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This publication is the 20th annual Report to the Congress on Voting Practices at the United Nations. It is submitted in compliance with Section 406 of Public Law 101-246. This law provides, in relevant part:

“The Secretary of State shall transmit to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate a full and complete annual report which assesses for the preceding calendar year, with respect to each foreign country member of the United Nations, the voting practices of the governments of such countries at the United Nations, and which evaluates General Assembly and Security Council actions and the responsiveness of those governments to United States policy on issues of special importance to the United States.”

This report reviews voting practices in the UN Security Council and General Assembly (UNGA) in calendar year 2002 and presents data in a variety of different formats. All Security Council resolutions for the entire year are described, and voting on them is tabulated (Section II). The report also statistically measures the overall voting of UN member states at the 57th General Assembly in fall 2002 in comparison with the U.S. voting record (Section III). In addition to an alphabetical listing of all countries, the report presents the voting record in a rank-ordered listing by voting coincidence percentage and by geographic regions, by selected bloc groupings, and in a side-by-side comparison with the amount of U.S. aid given to each country in fiscal year 2002. It also lists and describes UNGA resolutions selected as important to U.S. interests, again with tables for regional and political groupings (Section IV). Finally, it presents all data by country (Section V).

The Security Council and the General Assembly deal with a full spectrum of issues—including threats to peace and security, terrorism, disarmament, economic and social development, humanitarian relief, and human rights—considered critical to U.S. interests. A country’s behavior at the United Nations is always relevant to its bilateral relationship with the United States, a point the Secretary of State routinely makes in letters of instruction to new U.S. Ambassadors. Nevertheless, a country’s voting record in the United Nations is only one dimension of its relations with the United States. Bilateral economic, strategic, and political issues are often more directly important to U.S. interests.

SECURITY COUNCIL

As in past years, the Security Council was a major focus of U.S. attention in the United Nations in 2002. The Council was again heavily engaged in efforts to resolve conflict and in peacekeeping missions. Much of the Council's attention was focused on Iraq, as well as Africa and the Middle East. Afghanistan and international terrorism continued to be priority issues for the Council. The Council also took up the matter of international courts and tribunals. Among the highlights in 2002, the Council adopted a unanimous resolution requiring Iraq's disarmament and an historic resolution affirming a two state vision in the Middle East. It also took some noteworthy actions in Africa, including supporting elections in Sierra Leone and an expansion of MONUC, the UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In addition, the Council completed the mandates of UN Missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Prevlaka.

The Council adopted 68 resolutions during the year, fewer than the post-Cold War peak of Security Council action in 1992-1994, but far more than during the Cold War period when Council action was often frustrated. The Council also issued 42 presidential statements; these are consensus documents issued by the Council president on behalf of the members. Voting coincidence percentages for Security Council members were again high. Most resolutions were adopted unanimously: 63 of 68 (93 percent), including two adopted by acclamation, i.e., without a vote, on admitting Switzerland and East Timor as UN members.

The United States was the only permanent member to exercise its veto power, vetoing draft resolutions on the Middle East and Bosnia and Herzegovina (related to concerns about the International Criminal Court). The United States also abstained on a resolution on the Middle East, which was adopted. The only other No vote was cast by Syria on a resolution condemning the Mombasa, Kenya terrorist bombing. Bulgaria abstained on the two draft resolutions that the United States vetoed; Cameroon abstained on the Middle East draft resolution. In addition, Russia and Syria abstained on a resolution on Iraq, which was adopted; Syria also abstained on a U.S.-sponsored Middle East resolution. (See Section II for vote descriptions and tables of voting summaries).

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The 57th session of the General Assembly opened on September 10, 2002 and held 79 Plenary sessions before recessing on December 20, 2002. It adopted 300 resolutions, more than in the past few years, but still below the 332 of 1990. The subjects of the resolutions covered the full gamut of UN concerns: security, arms control, economic, social and humanitarian issues, human rights, budget and financial matters, and legal questions. Those resolutions on which recorded votes were taken continued primarily to address arms control, the Middle East, and human rights.

