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United Nations Reform: Background and Issues for Congress

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Summary

Since its establishment in 1945, the United Nations (U.N.) has undergone numerous reforms as international stakeholders seek ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the U.N. system. During the past two decades, controversies such as corruption in the Iraq Oil-For-Food Program, allegations of sexual abuse by U.N. peacekeepers, and instances of waste, fraud, and abuse by U.N. staff have focused attention on the need for change and improvement of the United Nations. Many in the international community, including the United States, continue to promote substantive reforms. The 114th Congress may focus on U.N. reform as it considers appropriate levels of U.S. funding to the United Nations and monitors the progress and implementation of ongoing and previously approved reform measures.

Generally, Congress has maintained a significant interest in the overall effectiveness of the United Nations. Some Members are particularly interested in U.N. Secretariat and management reform, with a focus on improving transparency and strengthening accountability and internal oversight. In the past, Congress has enacted legislation that links U.S. funding of the United Nations to specific U.N. reform benchmarks. Supporters of this strategy contend that the United Nations has been slow to implement reforms and that linking payment of U.S. assessments to progress on U.N. reform is the most effective way to motivate member states to efficiently pursue comprehensive reform. Opponents argue that tying U.S. funding to U.N. reform may negatively impact diplomatic relations and could hinder the United States' ability to conduct foreign policy.

In September 2005, heads of U.N. member states met for the World Summit at U.N. Headquarters in New York to discuss strengthening the United Nations through institutional reform. The resulting Summit Outcome Document laid the groundwork for a series of reforms that included enhancing U.N. management structures; strengthening the U.N. Security Council; improving U.N. system coordination and coherence; and creating a new Human Rights Council. Since the Summit, U.N. member states have worked toward implementing these reforms with varied results. Some reforms, such as the creation of the Human Rights Council and improving system-wide coherence, are completed or ongoing. Others reforms, such as Security Council enlargement and changes to management structures and processes, have stalled or not been addressed.

One of the key challenges facing reform advocates is finding common ground among the disparate definitions of reform held by various stakeholders. There is no single definition of U.N. reform, and consequently there is often debate over the scope, appropriateness, and effectiveness of past and current reform initiatives. U.N. member states disagree as to whether some proposed reforms are necessary, as well as how to most effectively implement reforms. Developed countries, for example, support delegating more power to the U.N. Secretary-General to implement management reforms, whereas developing countries fear that giving the Secretary-General more authority may undermine the power of the U.N. General Assembly and therefore the influence of individual countries.

Generally, U.N. reform is achieved by amending the U.N. Charter or through various non-Charter reforms. Charter amendment, which requires approval by two-thirds of the General Assembly and ratification "according to the constitutional processes" of two-thirds of U.N. member states (including the five permanent Security Council members), is rarely used and has been practiced on only a few occasions. Non-Charter reforms—which include General Assembly action or initiatives by the U.N. Secretary-General—are more common and comparatively easier to achieve. This report will be updated as policy changes or congressional actions warrant.

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Introduction

United Nations (U.N.) reform is an ongoing policy issue for the United States, and may continue to be an area of focus during the 114th Congress. As the single largest financial contributor to the U.N. system, the U.S. government has an interest in ensuring the United Nations operates as efficiently and effectively as possible. Congress has the responsibility to appropriate U.S. funds to the United Nations and can impose conditions on payments. On several occasions, it has sought to link U.S. funding of the United Nations to specific reform benchmarks.

Since the establishment of the United Nations in 1945, U.N. member states and past secretaries-general have repeatedly attempted to reform the organization. These reform efforts tend to be cyclical, with member states considering waves of new reform proposals every 5 to 10 years. The reform attempts are often initiated by a member state, groups of member states, and/or the current Secretary-General. They have generally focused on three areas of concern: (1) perceived inefficiencies and lack of accountability in the U.N. Secretariat; (2) duplication and redundancy of U.N. mandates, missions, and/or programs; and (3) evidence of fraud, waste, abuse, and/or mismanagement of U.N. resources.

Proposed reforms often reflect the political, economic, and cultural climate of the time. In the 1950s and 1960s, member states focused on increasing membership on the U.N. Security Council and the U.N. Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to account for growing U.N. membership.[1] In the 1970s, as the economic and political gap between developed and developing countries grew more pronounced, the General Assembly examined structural changes that would help the United Nations address "problems of international economic co-operation."[2] Due in part to pressure from the United States, U.N. reform initiatives in the 1980s and early 1990s addressed financial and structural issues, with a particular focus on decision-making processes related to the U.N. regular budget, which funds core U.N. activities.[3] Since the early 2000s, reform efforts have been driven by a combination of U.N. budgetary and financial challenges, controversy over mismanagement of the Iraq Oil-For-Food Program, perceived ineffectiveness of U.N. human rights mechanisms, and allegations of sexual abuse committed by U.N. staff and peacekeepers, among other issues.

This report examines reform priorities from the perspective of several key actors, including Members of Congress, the Obama Administration, selected member states, the U.N. Secretary-General, and a cross-section of groups tasked with addressing U.N. reform during the past 10 to 15 years. It also discusses congressional actions related to U.N. reform and mechanisms for

[1] U.N. membership grew from 51 countries in 1945, to 114 countries in 1963. Currently, the United Nations has 193 member states. Amendments to the Charter related to increased membership are discussed in the "Mechanics of Implementing Reform" section of this report.

[2] For more information on this and other U.N. reform efforts prior to the 1980s, see "Reforming the United Nations: Lessons from a History in Progress," by Edward C. Luck, *Academic Council on the United Nations System—Occasional Papers Series*, 2003.

[3] In 1986, under pressure from the United States and other industrialized countries, the General Assembly established a high-level group of 18 intergovernmental experts to "review the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning" of the United Nations. The group made 71 recommendations to the General Assembly, including a revised budgetary process that introduced the use of consensus-based budgeting. The group of experts was convened, in part, because of U.S. legislation popularly known as the "Kassebaum-Solomon Amendment," which directed that U.S. contributions to the U.N. regular budget be reduced if countries making the largest financial contributions did not have a more substantial influence in the U.N. budget process. See **Appendix A** for more information on Kassebaum-Solomon and other U.N. reform-related legislation.

implementing reform, as well as possible challenges facing U.S. policymakers as they consider existing and future U.N. reform efforts.

Selected Reform Efforts: 2005-Present

In 2005, U.N. reform efforts gained momentum as heads of state and government met for a World Summit at U.N. Headquarters in New York.[5] The Summit Outcome Document, which was adopted by consensus, laid the foundation for a series of reforms that included improving U.N. management structures; strengthening the Security Council (see **text box**); enhancing U.N. system coordination and coherence; and creating a new Human Rights Council (see **text box**).[6] Since the World Summit, U.N. member states have worked toward implementing these reform initiatives with varied results. Some reforms are stalled or have not been addressed, while others are underway or completed. Selected reform activities include the following:

- **Mandate Review**. The Outcome Document negotiated by member states at the World Summit called for a systematic review of all U.N. mandates five years or older.[7] Many experts were concerned that existing mandates might be duplicative, no longer relevant, or require unnecessary reporting requirements. Since 2005, member states have been reviewing mandates, but progress has stalled because some countries fear that mandates important to them will be discarded.

