

Searching for United Nations Documents using the Official Documents System (ODS)

<http://documents.un.org/>

Introduction

ODS is the full-text official document system of the United Nations that was made available free to the public in December 2004. ODS coverage includes all official United Nations documents since 1993 and older documents are continuously added. Resolutions of the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, and the Trusteeship Council are available since 1946. Press releases, sales publications, and the UN Treaty Series are not available through the database. Materials are available in all of the official UN languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish.

ODS is accessible at: <http://documents.un.org/>

Getting Started

1. At the main page, choose the language you prefer to view the database in.
2. Choose Access ODS Without Logging In. Log in is not required.
3. Choose either a basic or advanced search.

Deciding Between Basic and Advanced Searches

Which type of search to use in ODS depends on your needs and what type of information you are looking for, and you might consider using a different search engine, UNBISNET (see below), for an index to speeches and voting records.

BASIC SEARCH

Basic searches have the capability of searching by the following:

- Full-text search (Boolean searching is available. See examples below.)
- Language
- Symbol (See explanation below.)
- Truncation (See explanation below.)
- Date of publication

ODS - Simple Search

Advanced Search Useful links Log out Help

English FranÃ§ais DÃ©nÃ©nÃ© D'Ã©nÃ© EspaÃ±ol

This search will retrieve documents only from the **UN Documentation database** (documents and preliminary versions of UN resolutions)
Use one field or a combination of fields

Language of search: English

Symbol: [input] Lexicon

Truncation: Right None

Full-text search: [input]

Type of full-text search: Find this phrase

Date of publication: From (dd/mm/yyyy) [input] [input] [input] To (dd/mm/yyyy) [input] [input] [input]

Sort results by: Date of publication

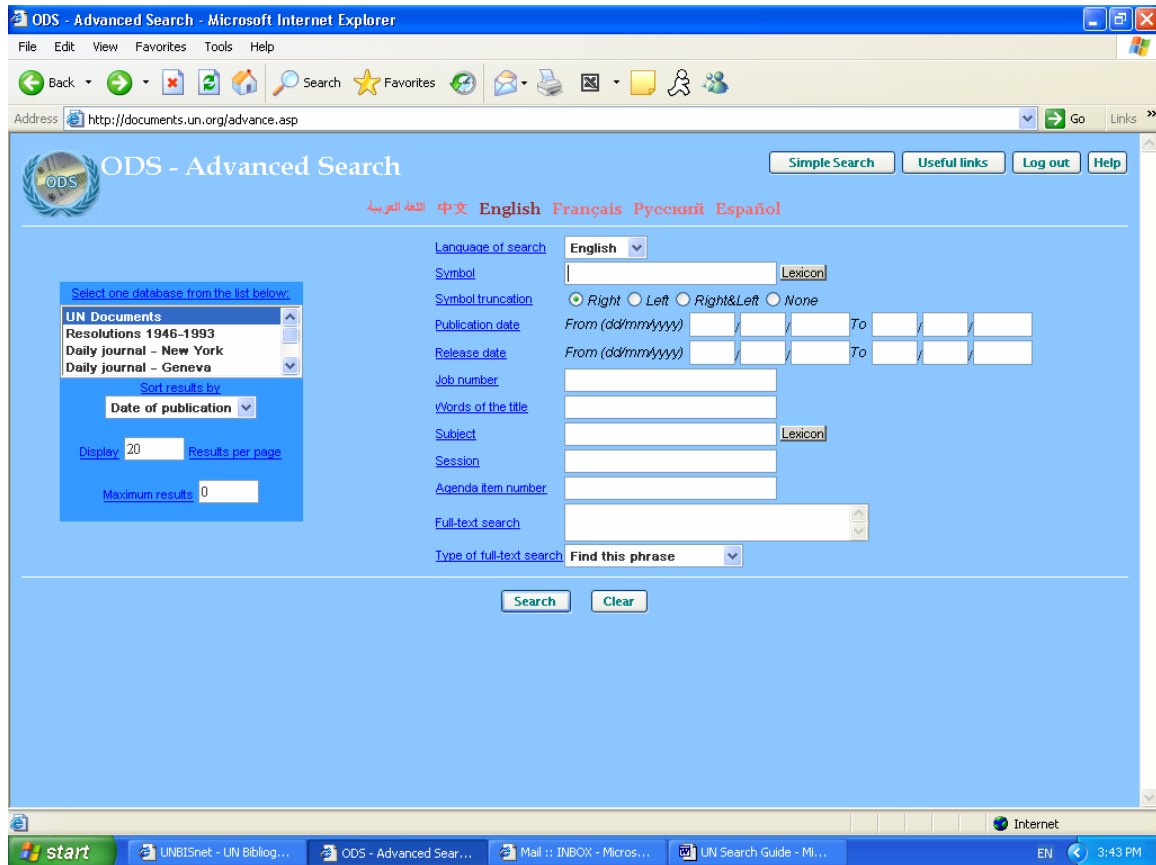
Search Clear

ADVANCED SEARCH

Advanced searches provide these additional features:

- Sorting by documents, resolutions, or the daily journal
- Release date
- Title words (Be careful. Newer titles may be abbreviated.)
- Subject (Click "Lexicon" for a full list of choices.)
- Session Number

Further explanation of the definitions of search terms are available by clicking on the blue link on the left.



