on the world debt problem in recent months requires the author to venture some observations. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is the organization that takes center stage in all this. The facts are that approximately 800 billion dollars are owed by the major debtor countries, and of this total, about 340 billion dollars are owed by various Latin American nations. Mexico and Brazil are the largest debtors, each owing about 90 billion dollars and Argentina owes more than 43 billion. Since

the news of the Mexican debt crisis in 1982, there has been a series of crises involving other countries, each of which has had to negotiate with the International Monetary Fund. The negotiations actually involve the governmental authorities of the debtor country on the one hand and the IMF and a consortium of banks on the other. The IMF normally has laid out an adjustment plan involving substantial doses of austerity. Once a country signs an agreement with the Fund, the IMF and the banks assemble a financial rescue package. Throughout the period there have been numerous press reports about strikes and other forms of social unrest in a number of countries that have had to undergo the adjustment process, but Argentina has been the country in the news most often. There was a last minute rescue package at the end of March 1984 to enable the country to meet overdue interest payments. The U.S. Treasury helped engineer this deal by guaranteeing repayment of 300 million dollars lent to Argentina by four other Latin debtors--Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, and Venezuela, but the idea was Mexican Finance Minister Silva Herzog's brainchild. Another 100 million dollars came from commercial banks and an additional 100 million was put up by Argentina itself. Under the new democratic government headed by President Raul Alfonsin, Argentina had been attempting to negotiate an agreement with the IMF for some time, but the negotiations were reported as not going smoothly because the Argentines resisted all the austerity measures usually prescribed, insisting on the necessity of maintaining economic growth. With the negotiations between Argentina and the IMF continuing to go badly, early in June the government bypassed the local IMF negotiating team and sent a "letter of intent" directly to the Fund management in Washington. (Cf. the Washington Post, June 12 and 13, 1984.)

A number of economic conferences held during the period included lengthy discussions on the debt problems. Among these were the Economic Summit in London and a conference of 11 Latin American countries at Cartagena, Colombia. At the Cartagena meeting the Latin countries agreed in a 15-page communiqué to establish a consultative mechanism on debt problems, with Argentina winning support for the statement that the IMF "should assign priority to growth of production and employment" in agreeing on economic programs and new loans (Washington Post, June 23, 1984). Even with increased exports from Latin America during the last several years, the countries have still been unable to meet all their loan payments, and the countries have become net exporters of capital to the industrial nations. Although the economic outlook has improved some in 1984, an increasing number of statements have come from leaders in the industrialized countries about the need for intervention by governments. Arthur Burns, U. S. Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany and former Chairman of the Federal Reserve, stated in a speech at Dusseldorf in May that the international debt problem is "without precedent in dimension and disruptive potential" (New York Times, May 9, 1984). Joseph Kraft, commenting in his column in the June 24 edition of the Washington Post, declared that "a logical next step is a move by the political authorities in the industrial countries." Continuing, he said, "in one way or another a promise of more money for the IMF, for the debtor countries, for the banks, needs to be made." In a column on the debt crisis in the Washington Post the same day, Henry Kissinger said that the "piece-meal, essentially technical methods have reached the limit of the politically sustainable..." He pointed out that the IMF "was created to redress short-term imbalances...; it lacks the financial and political resources to deal with a crisis of the entire international financial system." While agreeing with the diagnosis for economic reform in the debtor countries, he stated that the

remedies have been inadequate. "Statesmanship must be able to transcend formal theory; the time has come to bring the professed goals of the international financial system into line with political realities." Above all, he declared, governments "must find ways to provide new financial resources to the developing countries either directly or through international financial institutions."

On July 8 the Washington Post reported that the continuing crisis over Argentina's foreign debts was temporarily resolved again with another 11th hour settlement June 29. Not all the negotiations were finished, but Argentina got some improvement on rates that makes the situation look more promising for other countries. In the same analysis, the author noted that "the IMF wants to settle with Argentina if for no other reasons than to get the Argentina loans renegotiated and to get some desperately needed new money flowing into the country." The IMF, he said, "wants to sign an agreement it thinks has a chance of succeeding and not one viewed as a cave-in."