Strengthening the U.N. Security Council

For several decades, many U.N. member states have increasingly focused on the question of Security Council reform. The Council is the primary U.N. organ dealing with peace and security issues. As such, it has often played a lead role in addressing conflict and other forms of insecurity throughout the world. Some member states, finding themselves committed to what they may consider Council-imposed decisions, believe the entire U.N. membership needs to have a clearer understanding of Council actions and greater access to the work of the Council. Many also believe that the Council membership should be enlarged from 15, a number established in the 1960s, to a number commensurate with the increase in U.N. membership.

Security Council reform and enlargement has been actively discussed within the U.N. General Assembly since 1993, when it established an open-ended working group to address the issue. Over the years, consultations and discussions have continued over various aspects of Council reform, including (1) increases in the number of permanent members; (2) increases in the number of non-permanent members; (3) the status of new permanent members, including extension of the veto to such members; (4) continuation of the veto; or (5) limits on veto use. The Obama Administration has stated that it is open, in principle, to "modest" expansion of both permanent and non-permanent Council members.[4] It maintains that any proposals should be country-specific and follow a step-by-step approach. It also opposes any changes to the current veto structure. In November 2010, President Obama expressed support for India's inclusion as a permanent Security Council member.

[4] Statement by Ambassador Rosemary DiCarlo in the General Assembly Plenary Debate on the Security Council Annual Report and Reform, New York, November 15, 2012.

[5] The Summit convened to review the progress made in the fulfillment of the 2000 Millennium Summit goals and commitments made in other earlier U.N. conferences. The 2000 Millennium Summit was held from September 6-8, 2000, in New York.

[6] U.N. document, A/RES/60/1, *2005 World Summit Outcome*, September 16, 2005.

[7] Mandates are resolutions adopted by members of each of the principal U.N. organs. (The six U.N. organs are the General Assembly, Security Council, Trusteeship Council, Economic and Social Council, International Court of Justice, and Secretariat.) Mandates can be both conceptual and specific; they can establish or interpret international norms, provide policy direction on substantive and/or administrative issues, or request conferences, activities, operations and reporting requirements.

- **Internal Justice Administration**. In 2007, the General Assembly adopted a framework resolution to create a new system of internal justice administration. The previous system was criticized for being "slow, cumbersome, ineffective, and lacking in professionalism."[9] Since the new system became operational in 2009, the Tribunal judges have worked through a backlog of cases.
- **Internal Oversight**. The Summit Outcome Document called for strengthening the U.N. Office of Internal Oversight (OIOS). Experts, however, continue to question OIOS's ability to effectively evaluate U.N. activities in part because it depends on funding from the programs that it audits. Some member states maintain that this lack of operational independence could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest.
- **System-wide Coherence**. To improve coordination and coherence within the U.N. system, in 2007 member states created the "Delivering As One" initiative in eight pilot countries to harmonize U.N. system-wide activities at the country level; and in 2011 they consolidated three existing U.N. entities addressing women's issues into "UN Women," a specialized agency to address gender equality and women's empowerment.

The long-term impact of these and other recent activities remains to be seen. The overall success of these efforts—and any future reform efforts—depends on how effectively the United Nations and its member countries manage and follow through on the implementation of these reforms and how, if at all, they work to correct possible weaknesses or issues that may arise over time.[10]

The U.N. Human Rights Council

In March 2006, the General Assembly adopted a resolution replacing the Commission on Human Rights with a new Human Rights Council. Many governments, including the United States, viewed the Council's establishment as a key component of U.N. reform. The Council was designed to be an improvement over the Commission, which was criticized by many governments and human rights experts when widely perceived human rights abusers were elected as members. Under the George W. Bush Administration, the United States voted against the General Assembly resolution creating the Council and did not run for a seat. It argued that the Council lacked mechanisms for maintaining credible membership.

Since the Council was established, some policymakers have expressed concern with the Council's effectiveness in addressing human rights. Many contend that the Council has focused disproportionately on Israel while failing to address other pressing human rights situations. In mid-2007, for example, members agreed to make the "human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories" a permanent part of the Council's agenda. Israel is the only country singled out in this manner. At the same time, others contend that mechanisms such as the universal periodic review process, which aims to evaluate each member state's fulfillment of its human rights obligations, are a potentially effective means for addressing human rights in various countries. Many supporters are also encouraged by the Council's increased attention to human rights situations in countries such as Syria and Cote d'Ivoire. The Obama Administration has criticized the Council for its focus on Israel, but maintains that it is better for the United States to work from within to improve the Council. The United States was elected as a member in 2009 and 2012.[8]

Congress and U.N. Reform

Generally, Congress supports the United Nations and its overall mission. It authorizes and appropriates U.S. funds to the organization each year and often uses U.N. mechanisms to further U.S. foreign policy objectives.[11] Congress can also be critical of the United Nations—especially

[8] For more information on the Council, see CRS Report RL33608, *The United Nations Human Rights Council: Issues for Congress*, by Luisa Blanchfield.

[9] U.N. document, A/RES/61/261, April 4, 2007.

[10] For more information on U.N. reform activities, see the U.N. Secretariat Department of Management website at http://www.un.org/en/hq/dm/.

[11] For example, Congress has enacted laws supporting U.N. policies and/or requiring that U.N. member states comply with U.N. Security Council resolutions or the directives of other U.N. bodies, such as the General Assembly and Human Rights Council.

when some Members believe that it may not be running as effectively as it could be. In such instances, Congress may use a wide range of legislative tools to influence and direct U.S. policy at the United Nations. Placing financial conditions or limits on U.S. funding to the United Nations, described in more detail below, is a common congressional approach to U.N reform. Other tools may include considering "sense of the Congress" resolutions; holding hearings to investigate U.N. programs or oversee Administration policies; and considering U.S. nominations for U.N. posts.

