Foreword

This Yearbook of the United Nations is the thirty-seventh published since the founding of the Organization. During this time, the pages of these volumes have provided a factual record of what the United Nations has done or sought to do. Behind this record lies the whole panorama of the accomplishments and frustrations of humanity in this time of phenomenal change.

We have marvelled as countries rebuilt their lives after the dark night of global war and we have rejoiced as more than a hundred nations gained their independence. We have sought to restrain regional conflicts and we have witnessed with distress the failure of Governments to co-operate in resolving them on a basis of justice and honour. We have struggled to control the spiralling arms race, which can spell doom for the human enterprise. We have laid down standards for the observance of human rights which nevertheless are still violated frequently and on a massive scale. As dramatic advances in communications, knowledge and technology have vastly enriched the human estate, we have striven to reduce the deprivation that still remains the lot of the world’s majority. Both triumph and tragedy are writ large in the chronicles of our age.

Our hope is anchored in that constituency of peace which cuts across national frontiers and the divisions of race, culture or ideology. The United Nations represents that constituency. It is not, and was not designed to be, a world government. But it provides structure and continuity to the joint effort to solve international problems which affect peace and impinge on justice and human dignity. If used as its Charter envisioned, with loyalty and commitment by its Member States, it can make all nations good neighbours and give new form and direction to their collective strengths.

The information contained in this volume, and its predecessors, is indispensable to anyone wishing to understand how nations have addressed their common concerns, which have emerged at an ever-increasing rate. Whether reporting progress or set-backs, highlighting success or exposing deficiencies, it furnishes evidence of the fact that there is no alternative to the working of the United Nations for ensuring our survival and the betterment of the human condition.

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