Of the 300 resolutions adopted in Plenary, 234 (76 percent) were adopted by consensus. This figure and similar ones in recent years (77.7 percent in 2001, 76.0 percent in 2000, 76.9 percent in 1999, 78 percent in 1998, 75.2 percent in 1997, 72.9 percent in 1996, 76.6 percent in 1995, and 77.4 percent in 1994) illustrate the high rate of consensus agreement in the work of the General Assembly. Combining the 234 consensus resolutions and the 96 of 98 decisions adopted by consensus, the percentage of questions adopted by consensus was 81.4 percent. (Decisions are less formal than resolutions and generally cover matters of lesser importance.)

Voting Coincidence with the United States

On non-consensus issues, i.e., those on which a vote was taken, the average overall General Assembly voting coincidence of all UN members with the United States in 2002 was 31.2 percent, very close to the percentage of coincidence in 2001 (31.7 percent), but down significantly from 43.0 percent in 2000 and reflecting the general downward trend since 1995, when the voting coincidence reached 50.6 percent. This decline in voting coincidence with the United States on non-consensus issues in the years since 1995 reverses the steady and dramatic increase in the years immediately following the end of the Cold War. The 50.6 percent in 1995 was the first time the coincidence figure had exceeded 50 percent since 1978, and is more than three times the low point of 15.4 percent in 1988.

The following table illustrates the gradual decrease in overall voting coincidence with the United States since the post-Cold War high of 50.6 percent in 1995. This decrease is reflected also in the steady drop in coincidence on the votes on human rights. On Middle East issues, the voting coincidence in 2002 was up from the previous year, and even higher than other post-1995 years. The trend had been generally upward on arms control votes, except for a drop in 1999; however, 2001 and now 2002 reversed that trend, with significant drops in voting coincidence in the past two years.

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Year	Arms Control	Middle East	Human Rights	Overall Votes
2002	41.9%	32.4%	23.7%	31.2%
2001	50.4%	29.0%	33.9%	31.7%
2000	66.1%	11.9%	55.7%	43.0%
1999	57.9%	22.7%	52.5%	41.8%
1998	64.0%	22.5%	62.8%	44.2%
1997	65.8%	26.2%	61.9%	46.7%
1996	62.3%	28.3%	68.3%	49.4%
1995	60.9%	35.2%	81.0%	50.6%

When consensus resolutions are factored in as votes identical to those of the United States, a much higher measure of agreement with U.S. positions is reached. This figure (83.0 percent), which more accurately reflects the work of the General Assembly, is slightly below the 85–88 percent range recorded since the statistic was first included in this report in 1993. It was 85.0 percent in 2001, 87.6 percent in 2000, 86.4 percent in 1999, 88.3 percent in 1998, 87.3 percent in 1997, 87.3 percent also in 1996, 88.2 percent in 1995, 88.8 percent in 1994, and 88.3 percent in 1993. (See Section III—General Assembly—Overall Votes for additional comparisons.)

The coincidence figure on votes considered important to U.S. interests (31.8 percent) is just a little higher than the percentage registered on overall votes (31.2 percent). (See Section IV—Important Votes, for a side-by-side comparison of important and overall votes for each UN member.)

As in past years, Israel (92.6 percent), Palau (100.0 percent), Micronesia (89.8 percent), the Marshall Islands (97.9 percent), and the United Kingdom (57.1 percent) were among the highest in voting coincidence with the United States. Bosnia and Herzegovina, France, Monaco, Australia, and Belgium were also among the top ten countries, with Italy, the Netherlands, and Poland close behind.

In general, however, 2002 saw declining voting coincidences with the United States, even among friends and allies. Most members of the Western European and Others Group (WEOG) continued to score higher than average coincidence levels; the average was 49.9 percent, which is down from 54.4 percent in 2001, 61.5 percent in 2000, 67.1 percent in 1999, 65.2 percent in 1998, and 70.9 percent in 1997. There has been a growing divergence between

