

It pays tribute to the UN and wishes it full success for its efforts in decades to come.

The Executive Committee of the League of Red Cross Societies, at its 88th session, voted a resolution (No. 3) conveying to the United Nations Organization "its congratulations on the work done in difficult and often dramatic circumstances and its best wishes for its future activities".

ASSISTANCE IN NATURAL DISASTER

During its 49th session, held in Geneva in July 1970, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations examined once again the problems relative to assistance in cases of natural disaster.

After having heard the Secretary-General of the League of Red Cross Societies and having taken note of a letter from the International Committee of the Red Cross, in which the latter associated itself with the statements made by the League representative, the Economic and Social Council adopted the following resolution:

1546 (XLIX). Assistance in cases of natural disaster

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 2034 (XX) of 7 December 1965 and 2435 (XXIII) of 19 December 1968, on Assistance in cases of natural disaster,

Noting its resolution 1518 (XLIX) of 10 July 1970 concerning Measures to be taken following the earthquake in Peru,

Having in mind its resolution 1533 (XLIX) of 23 July 1970 in which it recommended that the States Members of the United Nations establish an emergency fund for disasters, to be made up of voluntary contributions from all States Members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies,

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Having considered with interest the interim report of the Secretary-General on assistance in cases of natural disaster,¹

Aware not only of the cost in human life and suffering but also of the serious implications, for social and economic development, of natural disasters especially in the developing countries,

Noting with appreciation the important contributions to disaster relief and rehabilitation made by Governments, the many United Nations organizations concerned, and by the League of Red Cross Societies and other voluntary agencies,

Mindful of the need to strengthen and make more effective the capacity of the United Nations system to assist countries stricken by natural disasters as stressed by experience in connexion with the natural catastrophes of recent years,

1. *Commends* the Secretary-General on his intention to entrust one of his senior officials with the responsibility of acting for him on a regular basis in developing and co-ordinating assistance from the United Nations system and in ensuring continual and close co-operation with the governments concerned, the League of Red Cross Societies and other voluntary agencies;
2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to make the staff arrangements necessary to this end in implementation of operative paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 2435 (XXIII);
3. *Re-affirms* the importance of the preparation of pre-disaster plans at the national level to meet natural disasters, including the establishment of co-ordination machinery capable of immediate action in cases of disaster;
4. *Draws attention* to the contribution that the United Nations Development Programme can make in providing technical assistance towards such preparations;
5. *Stresses* the importance of standby relief units at the national level and of the stock-piling of supplies for use in emergency situations;
6. *Appeals* to States Members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies to offer on an increasing scale, through bilateral arrangements, the United Nations system, or other appropriate organizations, emergency assistance to meet natural disasters, including standby relief units or the earmarking of similar units for service in foreign countries;

¹ E/4853 and Corr.1 and Add.1.

7. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to continue to consult the Governments of States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies on this matter;
 8. *Recognizes* the role of the Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme in undertaking a preliminary assessment of the extent of a natural disaster, including consultation with the Government concerned on the question of the need for a special resident co-ordinator to deal with international disaster relief;
 9. *Re-affirms also* the need to promote scientific research into the causes and early manifestations of impending disasters and to develop and improve early warning systems;
 10. *Invites* the Secretary-General, in continuing his studies in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2435 (XXIII), to pay special regard to the following points:
 - (a) That a clear distinction should be maintained between special arrangements for the co-ordination of assistance during the emergency phase of natural disasters, and the subsequent co-ordination of further assistance for reconstruction and rehabilitation;
 - (b) That possible improvements should be explored in co-ordination at the national and international level of prior arrangements both for the giving and the receipt of emergency assistance, and for the channelling of such assistance to disaster-affected areas, in order to help the initiatives of relief organizations;
 - (c) That there should be full consultation with the League of Red Cross Societies and other voluntary agencies concerned, and also with the Governments of States Members of the United Nations system or members of the specialized agencies and other appropriate organizations, in the formulation of his eventual recommendations to the fifty-first session of the Council;
 11. *Further invites* the Secretary-General, in pursuing his studies, to consider the role within the United Nations system of the Emergency Fund for Disasters, recommended in Council resolution 1533 (XLIV), in providing assistance to countries stricken by natural disasters;
 12. *Decides* to review at its fifty-first session the question of assistance in cases of natural disaster, on the basis of the comprehensive report which the Secretary-General has been asked to submit to the Council at that session, with a view to the formulation of recommendations for the consideration of the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth session in keeping with General Assembly resolution 2435 (XXIII).
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