

PEACE WALKS AT THE UNITED NATIONS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FACT SHEET

United Nations Charter

(The UN Charter was signed on June 26, 1945)

What is the UN Charter?

The Charter, which came into effect on October 24, 1945, is the "constitution" of the United Nations, establishing its basic principles, purposes and machinery. It is an international treaty which all UN member states must ratify in accordance with their own national processes.

What are the Principles of the Charter?

The Charter is based on 7 main principles.

- 1) The equality and sovereignty of all member states.
- 2) Fulfillment "in good faith" by all members of obligations assumed under the Charter.
- 3) Peaceful settlements of disputes.
- 4) Renunciation of the threat or use of force.
- 5) Cooperation with the UN in any action it takes.
- 6) Encouragement of non-member states to abide by its principles.
- 7) Non-intervention by the UN in the internal affairs of any state.

The Charter also calls for freedom of religion. Many faiths, each with a different conception of God, are represented at the UN. A moment of silence opens and closes each General Assembly session, and there is a Meditation Room at UN Headquarters.

What is the Basic Machinery of the UN Under the Charter?

The Charter established six main organs of the UN: the General Assembly, Security Council, Economic and Social Council, Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice and the Secretariat.

The General Assembly is the central body of the UN and the only one in which all member states are represented. In general, it forms the main forum for discussion, formulates policy and coordinates the work of other organs and subsidiary bodies. The Assembly has no power to pass laws that are binding. Its resolutions are recommendations for action backed only by the force of world opinion.

The Security Council is the main political organ of the United Nations and is given the "primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security." Five permanent members, China, France, the United Kingdom, the US and USSR, have the power of veto in this body.

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is the UN's planning body for the promotion of economic, social and humanitarian progress.

The Trusteeship Council is responsible for the supervision of territories voluntarily placed under the international trusteeship system by the administering governments. There were originally 11 trust

A series of events to inspire renewed dedication to the highest ideals of the United Nations Charter.

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-2-

territories; all but one have now become independent nations. The remaining one is the US Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

The International Court of Justice is the principal judicial organ of the UN. It is empowered to hear cases involving legal disputes between governments and to give advisory opinions to the UN and its related agencies to clarify questions of international law and interpretation of the Charter.

The Secretariat is the administrative arm of the United Nations and is headed by the Secretary-General. Its Headquarters are in New York City. There are approximately 10,000 men and women employed as Secretariat members in posts around the world.

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