

- 1959
(cont.) declaration into a full convention, Poland and Canada taking the lead.
- 1960 March–
April Second Law of the Sea Conference in Geneva narrowly fails to agree on limits to territorial sea and fishing zones. In May, Iceland, engaged in “cod war” with Britain, declares 12-mile fishing zone.
- April Sharpeville massacre of 67 black South Africans. Security Council calls on South African government to abandon *apartheid* policies.
- July 1 Independence of Belgian Congo. Within two weeks, a mutiny of the armed forces and secession of mineral-rich Katanga (now Shaba) province throws Congo into disorder. Security Council debate on July 13 launches UN operation in the Congo (ONUC from its French acronym). Canada contributes air transport and signals unit; King Gordon goes as a senior information officer for UN.
- October Nigeria, Africa’s most populous country, reaches independence. During 1960—“Africa Year”—16 African states become independent, including most former French colonies and Somalia (after a merger of two Trust Territories). General Assembly approves Declaration on Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in December. World Bank opens “soft loan window” for aid to low-income countries with International Development Association (IDA).
- 1961 January First Development Decade, inaugurated by General Assembly, begins. At midway point in 1966, it is decided that slow progress is partly due to lack of a world plan of action, so work starts on an International Development Strategy.
- February Plebiscites in Northern and Southern Cameroons, both under British administration as Trust Territories. North votes to join Nigeria, South to join Republic of Cameroon.
- September 17 Dag Hammarskjöld killed in air crash near Ndola on flight to reason with Moise Tshombe, Katangan leader. On November 3, the Burmese ambassador U Thant takes over as Acting Secretary-General; he begins a full term in 1962.
- Financial problems over Congo operation (including Soviet and French refusal to contribute) prompt Assembly to authorize the Secretary-General to float a United Nations bond issue of \$200 million.