

2. *Entrusts* the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control with the function of preparing the United Nations congresses on the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders by submitting appropriate proposals to the Economic and Social Council concerning, *inter alia*, the place and time of the congresses, the provisional agenda, participants and preparation of the necessary documentation;

3. *Endorses* the recommendation of the Fifth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders,²⁰ which requested the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control to review at its fifth session the provisional rules of procedure of the Congress with a view to bringing them into conformity with current practice in other United Nations bodies, conferences and congresses convened under the auspices of the United Nations, and requests the Committee to submit the revised draft rules of procedure to the Economic and Social Council at its sixty-sixth session;

4. *Decides further* that the members of the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control should be elected by the Economic and Social Council for a term of four years, with half the membership being elected every two years, on the basis of the principle of equitable geographical distribution, from among experts who possess the necessary qualifications and professional or scientific knowledge in the field and are nominated by Member States;

5. *Invites* the Economic and Social Council to request the Commission for Social Development to consider the question of the functions and long-term programme of work of the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control with a view to further improving United Nations activities in this field, and to submit its suggestions and proposals to the Council.

*98th plenary meeting
8 December 1977*

32/61. Capital punishment

The General Assembly,

Having regard to article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,²¹ which affirms everyone's right to life, and article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,²² which also affirms the right to life as inherent to every human being,

Recalling its resolutions 1396 (XIV) of 20 November 1959, 2393 (XXIII) of 26 November 1968, 2857 (XXVI) of 20 December 1971 and 3011 (XXVII) of 18 December 1972, as well as Economic and Social Council resolutions 934 (XXXV) of 9 April 1963, 1574 (L) of 20 May 1971, 1656 (LII) of 1 June 1972, 1745 (LIV) of 16 May 1973 and 1930 (LVIII) of 6 May 1975, which confirm the continuing interest of the United Nations in the study of the question of capital punishment with a view to promoting full respect for everyone's right to life,

Concerned at the fact that only thirty-two Governments responded to the questionnaire addressed to them for the preparation by the Secretary-General of the first

five-year report of 1975 on capital punishment,²³ submitted in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1745 (LIV),

Noting with concern that, notwithstanding the limited progress mentioned in the first five-year report of the Secretary-General of 1975 on capital punishment, it remains extremely doubtful whether there is any progression towards the restriction of the use of the death penalty, thus justifying the conclusions drawn by the Secretary-General in the aforementioned report,

Considering that the Sixth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders is to be held in 1980,

Taking note of the request of the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1930 (LVIII), to the Secretary-General, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2857 (XXVI), to proceed with the report on practices and statutory rules which may govern the right of a person sentenced to capital punishment to petition for pardon, commutation or reprieve, and to report on these questions to the Council at the latest at its sixty-eighth session, together with the basic report of 1980 on capital punishment,

Expressing the desirability of continuing and expanding the consideration of the question of capital punishment by the United Nations,

1. *Reaffirms* that, as established by the General Assembly in resolution 2857 (XXVI) and by the Economic and Social Council in resolutions 1574 (L), 1745 (LIV) and 1930 (LVIII), the main objective to be pursued in the field of capital punishment is that of progressively restricting the number of offences for which the death penalty may be imposed with a view to the desirability of abolishing this punishment;

2. *Urges* Member States to provide the Secretary-General with relevant information for his preparation of the second five-year report of 1980 on capital punishment and of the report on practices and statutory rules which may govern the right of a person sentenced to capital punishment to petition for pardon, commutation or reprieve;

3. *Invites* the Economic and Social Council to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session on its deliberations and recommendations on the basis of the aforementioned reports of the Secretary-General and of the study to be submitted by the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control in accordance with Council resolution 1930 (LVIII);

4. *Calls upon* the Sixth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders to discuss the various aspects of the use of capital punishment and the possible restriction thereof, including a more generous application of rules relating to pardon, commutation or reprieve, and to report thereon, with recommendations, to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session;

5. *Requests* the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control to give consideration to the appropriate place on the agenda of the Sixth Congress of the issue mentioned in paragraph 4 above, and to prepare documentation on the question;

6. *Decides* to consider, with high priority, at its thirty-fifth session the question of capital punishment.

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²⁰ A/CONF.56/10 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.2 and corrigendum), para. 26.

²¹ Resolution 217 A (III).

²² Resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

²³ E/5616 and Corr.1 and 2 and Add.1.