Palestinian Membership in UNESCO and the United Nations

UNESCO has received significant U.S. and international attention for member states' decision to admit "Palestine" as a member in October 2011. The Obama Administration and many Members of Congress opposed this action, maintaining that Palestinian statehood can only be realized through direct negotiation between Israelis and Palestinians rather than through membership in U.N. entities. From FY2012 through FY2015, the United States has withheld approximately $80 million annually to UNESCO under two laws enacted in the 1990s that prohibit funding to U.N. entities that admit the PLO as a member (§414 of P.L. 101-246), or grant full membership as a state to any organization or group that does not have the internationally recognized attributes of statehood (§410 of P.L. 103-236). In late 2013, the United States lost its vote in the UNESCO General Conference because it did not pay its dues for two consecutive years. The Administration has asked Congress to waive the legislative restrictions prohibiting funding to UNESCO, and has stated that it does not intend to withdraw from the organization.[12]

Palestinian efforts to achieve UNESCO membership are part of broader efforts by PLO Chairman and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas to achieve international recognition for Palestinian statehood. On November 29, 2012, the U.N. General Assembly voted to change Palestine's observer status from "observer entity" to "non-member observer state" by a vote of 138 in favor, 9 against (including the United States), and 41 abstaining. This change in observer status is a largely symbolic act. Although Palestine has the term "state" in its current designation, it is not a U.N. member. As such, it does not have the right to vote or call for a vote in the General Assembly. Palestine has maintained many of the capacities it had as an observer entity—including participation in Assembly debates and the ability to co-sponsor draft resolutions and decisions related to proceedings on Palestinian and Middle East issues.[13]

U.S. Funding as a Mechanism for U.N. Reform

In the past, Congress has used its authority to limit U.S. funds to the United Nations as a mechanism for influencing U.N. policy.[14] In some cases, Congress withheld a proportionate share of funding for U.N. programs and policies of which it did not approve. It has, for instance, withheld funds from regular budget programs, including the U.N. Special Unit on Palestinian Rights and the Preparatory Commission for the Law of the Sea. Currently, the only proportionate U.S. withholding from the regular budget is for some activities and programs related to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) or entities associated with it.[15] Since FY2012, the United States withheld funding from the U.N. Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) due to member states' October 2011 decision to admit "Palestine" as a member (see **text box**).

[12] For more information, see CRS Report R42999, *The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)*, by Luisa Blanchfield and Marjorie Ann Browne.

[13] For more information, see CRS Report RL34074, *The Palestinians: Background and U.S. Relations*, by Jim Zanotti.

[14] For a more detailed examination of U.S. funding of the United Nations, see CRS Report RL33611, *United Nations System Funding: Congressional Issues*, by Marjorie Ann Browne.

[15] Section 307 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (P.L. 87-195; 22 U.S.C. 2227), as amended.

The overall impact of withholding a proportionate share of assessed payments depends on the origin of the program's funding. If a program is funded by the U.N. regular budget[16] and the United States withholds a proportionate share of its normal contributions, the cost of the program will most likely be covered by surplus regular budget funds. Some U.N. programs are funded from several budgets that may include the U.N. regular budget, specialized agency budgets, and separate conference and administrative budgets. Because of this, it may be more difficult for U.S. proportionate withholdings to have a significant impact because the program's funding comes from several sources. In such cases, a U.S. withholding would have little or no immediate impact on the program's operation or funding levels. If the United States withholds funds from a program funded primarily by member state contributions, however, the impact of the United States withholding or suspending contributions could be greater.

Recent Enacted and Proposed U.N. Reform Legislation

In recent years, Members of Congress have sought to tie U.S. funding to U.N. reform, with a particular interest in improving U.N. transparency and management. Two examples of enacted and proposed legislation follow.

Enacted. Section 7048 of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2015 (Division J of P.L. 113-235; the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2015) states that the United States shall withhold 15% of its contributions to any U.N. agency if the Secretary of State determines that the agency is not taking steps to (a) publish regular financial and programmatic audits of the agency on a publicly available website and provide the U.S. government with necessary access to such audits; and (b) implement best practices for protecting whistleblowers from retaliation. The Secretary of State may waive these restrictions if it is determined that doing so is in the best interest of the United States. The conditions were also included in previous years' appropriations. The Administration has not withheld funding for any U.N. entities under this legislation.

Proposed. In October 2011, the House Foreign Affairs Committee (HFAC) reported out H.R. 2829, the United Nations Transparency, Accountability, and Reform Act of 2011, which (1) supported shifting the funding mechanism for the U.N. regular budget from assessed to voluntary contributions, and (2) tied U.S. contributions the United Nations to specific reform benchmarks. (Similar versions of this act, S. 1313 and H.R. 3155, were introduced in the 113th Congress.) The Obama Administration stated that it had some "constitutional concerns" with the bill, contending that "numerous provisions … would interfere with the President's conduct of diplomacy by purporting to declare 'policy' of the United States, or by purporting to direct United State diplomats to use their 'voice' or 'vote' to advance certain positions, in international negotiations. The Constitution commits to the President the responsibility for formulating the policy of the United States with respect to international bodies."[17]

In addition to withholding a proportionate share of U.S. funding, Congress may consider enacting legislation decreasing or increasing U.S. assessment levels or linking payment of U.S. arrears to policies it favors. In October 1993, for example, Congress directed that the U.S. payments of peacekeeping assessments be capped at 25% (lower than the assessment level set by the United Nations).[18] Congress has also used this strategy to further its U.N. reform policies. Enacted legislation such as the Helms-Biden Agreement linked U.S. assessment levels and the payment of U.S. arrears to reform benchmarks (see **Appendix A** for more information on legislation). As noted in the previous **text box**, some current Members of Congress have proposed shifting U.S. funding from assessed to voluntary contributions.

[16] The U.N. regular budget funds core U.N. activities for the General Assembly, Security Council, and other U.N. bodies. It also supports human rights-related activities; staffing and administration at U.N. headquarters, funding and staffing for international conferences, and special political missions, among other things.

[17] October 21, 2011 letter from Ronald Weich, Assistant Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice, to then-HFAC Chairperson Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen.

[18] Foreign Affairs Authorization Act for FY1994 and 1995 (P.L. 103-236), April 30, 1994.

Perspectives on Linking U.S. Funding to U.N. Reform

Opponents of linking U.S. funding to progress on U.N. reform are concerned that doing so may weaken U.S. influence at the United Nations, thereby undercutting the United States' ability to conduct diplomacy and make foreign policy decisions.[19] Some argue that withholding U.S. assessed payments to the United Nations infringes on U.S. treaty obligations and alienates other U.N. member states. Opponents also note that withholding U.S. funds could have an impact on diplomatic relations outside of the U.N. system. Additionally, some contend that U.N. reform legislation proposals may be unrealistic because the scope and depth of reforms required by the legislation cannot be adequately achieved in the proposed time frames.[20]

Supporters of linking U.S. funding to specific reforms argue that the United States should use its position as the largest U.N. financial contributor to push for the implementation of policies that lead to comprehensive reform. They note that despite diplomatic and political pressures from many countries, the United Nations has been slow to implement substantive reform. Advocates also argue that some previously implemented reforms have proved to be ineffective. They believe that tying U.S. funding to U.N. reform may motivate countries to find common ground on divisive issues. They also emphasize that past legislation that threatened to cut off U.S. funding of the United Nations (such as the Kassebaum-Solomon amendment, described in **Appendix A**) was effective, and led to substantive changes in U.N. operations and programs.

