

Issue Summary: Security Council Reform

The Security Council is one of the United Nation's oldest committees in the organization. Since 1946, the Security Council has consisted with five permanent nations on the council, and a rotating set of 10 member nations. The rotating set of 10 nations are selected by their geopolitical area. For example, Nigeria, Chad and Rwanda are the three nations represented the African continent on the Security Council.

However, nations inside the U.N. have called for reform about the Security Council. In 1995, the U.N. General assembly seriously contemplated reforms that created a more diplomatic and democratic Security Council (Paul, 1995). Issues, such as veto power, have become a hotly contested item (Fassbender, 1998). The last time voting powers were amended was in 1995 when the requirement for passing a resolution changed from 7 required votes to 9. Other issues include, size of the Security Council, expanding permanent membership, and secrecy and transparency of the organization. (Paul, 1995). The debate according to Yehuda Z. Blum can be summed up as a matter of "contribution" versus "representativeness." Either way, Security Council reform continues to be a hotly contested topic among the General Assembly and Security Council itself.

Further information:

Blum, Y. Z. (2005). Proposals for UN Security Council Reform. *American Journal of International Law*, 632-649. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1602295?seq=3>

Fassbender, B. (1998). *UN Security Council Reform and the Right of Veto: a constitutional perspective* (Vol. 32). Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.

Paul, J. A. (1995). Security Council Reform: Arguments about the Future of the United Nations System. Global Policy Forum.

<http://dspace.africaportal.org/jspui/bitstream/123456789/18535/1/Security%20Council%20Reform.pdf?1>

Chapter V of the United Nations Charter: Security Council.

<http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter5.shtml>

Issue Summary: International Waters

The United Nations recognizes law and regulations of international water based on the 1982 Convention of the Law of the Seas. Features of the updated 1994 Convention developed certain statuses for distances of water that can be claimed by nations. However, the general limit for a nation to extend its borders beyond coast and continental shelf is 200 miles.

Current international water disputes:

Australia and Antarctica: Exclusive Economic Zone. <http://www.ga.gov.au/scientific-topics/geographic-information/dimensions/oceans-and-seas>

China and Vietnam: International Waters and Oil

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/17/oil-rig-china-vietnam-row-south-china-sea>

<http://nationalinterest.org/feature/could-tensions-the-south-china-sea-spark-war-10572>

Norway, Canada, and Russia: A fight for the north pole

<http://metronews.ca/news/world/980914/the-far-north-turf-war-who-really-rules-the-arctic/>

<http://www.nbcnews.com/news/other/canada-risks-tensions-russia-claiming-ownership-north-pole-f2D11720945>

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/12/09/us-arctic-pole-idUSBRE9B811Y20131209>

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea:

http://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/convention_overview_convention.htm

Works Cited