
Appendix 11: The United Nations and the *Yearbook of International Organizations*

When the Union of International Associations resumed operations after World War II, officials at the United Nations Secretariat recognized the importance of its status as an independent research institute. When arrangements had been made for it to undertake publication of the 4th (1951-52) edition of the Yearbook, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations adopted unanimously at its 11th session on 20 July 1950, Resolution 334 B (XI):

“The Economic and Social Council,

*“Considering that the Union of International Associations had published a Yearbook of International Organizations which includes information regarding a very large number of international non-governmental organizations, and
“Taking note of the intention of the Union of International Associations to continue the publication of such a yearbook, and to take into account in future editions suggestions offered and information made available by the United Nations.
“Decides not to give any further consideration, at this time, to the publication by the United Nations of a handbook concerning non-governmental organizations.”*

After the appearance of the 4th edition the Economic and Social Council evidently felt that its confidence had not been misplaced, as at its 16th session (1953) it accepted the following recommendation by the Council Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations:

“The Committee unanimously expressed its appreciation of the value and usefulness of the Yearbook of International Organizations published by the Union of International Associations. Members voiced the hope that the work of the Union would become even better known both to the public and to Member States and that its continuation would be secured.”
(UN Doc E/2489)

The annual *Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization* regularly mentions, in the final paragraph of the chapter on economic and social activities at United Nations headquarters, the phrase:

“Under Council Resolution 334 B (XI), the Secretariat continues to co-operate with the Union of International Associations in the preparation of the annual edition of the Yearbook of International Organizations.”

The Yearbook does not, of course, confine itself to the non-governmental sector. Dealing with Resolution 128B (VI) of 10 March 1948 of the Economic and Social Council (calling for the compilation of a list of intergovernmental institutions with a view to examination by the Council of possible duplication and dispersal of efforts by such institutions) the Secretary-General of the UN himself, in a note dated 17 November 1955 (E/2088), proposed that the Council, if it should decide to

undertake, as in the past, a general examination of the structure of intergovernmental organizations, should adopt as basic document the *Yearbook of International Organizations*.

The League of Nations

Following its foundation in 1907, the Union of International Associations produced many publications on international organization, the main series being the *Annuaire de la Vie Internationale* (Vol. 1: 1908-1909, 1370 pages; Vol. 2: 1910-1911, 2652 pages). After World War I, this information was made available to the League of Nations which used it in the production of its *Handbook of International Organizations*.

With regard to this collaboration, a seven-page memorandum by the Secretary-General of the League of Nations, classified as Council document No.A.43 (B) 1421, communicated on 5th September 1921 to the member States of the League and to the delegates of the Assembly, on the subject of Educational Activities and Co-ordination of Intellectual Work accomplished by the Union of International Associations, underlined in the following terms the support given by the UIA to the institution of the League of Nations:

“The principles and ambitions of the Union of International Associations were consecrated by the formation of the League. The very nature of the work carried out by the Union of International Associations before the war rendered it indirectly and within the means at its disposal, one of the promoters of the League of Nations. It had already expressly declared at one of the Congresses that the principle of a League of Nations was the ultimate end of all international movements. During the war the leaders of the Union drew up drafts of a Covenant and of an international constitution...”

“Surveying as a whole the picture we have just drawn, the work of the founders of the Union of International Associations, a work of documentation and information, of co-ordination of effort, of general education, appears as a vast enterprise of international intellectual organization, characterised by the breadth of its conception and design. Its action is twofold as regards principles; it owes to the logical force of the ideas which it has brought forward an educative influence which is highly conducive to the development of the ideas of union and international organization. As regards facts, it has proved its efficacy by the institutions which it has created. The Union of International Associations, its Congresses, the publications connected with them, and the International University, form particularly effective instruments for the “diffusion of a broad spirit of understanding and world-wide co-operation”. The League of Nations should regard these institutions to-day as most valuable of collaboration.”