Possible Instruments for Furthering U.S. Reform Policy

Congress's influence over U.S. funding of the United Nations is a powerful tool for furthering U.S. reform policy at the United Nations. However, there may be other strategies for Congress to consider when advocating its reform agenda. These strategies have been widely used by many past and current Members of Congress and Administrations, and include, but are not limited to:

- **Resolutions**—Members of Congress may propose and/or enact simple or concurrent resolutions expressing an opinion, fact, or principle in one or both chambers of Congress. Some Members have used these resolutions to voice an opinion about U.S. policy in the United Nations/or the United Nations itself.
- **Working with the U.N. Secretary-General**—Some previous and current Members of Congress and Administrations have worked to earn the support of U.N. secretaries-general to help advocate their positions. Developing a relationship with the chief administrative officer of the United Nations can be valuable during some negotiations, when the Secretary-General can act as a bridge among member states that disagree on issues. U.S. citizens have also held key U.N. reform-related posts at the United Nations, which some Members of Congress believe may play a role in furthering U.S. reform policy interests.[21]

[19] Additionally, some observers contend that if the United States were to delay or stop payment of its arrears, it may risk losing its vote in the General Assembly—a generally undesirable outcome for many Members of Congress and the Administration. In 1999, for example, the United States came very close to losing its General Assembly vote. Under Article 19 of the U.N. Charter, a U.N. member state with arrears equaling or exceeding the member state's assessments for the two preceding years will have no vote in the General Assembly.

[20] "The Right Approach to Achieving U.N. Reform," Better World Campaign, *Better World Campaign Fact Sheet*.

[21] Most recently, Christopher Burnham served as U.N. Under-Secretary for Management. He stepped down before Secretary-General Annan's term ended in 2007. Prior to Christopher Burnham, the post was held by Catherine Bertini, also a U.S. citizen. The current Under-Secretary-General for Management is Yukio Takasu of Japan.

- **Collaborating with Other U.N. Member States**—The United States may wish to continue to reach out to other U.N. member states to build consensus and form partnerships on reform policies, either within the framework of the United Nations or bilaterally.[22] Observers have noted that U.S. support for certain U.N. reform initiatives can be a liability because some member states may view U.S. support as self-serving. In these cases, the United States may consider encouraging like-minded countries to advocate its reform agenda.
- **Identifying Key Priorities**—The United States may wish to focus on a small number of reform priorities and pursue them vigorously in both multilateral and bilateral fora. It may also consider compromising with other member states on U.N. reform issues that it has identified as lesser priorities.

Many experts have emphasized that U.N. reform is an ongoing process rather than a singular event. With this in mind, the 114th Congress may wish to continue monitoring the implementation and overall progress of ongoing reform initiatives. It may also consider future reforms proposed by member states and the Administration, as well as by Members of Congress or the Secretary-General.

Administration Policies

The United States generally supports the mission and mandate of the United Nations. It played a key role in establishing the United Nations in 1945, and serves as one of five permanent members of the Security Council. Some Administrations have been critical of the United Nations, however, and have advocated sweeping reform of the organization.

Obama Administration

Since President Obama took office, his Administration has focused on "re-engaging" with the United Nations.[23] The Administration elevated the status of the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations to a Cabinet-level position that reports directly to the President.[24] It also paid a significant portion of U.S. arrears, and decided to run for a seat on the U.N. Human Rights Council. Many of the Administration's U.N. reform priorities focus on management issues—particularly those related to budget processes and transparency. In various statements and documents, the Administration has highlighted the following areas of priority:

[22] In the 1970s and 1980s, for example, the "Geneva Group" was formed to encourage dialogue and cooperation among like-minded U.N. member states. It was composed mostly of Western countries that were the United Nations' largest financial contributors. The group focused mainly on financial and budgetary issues, and some contend it was instrumental in bringing about budgetary restraint in some of the U.N. specialized agencies. For more information, see *The United States and Multilateral Institutions,* edited by Margaret P. Karns and Karen A. Mingst, Unwin Hyman Publishers, 1990, p. 313; and *United Nations: Law, Policies and Practice,* edited by Rudiger Wolfrum, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1995, pp. 70-71.

[23] See (1) Remarks by the President to the United Nations General Assembly, September 23, 2009, White House Press Office, and (2) Remarks by Ambassador Esther Brimmer delivered at the Brookings Institution, "Revitalizing the United Nations and Multilateral Cooperation: The Obama Administration's Progress," February 1, 2011.

[24] During the George W. Bush Administration, the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations reported to the Secretary of State. During the Clinton Administration, the Permanent Representative reported to the President.

- **enforcing budget discipline** by taking cost-saving measures such as eliminating vacant U.N. posts, freezing U.N. staff salaries, and exploring alternate budget practices;
- **improving transparency and accountability** by strengthening the effectiveness of U.N. bodies charged with evaluating performance and investigating abuses, including the Ethics Office, the Independent Audit Advisory Committee, the Board of Auditors, and the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS);
- **reforming human resources practices** to create a more mobile and merit-based workforce by further streamlining U.N. staff contracting and conditions of service across the U.N. system; and
- **overhauling day-to-day business practices** such as upgrading information technology, and improving procurement procedures, accounting procedures, and budgeting processes.[25]

The Obama Administration has also implemented initiatives within the State Department aimed at evaluating and improving U.N. system transparency and effectiveness. It has continued to support the U.N. Transparency and Accountability Initiative (UNTAI), a Bush Administration program created by the U.S. Mission to the United Nations that tracks the adoption of management reforms by U.N. funds and programs.[26] Additionally, in September 2010, then-Assistant Secretary for International Organization Affairs (IO) Esther Brimmer announced that the IO Bureau hired an advisor on effectiveness, whose role is to "systematically review the effectiveness of international organizations," including U.N. entities.[27]

The Administration has generally resisted legislation tying U.S. contributions to specific U.N. reforms due to concerns that it may interfere with the President's ability to conduct diplomacy. In an April 2011 statement before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, then-U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations Susan Rice remarked that failing to pay U.N. dues "undermines [U.S.] credibility and influence [in the United Nations]—not just on reform, but on a range of U.S. national security policies."[28]

George W. Bush Administration

The George W. Bush Administration was an active participant in U.N. reform efforts. It identified several key priorities that it believed would help the United Nations improve its effectiveness,

[25] Drawn from statements by Administration officials, including statement of then Ambassador Susan E. Rice to the House Foreign Affairs Committee for a hearing entitled, "U.S. Policy Toward the United Nations," April 7, 2011; U.S. Mission to the United Nations, Statement on Transparency Initiatives at the U.N. by then-Ambassador Torsella, September 14, 2011; State Department Fact Sheet, Advancing U.S. Interests at the United Nations, September 25, 2012; State Department Fact Sheet: Conclusion of the 67th General Assembly Session of the Fifth Committee, December 28, 2012; and Remarks by Ambassador Samantha Power, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, at the Fifth Committee on the Final Budget Report for 2012-2013, December 16, 2013.

[26] In 2011, the Obama Administration launched the second phase of UNTAI (UNTAI-II) to identify areas where member states can increase oversight and accountability to ensure their contributions are used efficiently and effectively.

[27] The effectiveness advisor also promotes "rigorous evaluation standards that the organizations themselves can take up, to expand their own capacity for self-improvement." See Remarks by then-Assistant Secretary Brimmer to the American Foreign Service Association, "The Role and Relevance of Multilateral Diplomacy in U.S. Foreign Policy," January 11, 2011.

