later. Characteristic of this phase was what Walter Gehlhoff, the Federal Republic of Germany’s Permanent Representative (→ Permanent Missions) from 1971 to 1974, said: “My predecessors always had to watch most closely that the GDR was not possibly recognized by the United Nations. This task still mattered during my term of assignment. But it was ... a fighting retreat.” (translated from Gehlhoff 1991, 21).

Bernhard Neugebauer


Addendum


UN Policy, Germany

Germany and later Japan were the reason for the foundation of the United Nations. It was founded on grounds of the experiences of World War II, provoked by Germany, and founded by those 50 states that had declared war on Germany. This origin found its expression in the → enemy state clauses of the UN Charter (Articles 53 and 107) (→ Charter of the UN). These had become obsolete for Germany since 1973 at the latest, when the Federal Republic of Germany and the GDR (→ UN Policy, German Democratic Republic) were admitted to the United Nations as “peace-loving states which accept the obligations contained in the present Charter and, in the judgment of the Organization, are able and willing to carry out these obligations”. (Art. 4 UN Charter)

I. The Relationship between Germany and the UN

The relationship between Germany and the United Nations developed in three phases to its present state:
1. Period I: 1945-1949

In the few first years between the end of World War II in 1945, and the foundation of both the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in 1949, the defeated and occupied Germany was partly an object of the United Nations. The UN Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), already founded during the emergence of the UN in 1943, for the purpose of repatriating people deported by Germany, together with other similar UN organizations in charge of this group of people (→ UNHCR) and the organization for the protection of children (→ UNICEF), were already at work on the territory of Germany governed by the occupation powers.

The division of Germany being a concomitant of the Cold War became a topic of the United Nations twice. In 1948/1949, the → Security Council dealt with the Berlin Blockade by the Soviet Union, but did not reach any decision because of a veto by the latter. The Berlin Blockade was ended by direct negotiations between the USA and the Soviet Union (→ History of the UN).

Two years later, during the Cold War that was now leaving its mark on European politics already in a specific way, the Federal Republic and the three Western occupation powers asked the → General Assembly to examine the holding of free elections for a German National Assembly in all four occupation zones. The undertaking ended in 1952 when the examining board established by the General Assembly was refused entry into the GDR. From then on, the division of Germany was no longer a topic for the UN. Moreover, the Federal Republic and its allies developed the common policy of not letting the German division become a UN topic because of the imponderabilities connected with it.

2. Period II: 1949-1973

In the second period, lasting from the foundation of the Federal Republic and the GDR (1949) to the accession of both German states to the United Nations (1973), German relations with the UN were matter of concern for the Federal Republic only.

Directly after its foundation, the Federal Republic put its interest in a speedy admission to international organizations. Furthermore, its foundation was part of the integration of West Germany into Western Europe and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Article 24 of the Basic (Constitutional) Law, the German Constitution, which declares that the Federal Republic is allowed to “join a system of mutual and collective security” under the condition of restricting its rights of sovereignty by transferring “rights of sovereignty to intergovernmental institutions”, was placed in the constitution with the United Nations forming the background as the then only existing system of that kind (→ Collective Security), and against the background of the newly forming military alliance of the NATO. In the Deutschlandvertrag (German Contract) of 1954 which ended the regime of the occupation powers and prepared the accession of the Federal Republic to NATO, the Federal Republic obliged itself “to conduct its politics in accordance with the principles of the United Nations”.

In the first years of the Federal Republic, when the major objective of its foreign policy was to re-enter the international community of peoples, the United Nations was generally seen as a kind of a higher institution and court of appeal. In important declarations relating to international affairs in the Bundestag (Lower House of the German Federal Parliament) and on other occasions one referred explicitly to the “purposes and principles of the United Nations”.

Even before its accession to the European Council (1951), which was important for its European policy, the Federal Republic had already been admitted in 1950 to one of the large → specialized agencies: the Food and Agricultural Organization (→ FAO). Thanks to the support of its allies, the Federal Republic was in 1952 able to establish an observer mission (→ Observer Status) at