

Resolution: A3-0331/93
Title: Resolution on the role of the Union within the UN
and the problems of reforming the UN
Parliamentary year: 93
Date of decision: 19940208

Full text

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the motions for resolutions by:

a) Mrs van den Brink on the future role of the European Community in the United Nations (B3-1578/90),

b) Mr Arbeloa Muru on the UN as the centre for a new international order (B3-677/90)

- having regard to its resolution of 18 December 1992 on the establishment of the European Community's common foreign policy [OJ No. C 21, 25.1.1993, p. 03],

- having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and Security (A3-0331/93),

A. convinced that the profound changes which have occurred in the second half of this century require the alteration of the aims and the structure of the United Nations,

B. convinced however that the primary duty of the UN must remain the prevention of war and aggression, the promotion of collective security and the provision of the means for the peaceful settlement of disputes,

C. having regard to the new challenges and the new goals which the UN must get itself, such as protecting human rights and the environment, conserving the ecosystem, combating the resurgence of nationalism and fighting against poverty and hunger in the world and against scourges such as AIDS and drug-taking,

D. whereas the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of the UN might be a suitable occasion of the organization to move towards greater democracy, better representation of peoples and communities of states such as the European Union, and greater effectiveness and political weight,

E. noting that the UN's commitments have grown in number and become increasingly difficult to handle (cf. Bosnia and Somalia), adding to the need for an extremely rapid, effective reform of the UN,

F. noting that the military interventions of the United Nations for purposes of peace-keeping, peace-making or food distribution regrettably make it clear that the UN as such is not suited to military/logistical operations,

G. convinced of the inadequacy of the current set-up at the United Nations, both in its aims, which must be supplemented in line with the new, more pressing needs of the international community, in the way in which its bodies operate and in the resources made available to it to achieve its objectives,

H. whereas the entry into force of the Treaty on European Union will require the European Union and its Member States to assume new tasks and new duties, with particular regard to the activities of international organizations,

I. having regard to the provisions of Article J.2 and J.5 of the Treaty on European Union which state that Member States shall coordinate their action in international organizations and that Member States which are also permanent members of the United Nations Security Council will concert and J.

keep the other Member States fully informed and will, in the execution of their functions, ensure the defence of the positions and interests of the Union,

J. considering the Union's current level of involvement in the day-to-day affairs of the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies, pursuant to Resolution 3200 (XIX) of the General Assembly, to be inadequate,

K. pointing out that the Community became a full member of the FAO in 1991 and is a de facto member of GATT, which is unofficially considered by the United Nations as one of the specialized agencies,

1. Notes the proposals set out in the Agenda for Peace drawn up by the United Nations Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros Ghali, and feels that the way in which United Nations bodies <including the subsidiary bodies and specialized agencies> operate should be rationalized and coordinated in order to prevent waste and inefficiency;

2. Supports the proposals for organizing the Summit for Social Development in 1995 to mark the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the organization, and calls on the Commission to play an active role in the preparation and holding thereof;

3. Considers it vital for a precise, unambiguous definition to be given of the principles which serve as the basis for decisions on UN 'intervention';

4. Considers that the peace-keeping units must be placed under the sole responsibility of the Secretary-General of the United Nations;

5. Considers it of the utmost importance to establish clearly what powers are being vested in whom before any UN forces are deployed;

6. Considers that certain UN agencies should alter their operating procedures in order to provide more effective humanitarian aid; draws attention to the fact that the WHO cannot declare that an epidemic exists and act accordingly unless the government of the country concerned has previously issued a similar declaration;

7. Considers it of vital importance, after the democratization of the United Nations, for the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of member countries to be reviewed, with a view to recognizing the universal validity of the right to intervene on humanitarian grounds - which must in future be fundamental to operations conducted under United Nations auspices - and to defining the relevant principles and procedures to prevent arbitrary use of this right;

8. Considers that the UN should have permanent military reserve units at its disposal, immediately available for rapid deployment in emergencies; calls on the Member States to contribute actively to the establishment of such a force by providing both funding and manpower;

9. Considers the selective application of international law - in this instance in the form of Security Council resolutions, for example as in the case, at least until now, of Cyprus - to be damaging to the credibility of the United Nations and calls therefore for greater consistency and for all resolutions to be enforced with the same firmness;

10. Believes that action by the UN will be credible only once its bodies possess realistic, integrated, human, financial and technical resources with which to implement their decisions effectively;

11. Wishes an international environmental court to be set up under the auspices of the UN, which should be independent of states and provided with adequate resources, and which should have the task of protecting the quality of the environment, on behalf of the international community, as a fundamental right;

12. Considers it necessary that, in order for the UN to carry out its new duties, it should set up a World Environment Agency, of which the European Environment Agency would be the regional branch, and which would have the following remit:

- to organize a worldwide environmental monitoring network;
- to manage the existing UN programmes, UNDP and UNEP once they have been merged;
- to manage the Global Environment Facility;
- to develop environmental training and information;

13. Considers that the UN member states should meet their financial commitments in full;

14. Expresses its concern at the delays on the part of the UN and its specialized agencies in responding to certain crises <for example in Somalia, Liberia and Sudan> and considers that the UN should assign priority to investigating the cause of these delays and altering its methods accordingly;

15. Feels that changes should be made to the relations between the General Assembly and the Security Council so that the General Assembly can be associated with the decisions of the Security Council in a more functional and precise manner;

16. Welcomes the setting-up of a permanent international tribunal, under the auspices of the UN, to try those suspected of war crimes and crimes against humanity, pursuant to Security Council Resolution 808 on the establishment of an international tribunal for the prosecution of persons responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in the territory of the former Yugoslavia since 1991, and calls for the necessary funds to be released to enable the tribunal to operate effectively;

17. Wishes consideration to be given to the possibility of setting up within the UN a parliamentary consultative assembly to enable the elected representatives of peoples to participate more fully in the work of UN bodies;

18. Takes the view that if indigenous peoples were grouped together by major geographical region, e.g. Amazonia, the Sahel and Arctic, this would greatly simplify and hence assist improvements in their representation at the UN; accordingly, undertakes to promote such groupings;

19. Is convinced that the common foreign and security policy should take the place of the foreign policies of the Member States in order to fulfil justified expectations vis-à-vis the Union both outside and within the United Nations;

20. Believes that the role of coordinator and representative of the Union in the United Nations should eventually be determined jointly by the Council, the Commission and Parliament, and calls upon the Commission to use the new powers conferred upon it under the Treaty on European Union to put forward as soon as possible proposals in keeping with the views set out in this resolution;

21. Considers that, once all the necessary institutional measures have been taken for the establishment of the common foreign and security policy, consideration may be given to granting the European Union the status of a full member of the UN General Assembly and Security Council;

22. Considers that, in view of the changes which have occurred in the international political situation, international organizations such as the European Union, WEU, NATO, OECD, EFTA and the Council of Europe should

coordinate their activities on the continent of Europe, with a view to improving the demarcation of responsibilities;

23. Questions the validity of the criteria used for permanent membership of the Security Council, as they reflect the pattern of power in 1945;

24. Believes that steps should be taken to make the Security Council more representative of world realities in the 1990s;

25. Considers that the logical conclusion of Titel V of the Treaty on European Union, on a common foreign and security policy, is for the Union to become a permanent member of the Security Council;

26. Considers that the number of permanent members of the Security Council should be increased to make it more representative;

27. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the governments of the Member States and the Secretary-General of the United Nations.