Using Boolean Searching

In the “Type of Full-Text Search” toolbar, choose “use Boolean operators.”

EXAMPLES:

Phrase: “security council”

And: “weapons inspections” AND Iraq

Or: Myanmar OR Burma

Not: Yugoslavia AND NOT Serbia

Nested: “war crimes” AND (Yugoslavia OR Serbia)

TRUNCATION

wom?n will retrieve woman and women

Crim* will retrieve crime, criminal, criminals, etc.

Questions marks are used to replace a single letter in the middle of a word

Asterisks are used to replace multiple letters at the beginning or end of a word.

Explanations of Symbols and Truncation

SYMBOLS

The UN document symbol is somewhat like a call number. The first letter of the symbol indicates the parent organization (General Assembly, Security Council, etc.). Bits of information are separated by a slash, but punctuation in a search will be ignored. Following numbers can indicate the year or the session number. Other letter series can indicate subsidiary bodies or types of documents. A full list of possible symbols is available by clicking the “Lexicon” button.

Examples of Symbols:

A/52/100 – General Assembly document from the 52nd session

S/1997/100 – Security Council document issued in 1997

E/1997/100 – Economic and Social Council document from the 1997 sessions

ST/AI/405 – Administrative instruction issued by the Secretariat

E/CN.4/1997/1 – document of the Commission on Human Rights, a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council¹

For further explanation of UN symbols, visit:

<http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/resguide/symbol.htm>

To find the symbol for a specific title, try the UN-I-QUE database:

<http://lib-unique.un.org/lib/unique.nsf>

TRUNCATION

This field is for symbols only and allows a user to search for one that is incomplete. In basic searches, only right truncation is available. Advanced searches allow left truncation and simultaneous left and right truncation.

¹ Examples taken from ODS Help Screen. http://documents.un.org/Help_E.htm#Search_DS

EXAMPLES

Right: A/52/101 will retrieve A/52/101 and A/52/101/Rev.1, A/52/101/Rev.1/Add.1 as well as A/52/1010-1019.

Left: 52/33 will generate a list that will include A/52/33, A/C.5/52/33, A/RES/52/33, DL/1995/233, S/1995/233, S/25233, etc. (Note that the last three results will be displayed because the database ignores punctuation.)

Right and Left: 52/101 will retrieve A/52/101 and A/52/101/Rev.1, A/52/101/Rev.1/Add.1 as well as A/52/1010-1019.

None: The search will return one document matching exactly the symbol entered.²

Search Results

To view an item, click on the symbol. Before accessing the document, a citation page similar to this one will appear. To view the document, click on the language you wish to view the document in.

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اللغة العربية 中文 English Français Русский Español

Previous doc

ODS	E/CN.9/1996/2		
Display PDF File	English(70K) , French(2126.7K) , Russian(137.8K) , Spanish(2426.4K) , Arabic(1602.3K) , Chinese(1942.4K)		
Download File	English(204.3K)(WPF51) , Russian(419.3K)(WPF51) , Chinese(51K)(GWL)		
Title	CONCISE REPORT ON WORLD POPULATION MONITORING, 1996 : REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH : REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL		
Publication date	15/1/1996		
Symbol	E/CN.9/1996/2		
Session/Year	29		
Agenda Items	4		
Subjects	REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH FAMILY PLANNING POPULATION EDUCATION BIRTH CONTROL MATERNAL HEALTH SERVICES SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES AIDS POPULATION POLICY TRAINING PROGRAMMES		
Language Info.	Language	Job Number	Release date

² Examples taken from ODS Help Screen. http://documents.un.org/Help_E.htm#DS_Trunc

Should I use ODS or UNBISNet?

UNBISNet, or the United Nations Bibliographic Information System (<http://unbisnet.un.org/>), is another United Nations document retrieval system that has been free much longer. UNBISNet's coverage consists mainly of documents that are found at the UN Dag Hammarskjöld Library in New York City and extends back to 1979, although new materials are added everyday. Some of these materials, although not all, have full-text online and others may be located at your library or through InterLibrary Loan.

Use UNBISNet if:

- You need to find documents between 1979 and 1993.
- You want to search by author, country of publication, or specific type of document (addresses, calendars, book reviews, handbooks, country studies, etc.).
- You are searching for voting records or speeches. UNBISNet provides more advanced search capabilities for these types of documents.

UNBISNet is available at: <http://unbisnet.un.org/>

When Do I Use Access UN?

Access UN (<http://infoweb.newsbank.com/?db=UNAD>) is a database purchased by the library for campus use. It indexes U.N. documents beginning from 1946 but has little full text.

Use Access UN if:

- You are on the University of Michigan campus
- You want to search the period prior to 1979.

Access UN is available at: <http://infoweb.newsbank.com/?db=UNAD>

Autumn Kladder, Documents Center,
University of Michigan Library
April 11, 2005