[28] Statement of then-Ambassador Susan E. Rice to the House Foreign Affairs Committee for a hearing entitled "U.S. Policy Toward the United Nations," April 7, 2011.

including (1) management, budget, and secretariat reform; (2) increased oversight and accountability; (3) review of all U.N. mandates and missions; and (4) fiscal discipline.

Prior to and after the adoption of the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, the Bush Administration attempted to work with like-minded countries and the U.N. Secretary-General to move a reform agenda forward. Some reform initiatives supported by President Bush, particularly management and oversight reforms, were not approved or considered by the General Assembly. Administration officials expressed dissatisfaction with the overall effectiveness of some previously implemented reforms, as well as the pace of reform efforts. Nevertheless, the Administration did not support mandatory withholding of U.S. payments to the United Nations.

Reform Perspectives and Priorities

A significant challenge for advocates of U.N. reform is finding common ground among the disparate definitions of reform held by various stakeholders. There is no common definition of U.N. reform and, as a result, there is often debate over the scope, appropriateness, and effectiveness of past and current reform initiatives. One method for determining how a stakeholder defines U.N. reform may be to identify policy priorities in the U.N. reform debate. In some cases, common objectives among stakeholders have translated into substantive reform policy, though shared goals do not always guarantee successful outcomes.

The Secretary-General

On December 14, 2006, Ban Ki-moon of South Korea took the oath of office to succeed outgoing U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan. He was appointed to a second five-year term on June 21, 2011, and since his first term has stated that U.N. reform is one of his top priorities. He maintains that progress needs to be made in three areas: (1) improving what and how the United Nations delivers on the ground, (2) doing more with what the United Nations has, and (3) increasing accountability. During his tenure, Ban's reform efforts have included restructuring the Department of Field Support and the Department of Disarmament Affairs; establishing a "Change Management Team"[29] to address management issues and future reform efforts; and proposals to improve staff mobility.

The extent and effectiveness of Ban's reform efforts remain to be seen. On the one hand, some experts and policymakers argue that Ban is not doing enough to press member states for comprehensive reform or to institute reforms in the Secretariat. On the other hand, some emphasize that like previous Secretaries-General, Ban's success in achieving reform is limited by the responsibilities of his office. Although the Secretary-General—as the "chief administrative officer" of the United Nations—can facilitate and advocate reform, the power to implement wide-ranging and comprehensive change lies primarily with U.N. member states. Many of these states are concerned that reform activities initiated by the Secretary-General may undermine their authority. For example, the Secretary-General's aforementioned Change Management Team, which was supported by the United States, has faced opposition from many developing countries due to such concerns.[30]

[29] Ban appointed Assistant Secretary-General Atul Khare of India to lead the Change Management Team (CMT) in May 2011. The CMT published its recommendations in December 2011 at http://www.un.org/sg/pdf/the-change-plan.pdf.

[30] For an overview of member state perspectives on this issue, see U.N. Department of Public Information document GA/11222, April 9, 2012. Also see U.S. Mission to the United Nations, "Statement by Ambassador Joseph Torsella,

Developed and Developing Countries

Past reform debates in the U.N. General Assembly and its committees have drawn attention to fundamental differences that exist among some member states, particularly developing countries (represented primarily by the Group of 77),[31] and developed countries (particularly the United States, Japan, and members of the European Union). Developed countries, which account for the majority of assessed contributions to the U.N. regular budget, tend to focus on the United Nations' role in maintaining international peace and security and the overall efficiency of the organization. They would like the Secretary-General to have greater flexibility and authority to implement reforms, specifically those related to oversight and human resources. Generally, they make significantly larger financial contributions to the U.N. system than developing countries and therefore want to ensure that their funds are used in ways they perceive as most effective. Conversely, developing countries, which constitute the largest U.N. voting bloc, often focus on development-oriented policies. They generally object to reforms that would enhance the power of the Secretary-General and decrease the power of the General Assembly and its Fifth Committee (which addresses budget and administrative issues). In the past, some developing countries have expressed concern that reform initiatives might drain resources from development programs. They have also suggested that reforms proposed by the Secretary-General tend to be influenced by countries that are the largest financial contributors to the United Nations.

Many observers are concerned that the aforementioned difference in reform philosophy has created deadlocks in the General Assembly and significantly delayed the implementation of management and budget reforms. Such differences were highlighted in December 2005 when a group of U.N. member states, led primarily by developed countries such as the United States and Japan, sought to link the U.N. budget to progress on management reforms. The countries placed a spending cap of $950 million (about six months of U.N. spending) on the two-year, $3.6 billion budget in hopes that the General Assembly would adopt a series of management and budget reform measures proposed by then-Secretary-General Annan. On May 8, 2006, the General Assembly's Fifth Committee bypassed the traditional practice of budget-by-consensus and voted on a resolution, supported by the G-77, which approved some reforms but delayed the consideration of several others. The developed nations that imposed the budget cap were disappointed with the outcome. They eventually lifted the budget cap in June 2006 because they were unwilling to cause a shutdown of the United Nations.[32]

U.N. Reform-Related Commissions, Task Forces, and Groups

Since the United Nations was established in 1945, many commissions, panels, committees, and task forces (hereinafter referred to collectively as "groups") have been created to examine ways to improve the United Nations.[33] These groups were established by a variety of stakeholders, including past secretaries-general, individual member states, groups of member states, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, and others. The following sections address the

U.S. Representative for U.N. Management and Reform, on Action Taken on Fifth Committee Resolutions from the First Resumed Session of the 66th GA, General Assembly," April 9, 2012.

[31] Comprised of 134 members, the Group of 77 of (G-77) is the largest intergovernmental organization of developing countries in the United Nations.

[32] On July 7, 2006, the General Assembly approved the reforms recommended by the Fifth Committee. See U.N. document, A/RES/60/283, July 7, 2006.

[33] For a discussion on the effectiveness of various U.N. reform groups, see keynote speech at University of Waterloo made by Edward C. Luck, Director of the Center on International Organization at Columbia University, "U.N. Reform Commissions: Is Anyone Listening?" May 16, 2002.

findings of a cross-section of these groups during the past 15 years—the Volcker Commission, the U.S. Institute of Peace U.N. Reform Task Force, and then-Secretary-General Kofi Annan's 2005 report, *In Larger Freedom: Toward Development, Security, and Human Rights for All.*

Though the circumstances and mandates for each group are different, they made similar recommendations for improving the United Nations. Notably, each group highlighted the need for enhanced internal oversight and Secretariat reform, including staff buyouts and enhanced financial disclosure requirements. The groups also emphasized the need for overall streamlining and consolidation of the U.N. system (see **0** for a side-by-side comparison of the recommendations).

