



International Agreements and Resolutions - United Nations

Summary: In the mid-1970s, the Prime Minister of the new member state of Grenada, Sir Eric Gairy, began a lobbying initiative to incorporate the UFO problem in the United Nations agenda. Prime Minister Gairy and UN Ambassador Wellington Friday raised the UFO issue at a meeting of the thirty-second General Assembly Special Political Committee on November 28, 1977



In the mid-1970s, the Prime Minister of the new member state of Grenada, Sir Eric Gairy, began a lobbying initiative to incorporate the UFO problem in the United Nations agenda. Prime Minister Gairy and UN Ambassador Wellington Friday raised the UFO issue at a meeting of the thirty-second General Assembly Special Political Committee on November 28, 1977. Grenada was proposing the "establishment of an agency or a department of the United Nations for undertaking, coordinating and disseminating the results of research into Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs) and related phenomena." 154

Grenada made further statements on November 30 and December 6, 1977. As a result of this effort, at the 101st plenary meeting on December 13, 1977, "the General Assembly adopted Decision 32/424," which acknowledged "the draft resolution submitted by Grenada" and further stated that:

Don Berliner "3. The General Assembly requests the Secretary-General to transmit the text of the draft resolution, together with the above-mentioned statements, to Member States and to interested specialized agencies, so that they may communicate their views to the Secretary-General." 155

Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim duly forwarded "Decision 32/424" to the Member States by a "note verbale" on March 13, 1978. However, only three governments responded (India, Luxembourg and Seychelles) and only two specialized agencies (International Civil Aviation Organization and UNESCO) replied with a flat "no comments to offer." 156 Not deterred, Grenada launched a new offensive during the thirty-third General Assembly.

A group of recognized experts was brought to testify before a Hearing of the Special Political Committee on November 27, 1978. Besides Sir Eric Gairy and Wellington Friday, the Hearing included testimony by Drs. Allen Hynek and Jacques Vallee, and a first-hand witness account by Lt. Col. Lawrence Coyne of the U.S. Army (Reserve) on the famous 1973 UFO-helicopter near collision case in Ohio (see Quotations, section on Military/Intelligence). A letter of endorsement by astronaut Gordon Cooper, who was then Vice-President of Research & Development of Walt Disney Enterprises, was also read into the record (see Quotations, section on Astronauts).

At the 37th plenary meeting of the General Assembly on December 19, 1978, Decision 33/426 was adopted with the same heading to the previous Decision 32-424 cited above, "Establishment of an agency or a department of the United Nations for undertaking, coordinating and disseminating the results of research into unidentified flying objects and related phenomena." The "consensus text" informed in its Point 1 that the General Assembly had "taken note" of the "draft resolutions submitted by Grenada" and that:

"2. The General Assembly invites interested Member States to take appropriate steps to coordinate on a national level scientific research and investigation into extraterrestrial life, including unidentified flying objects, and to inform the Secretary-General of the observations, research and evaluation of such activities.

"3. The General Assembly requests the Secretary-General to transmit the statements of the delegation of Grenada and the relevant documentation to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, so that it may consider them at its session in 1979." 157

Point 4 finally stated that the Outer Space Committee would permit Grenada "to present its views" in 1979 and the Committee's deliberation would be included in its report to the thirty-fourth General Assembly. The Grenada initiative was gradually opening the door to UFO cooperative international investigation, but unfortunately the effort came to an abrupt halt when the Gairy government was overthrown by a Marxist revolution led by Maurice Bishop. The new government launched a publicity campaign to discredit Gairy as a believer in voodoo and flying saucers. Decision 33/426 was never implemented, but its mere existence provides a useful framework for any future initiative on the matter.