Structure of the General Assembly

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Basics

- General Assembly (GA) represents a forum of communication (value is inestimable)
- annual sessions provide a unique opportunity, particularly for smaller states
- in first 10 years the GA was directed politically by the United States
- year 1960 brought the first great wave of newly independent states to the UN
- → from then GA was increasingly under influence of the Third World
- → focus of GA had moved to economic and social questions
- every member state has seat and vote (Art. 9 par. 1)

Committees

- Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC)
- Economic and Financial Committee (EC)
- Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee (SOCHUM)
- Special Political and Decolonization Committee (SPECPOL)
- Administrative and Budgetary Committee
- Legal Committee

Procedures

- the General Assembly does not meet in plenary
- most of the resolutions are prepared in committees
- every member of the GA has one vote (that is every member state) (Art. 18)
- decisions are taken on the basis of a simple majority (Art.18 par. 3)
- important questions require to a two- third majority (on the basis of the number of members present and voting, abstaining not included)

Relationships

- the relationship of the GA to the subsidiary and specialized organs are created on the basis of Art. 22
- the GA is based on the principle of subordination
- some of these organs have achieved a considerable amount of independence (UNICEF)

Vocabulary

unanimous –einstimmig forfeited –verwirkt (to) abstain –enthalten