The Volcker Commission

In April 2004, then-Secretary-General Annan, with the endorsement of the U.N. Security Council, appointed an independent high-level commission to inquire into corruption in the U.N.-led Iraq Oil-for-Food Program.[34] The commission, led by former U.S. Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker, concluded that the failures of the Oil-For-Food Program were evidence of a greater need for "fundamental and wide-ranging administrative reform" in the United Nations.[35] The commission recommended establishing an Independent Oversight Board to review U.N. auditing, accounting, and budgeting activities; creating the position of Chief Operating Officer to oversee administrative matters such as personnel and planning practices; providing fair compensation to third parties involved in U.N. programs (while ensuring that the compensation does not lead to inappropriate profit); and expanding financial disclosure requirements to cover a variety of U.N. staff, including those working on procurement.

U.S. Institute of Peace U.N. Reform Task Force

In December 2004, Congress directed the U.S. Institute of Peace to create a bipartisan task force to examine ways to improve the United Nations so that it is better equipped to meet modern-day security and human rights challenges.[36] Congress appropriated $1.5 million to the task force and required that it submit a report on its findings to the House Committee on Appropriations.[37] The task force identified improving internal oversight as its single most important reform recommendation. It supported the creation of an independent oversight board to direct the budget and activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS). It also recommended several

[34] U.N. document, A/RES/1538, April 21, 2004. The committee was chaired by Paul Volcker and included Professor Mark Peith of Switzerland, an expert on money laundering from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); and Justice Richard Goldstone of South Africa, a former prosecutor with the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. The commission's final report was released on October 27, 2005.

[35] "Briefing by Paul A. Volcker Chairman of the Independent Inquiry Committee into the U.N. Oil-For-Food Program for the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the U.S. Senate," Washington, DC, October 31, 2005.

[36] Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2005 (P.L. 108-447, December 8, 2004). In the report accompanying the act, conferees stated that they were "deeply troubled by the inaction of the United Nations on many fronts, especially in regard to the genocide in Darfur, Sudan and the allegations of corruption regarding the United Nations Oil-For-Food Program." Conferees directed that the task force should include experts from the American Enterprise Institute, Brookings Institution, Council on Foreign Relations, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Hoover Institution, and the Heritage Foundation.

[37] The Task Force was co-chaired by former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich and former Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell, and released its first report, *American Interests and U.N. Reform* in June 2005. Following the 2005 U.N. World Summit in New York, the Task Force released an updated report entitled, *The Imperative for Action,* in December 2005.

management reforms, including establishing the position of Chief Operating Officer, creating a U.N. Ethics Office, and enhancing whistle-blower protection. It supported broadening the U.N. staff financial disclosure policy, and recommended the review of all U.N. mandates five years or older, as well as the incorporation of sunset clauses into all new mandates. The task force supported incorporating results-based budgeting into the U.N. system, and a one-time buyout for all unwanted or unneeded staff. It recommended the creation of a new U.N. Human Rights Council to replace the discredited Commission on Human Rights, but was unable to come to consensus on Security Council reform.

Secretary-General Annan's Report, *In Larger Freedom*

On March 21, 2005, then-Secretary-General Annan released his report, *In Larger Freedom*, in response to the findings of the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change.[38] The report was presented to member states as a starting point for discussion at the 2005 U.N. World Summit, and included the following management reform recommendations:

- the review of all U.N. mandates over five years old;
- a one-time staff-buyout to ensure U.N. Secretariat staff meets current needs;
- the establishment of a Cabinet-style decision-making body in the Secretariat to improve management and policy activities;
- the review of all budget and human resource operations; and
- a comprehensive review of Office of Internal Oversight Services to examine ways to enhance its authority and effectiveness.

In addition, Secretary-General Annan proposed a broad range of institutional and programmatic reforms, including modifying the composition of the U.N. Security Council so that it more adequately reflects current political realities, and replacing the Commission on Human Rights with a new Human Rights Council. Annan also recommended streamlining the General Assembly agenda and committee structure so that the Assembly can increase the speed of its decision-making and react more swiftly and efficiently to events as they occur.

Mechanics of Implementing Reform

Previous and current U.N. reform initiatives encompass an array of organizational issues that may require different processes for implementation. These reforms might be achieved by amending the U.N. Charter or through various non-Charter reforms. Charter amendment is a rarely used practice and has only occurred on three occasions. Non-Charter reforms are more common and comparatively easier to achieve.

[38] The 2005 World Summit Outcome Document called on the Secretary-General to improve U.N. system-wide coherence and coordination by "strengthening linkages" between the U.N. system's normative work and its operational activities. Accordingly, in February 2006, the Secretary-General announced the creation of a High-Level Panel on System-wide Coherence to examine how the U.N. system can work more effectively, especially in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance, and the environment. The panel's final report emphasized the overall value and progress of the United Nations, but also noted that without substantial reforms the United Nations will be "unable to deliver on its promises and maintain its legitimate position at the heart of the multilateral system."

Amending the U.N. Charter

Articles 108 and 109 of the U.N. Charter provide for potential changes to the document. Article 108 states that a proposed Charter amendment must be approved by two-thirds of the full General Assembly, and be ratified "according to the constitutional processes" of two-thirds of U.N. member states, including all permanent members of the Security Council.[39] The Charter was first amended in 1963 to increase U.N. Security Council membership from 11 to 15 members, and to increase the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) membership from 18 to 27. It was last amended in 1973, when ECOSOC membership increased from 27 to 54.[40] Examples of possible reform initiatives that might involve amending the U.N. Charter include, but are not limited to, increasing permanent and/or non-permanent Security Council membership; increasing membership on ECOSOC; and adding or removing a principal organ.[41]

Article 109 of the Charter allows for a convening of a General Conference of U.N. members with the purpose of "reviewing the present Charter." The date and place of the conference would be determined by a two-thirds vote in the General Assembly, and an affirmative vote from any nine Security Council members. Potential revisions to the Charter would be adopted at the conference by a two-thirds vote (with each country having one vote), and take effect when ratified by the governments of two-thirds of U.N. member states. A Charter review conference has never been held.

Non-Charter Reform Process

Since 1945, the General Assembly has authorized reforms of its own processes and procedures—as well as those of the Secretariat—without Charter amendment. The General Assembly has established various fora for discussing reform issues, including a Committee on the Charter of the United Nations[42] and a Working Group on the Security Council.[43] The General Assembly has also implemented reforms on its own by adopting proposals introduced by member states or the Secretary-General.[44] The Secretary-General may also institute reform in his capacity as chief administrative officer, as well as make administrative decisions regarding the organization of some U.N. departments. Secretary-General Ban, for example, restructured the Departments of

[39] Article 108 of the U.N. Charter states, "Amendments to the present Charter shall come into force for all Members of the United Nations when they have been adopted by a vote of two-thirds of the members of the General Assembly and ratified in accordance with their respective constitutional processes by two thirds of the members of the United Nations, including all the permanent members of the Security Council."

[40] Simma, Bruno, *The Charter of the United Nations: A Commentary*. Second Edition, Vol. II. New York, Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 1367-1357.

[41] Principal organs of the United Nations include the Trusteeship Council (TC); Security Council; General Assembly; Economic and Social Council; International Court of Justice; and the Secretariat. There is an ongoing effort to abolish the TC, a system that was designed to administer and supervise U.N. trust territories. The TC suspended its operations on November 1, 1994, with the independence of its last trust territory, Palau.

