

RESOLUTION ON THE PERMANENT SOVEREIGNTY OF AFRICAN COUNTRIES
OVER THEIR FISHERY RESOURCES OFF THE SHORES OF AFRICA

The Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity, meeting in its Seventeenth Ordinary Session in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 15 to 19 June 1971,

Considering the aims set forth in the Charter of the Organization of African Unity to put the natural resources of our continent at the service of the general progress of its peoples in all fields of human endeavour,

Conscious of the fact that fishery resources around Africa are limited and that their illegal and clandestine exploitation by non-African fleets constitutes a lasting burden and a serious threat to the development programmes of African countries,

Convinced of the importance that the expanded exploitation of fishery resources may assume in the process of industrial development of a large number of African countries,

Taking into account the recommendations that have been formulated through African consultations on the protection of fishery resources and the control of fisheries in Africa, at the meeting convened by FAO in Casablanca from 20 to 26 May 1971, on the need for African States to extend their sovereignty over the fishery resources among the whole of their continental shelf in order to ensure better control over them and their rational conservation, on the one hand, and on the other, their exploitation for the benefit of the African economies,

Considering that international law recognizes the sovereignty of States over the natural resources of the sub-soil of the continental shelf and that the extension of such sovereignty to cover living resources constitutes a justifiable rectification of international law,

Bearing in mind the spirit of United Nations General Assembly resolution 2158 (XXI) on permanent sovereignty over natural resources, which stipulates that "... .. in order to safeguard the exercise of permanent sovereignty over natural resources, it is essential that their exploitation and marketing should be aimed at securing the highest possible rate of growth of the developing countries",

1. CONFIRMS the inalienable rights of the African countries over the fishery resources of the continental shelf surrounding Africa, in conformity with the spirit and principle of the charter of the Organization of Africa Unity;
2. URGES the Governments of the African countries to take all necessary steps to proceed rapidly to extend their sovereignty over the resource of the high seas adjacent to their territorial waters and up to the limits of their continental shelf;
3. CONFIRMS that the exploitation of fishery resources in the fishing areas thus defined for each country shall always be conducted in accordance with its national laws and regulations;
4. URGES the governments of the African countries to promote among themselves a policy of co-operation as regards the development of fisheries, in order to increase the participation of African States in the exploitation of maritime resources surrounding Africa.