[42] The "Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization," was established in 1974 to consider "any specific proposals that Governments might make with a view to enhancing the ability of the U.N. to achieve its purposes," as well as "suggestions for the more effective functioning of the U.N. that might not require amendments to the Charter." The committee also makes recommendations for possible Charter amendments. Most recently, in 1995 it proposed an amendment to delete "enemy state" clauses in the Charter.

[43] The "Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council," was established in 1993.

[44] For example, in March 2006 the Assembly negotiated and approved a resolution replacing the previous U.N. Commission on Human Rights with a new Human Rights Council.

Field Support and Disarmament Affairs and established a Change Management Team to consider possible future reform efforts. Other non-Charter reforms have included the establishment of consensus-based budgeting in 1986; the creation of an Office of Strategic Planning in the Secretariat authorized by Secretary-General Annan in 1997; and the establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission by the Security Council and General Assembly in 2006.[45]

Looking Ahead: Possible Challenges to Reform

Achieving meaningful and comprehensive U.N. reform is a significant and ongoing challenge for U.N. member states. The 114th Congress may wish to take possible reform obstacles into account when considering legislation that exercises oversight or supports a reform agenda.

National Self-Interest and Differing Reform Perspectives

Each U.N. member state has its own political agenda and foreign policy goals, and may also have its own definition of U.N. reform. As a result, member states often hold differing views on when reform is necessary, how best to implement reform, and how to measure the success or failure of a given reform initiative. In some cases, failure to reach consensus can lead to significant delay, or failure, of certain reform initiatives. Some member states package their policy priorities as U.N. reform to further their own policy goals. This can cause distrust among member states as countries question whether reform proposals by other member states are based on self-interest or a genuine desire to improve the U.N. system.

Competing Priorities

Some observers cite the inability of U.N. member states or secretaries-general to effectively prioritize reform initiatives as an obstacle to U.N. reform. When Secretary-General Annan presented reform proposals in 2005, for example, he requested that they be adopted by the General Assembly not in increments, but as a package of reforms.[46] Instead of considering a large series of reform proposals, some observers argue that member states should select only a few reform priorities and work toward their adoption and implementation. Others contend that the most efficient way to achieve reform may be for member states first to adopt reform initiatives they can agree to and then gradually work toward tackling the more divisive and complicated reform issues.

Organizational Structure and Bureaucracy

The United Nations is a highly complex and decentralized organization, and therefore may be slow to consider or implement potential reforms. Some argue that there is a "culture of inaction"[47] in the United Nations, and that U.N. managers and staff are resistant to the implementation of new programs, changes to existing programs, and modifications to staffing and personnel policies. Many contend that prospective and agreed-to reforms lack clear plans for implementation, including deadlines and cost estimates. They stress that this overall lack of

[45] An example of a possible non-Charter reform could be the redistribution of regional seats on the Security Council or ECOSOC. For further discussion on possible non-Charter reforms, see article by Louis B. Sohn, "Important Improvements in the Functioning of the Principal Organs of the United Nations that Can be Made Without Charter Revision,*" American Journal of International Law,* October 1997.

[46] "The Secretary-General's Statement to the General Assembly," New York, March 21, 2005.

[47] "Annan's 'Culture of Inaction.'" *The Chicago Tribune,* December 12, 2006.

planning may affect the progress and ultimate success of reforms already implemented, as well as those reforms currently being considered by the General Assembly. Some also emphasize that without proper implementation plans and follow-up, U.N. member states may be unable to adequately gauge the overall effectiveness of reforms.

Limited Resources

Many observers note that a significant challenge for U.N. reform efforts may be the effective implementation of reforms within the current U.N. budget. Some reform initiatives are established by member states to operate "within existing resources." Many argue that the existing U.N. budget limits may not be able to support all of the reform initiatives currently being considered. Some member states, including the United States, however, contend that money saved from other reforms could create a funding source for further reforms and/or the creation of new U.N. programs or bodies.

External Influences

The complex relationships that exist among member states outside of the U.N. system may be another challenge affecting U.N. reform efforts. These relationships are entirely independent of the United Nations but can affect how countries work together within the U.N. framework to achieve reform objectives. Military conflict, religious and ethnic differences, political conflict, trade and economic issues, and geography can all potentially impact reform priorities and cooperation among U.N. member states.

Appendix A. Selected Reform Legislation

When considering U.N. reform issues, Congress may wish to explore the nature and effectiveness of past legislative approaches and the extent to which they may have influenced the adoption of reform measures at the United Nations. There is some evidence that legislation such as the Kassebaum-Solomon Amendment and the Helms-Biden Agreement may have led, either directly or indirectly, to substantive changes in U.N. policies. The following sections highlight selected reform legislation from 1986 to the present and note any subsequent changes to internal U.N. policy.

Kassebaum-Solomon Amendment (1986-1987)[48]

In the mid-1980s, some Members of Congress expressed concern that U.S. influence over the U.N. budget was not proportionate to its rate of assessment. In 1986 Congress passed legislation, popularly known as the "Kassebaum-Solomon amendment," which required that the U.S. assessed contribution to the U.N. regular budget be reduced to 20% unless the United Nations gave major U.N. financial contributors a greater say in the budget process.[49] Subsequently, in 1986 the General Assembly adopted a new budget and planning process that incorporated consensus-based budgeting as a decision-making mechanism, thus giving member states with higher assessment levels a potentially greater voice in the budget process.

U.N. Office of Internal Oversight Services (1993)

In the early 1990s, some Members of Congress and the Administration were concerned with the apparent lack of oversight and accountability within the U.N. system. In 1993, as part of the FY1994 State Department Appropriations Act, Congress directed that 10% of U.S. assessed contributions to the U.N. regular budget be withheld until the Secretary of State certified to Congress that "the United Nations has established an independent office with responsibilities and powers substantially similar to offices of Inspectors General Act of 1978."[50] On July 29, 1994, the U.N. General Assembly established the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) which reports directly to the Secretary-General and provides "internal auditing, investigation, inspection, programme monitoring, evaluation and consulting services to all U.N. activities under the Secretary-General's authority."[51]

Helms-Biden Agreement (1999)

In the late 1990s, Congress and the Administration negotiated and agreed to legislation that would further U.S. reform policy at the United Nations. The Helms-Biden bill authorized payment of some U.S. arrears if specific reform benchmarks were met and certified to Congress by the Secretary of State.[52] Under the terms of Helms-Biden, the United States agreed to (1) pay $819

[48] For a more detailed account of the Kassebaum-Solomon Provisions, see CRS Report RL33611, *United Nations System Funding: Congressional Issues*, by Marjorie Ann Browne.

[49] Foreign Relations Authorization Act, FY1986 and 1987 (H.R. 2068, P.L. 99-93), Section 143, August 16, 1985.

[50] U.S. Department of State Appropriations Act, 1994 (H.R. 2519, P.L. 103-121), October 27, 1993.

[51] More information on OIOS is available at http://www.un.org/depts/oios/. See U.N. document, A/RES/48/218 B, August 12, 1994, for a detailed description of its mandate.

[52] The Helms-Biden Agreement was incorporated into the Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY2000 (H.R. 3194, P.L. 106-113), November 19, 1999.

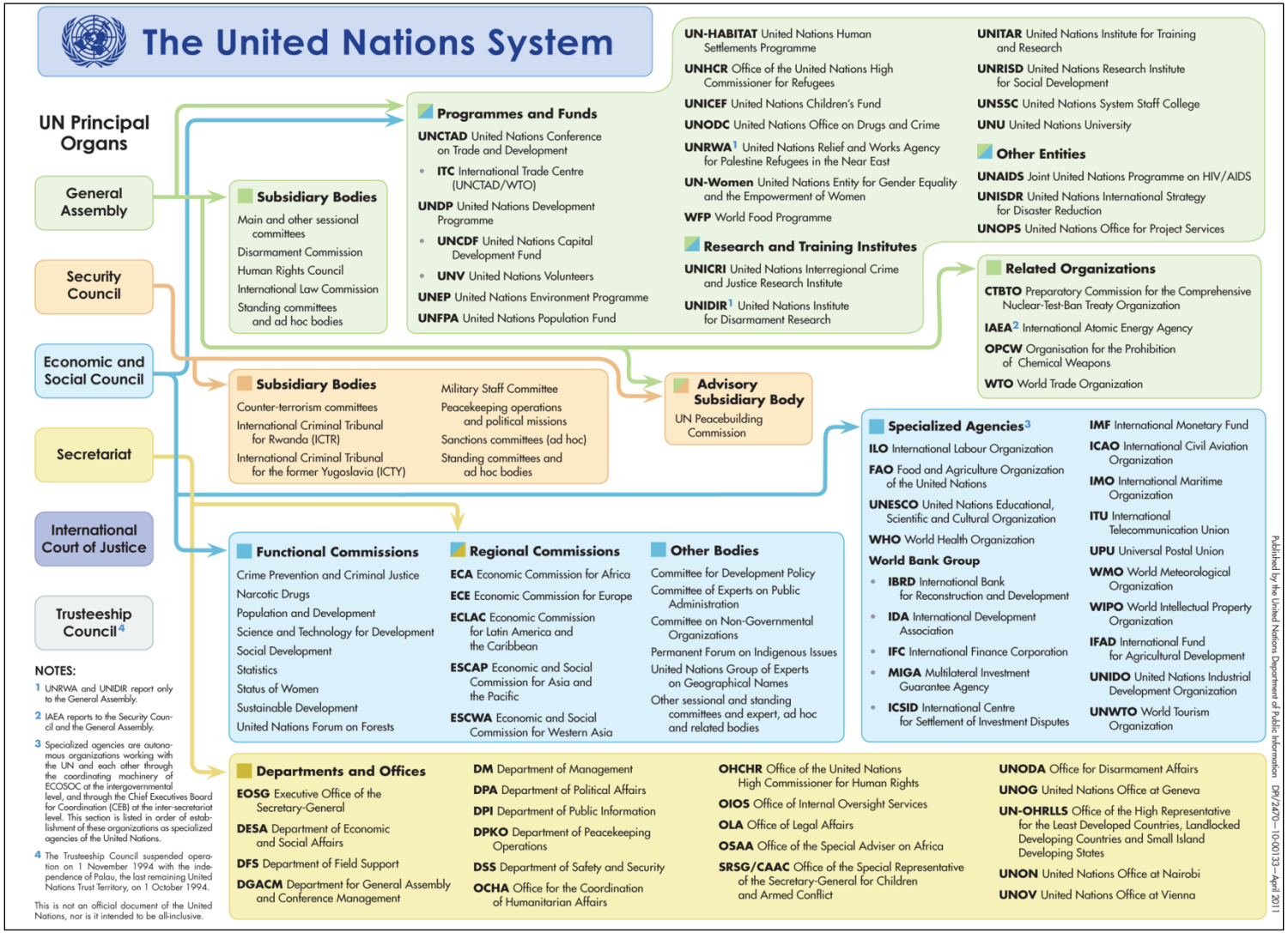
million in arrearages over fiscal years 1998, 1999, and 2000; and (2) forgive $107 million owed to the United States by the United Nations in peacekeeping costs if the United Nations applied the $107 million to U.S. peacekeeping arrears. For arrearage payments to occur, Congress required that the U.S. assessment for contributions to the U.N. regular budget be reduced from 25% to 22% and that the peacekeeping contribution be reduced from 30% to 25%.[53] In December 2000, the U.N. General Assembly reduced the regular budget assessment level to from 25% to 22%, and the Peacekeeping share from approximately 30.4% to 28%. In subsequent years, the U.S. peacekeeping assessment continued to fall and is now close to 26.5%.

[53] See archived CRS Report RL33700, *United Nations Peacekeeping: Issues for Congress*, by Marjorie Ann Browne, for further information.

Appendix B. Key U.N. Reform Recommendations and Proposals by Independent and U.N. Affiliated Groups

Report of the Task Force on the United Nations (June 2004, December 2005)	In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All (March 2005)	Report of the Independent Inquiry Committee into the United Nations Oil-for-Food Program (October 2005)
Improved management reform, including:	*Secretariat reform, including:*	*Strengthen U.N. management practices, including:*
Establish an Independent Oversight Board to function as an independent audit committee;	Review of the Office of Internal Oversight Services and general strengthening of internal oversight;	Establish an Independent Oversight Board with responsibility over internal and external audits and investigations;
Establish the role of Chief Operating Officer (COO);	Creation of a Cabinet-style decision-making mechanism;	Create the position of Chief Operating Officer (COO);
Establish policies for improved financial disclosure standards, whistle-blower protection; and	Authority/resources for Secretary-General to realign and/or buy-out Secretariat staff; and full review of budget and human resources operations; and	Expand financial disclosure requirements for U.N. staff, including the Secretary-General, Deputy-Secretary-General, and those involved in procurement and/or disbursement;
Review of all U.N. mandates and sunset clauses for new mandates.	Review of all U.N. mandates five years or older.	Improve coordination and framework for cross-agency U.N. programs; and
Reorganization of the General Assembly;	Streamlining the General Assembly to speed-up decision-making processes;	Ensure third party agencies involved in U.N. programs are entitled to fair compensation.
Replace the Commission on Human Rights with a new Human Rights Council;	Replace the discredited Commission on Human Rights with a new Human Rights Council;	
Identification of U.N. programs that could be more effective if funded by voluntary contributions; and	Modify composition of the Security Council to reflect current political realities; and	
Improving the Department of Peacekeeping Operations so that it becomes "a more independent program" with its own rules and regulations to address its unique mission.	Reform ECOSOC so it may better coordinate the U.N. development agenda and guide other economic and social agencies in the United Nations.	

Appendix C. Organizational Chart of the U.N. System



Source: United Nations.

Author Information

Luisa Blanchfield
Specialist in International Relations

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