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the United States and the European Union, which, at 49.5 percent, is down from 53.5 percent in 2001, 62.5 percent in 2000, 68.5 percent in 1999, 66.7 percent in 1998, and 73.0 percent in 1997. The Eastern European group was also down in 2002, at an average of 43.7 percent, which is down from 48.8 percent in 2001, 58.0 percent in 2000, 61.7 percent in 1999 and 1998, and 68.6 percent in 1997 and 1996. After the latter group's meteoric rise in coincidence with the United States immediately following the dissolution of the Soviet bloc, it largely matched the coincidence level of the Western European countries before its decline in the past five years. The NATO and Nordic countries also decreased in voting coincidence with the United States, continuing to reverse the upward trend of the late 1990s. The African and Asian groups, the Islamic Conference, the Non-Aligned Movement, and the Latin American and Caribbean group all declined in voting coincidence with the United States.

The following five bar graphs depict voting trends since the end of the Cold War. Voting coincidence with the United States, in terms of both overall and important votes, is broken down by year for issues, geographic groups, and political groups.

Realization of U.S. Priorities

At the 57th UN General Assembly (UNGA), the United States focused its efforts on five major goals: international counter-terrorism cooperation; support for U.S.-led efforts to promote Middle East peace; a “new partnership” between developed and developing countries (with special emphasis on Africa); a more efficient and effective United Nations; and greater respect for human rights and support for democracy. The outcome of the fall session was once again mixed with regard to realizing U.S. priorities, with significant achievements as well as obvious shortfalls.

Overall, the U.S. delegation joined consensus on most of the resolutions adopted, including several considered a high priority for the United States. It strongly supported consensus actions on a “new partnership” for Africa’s development, arms reductions and treaty compliance, combating trafficking in women and girls and honor crimes, follow-up to the Monterrey Consensus, and the most recent reform initiative of the Secretary-General. In addition, the United States succeeded in electing U.S. candidates to key UN offices, including the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the UN Human Rights Committee.

However, the United States continued to differ with most UN members on the situation in the Middle East, nuclear disarmament issues, some thematic human rights issues, and the International Criminal Court. These differences were often reflected in lopsided vote counts on several resolutions, with the United States in the minority. Also, for the eleventh year in a row, Cuba received broad international support for its resolution opposing the U.S. embargo on Cuba, an issue which the United States maintained did not belong before the UNGA.

On disarmament and international security matters, the United States had some notable successes. The situations in Iraq and North Korea lent weight to the U.S. emphasis on the importance of compliance with current agreements. U.S.-sponsored resolutions on bilateral strategic nuclear reductions and compliance with arms limitation, disarmament and nonproliferation agreements were adopted by consensus. In addition, the United States succeeded in defeating Iraq’s resolution on the effects of the use of depleted uranium in a First Committee vote. At the same time, the UNGA maintained its perennial focus on nuclear disarmament, with the United States voting nearly alone on resolutions on the elimination of nuclear weapons and the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East.

Given heightened Middle East tension, it continued to be difficult to add balance to the perennial UNGA resolutions on Arab-Israeli issues. The United States was in the minority in opposing most of the resolutions in the areas of Israeli Practices, UN Relief and Works Agency operations, the Question of Palestine, and the situation in the Middle East. Among the most important, on

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the work of a special committee to investigate Israeli practices, there was a narrow net improvement in the vote tallies over last year: it was adopted by just 86 votes, with six against and 66 abstentions. In addition, the United States did co-sponsor a resolution on assistance to the Palestinian people, which was adopted by consensus.

On economic and financial issues, adoption of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) was a key U.S. priority. The resolution, in keeping with the new consensus that Africa's development must be Africa-led, incorporated U.S.-favored language emphasizing democracy, good governance, human rights, and sound economic management. The General Assembly also endorsed new resolutions on follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development. Reflecting Monterrey Consensus priorities, including the responsibility of countries to advance their own development, these resolutions were welcomed by the United States. On the environment, the United States was able to join consensus on a resolution on global climate protection, by noting that Kyoto Protocol references do not apply to the United States.

Several human rights issues provoked contentious debate. The U.S. delegation was in the minority in voting against thematic resolutions on torture (adoption of a Draft Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture, DOPCAT), children (support for child rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, CROC) and women (support for future operations of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, INSTRAW). While emphasizing in principle its condemnation of torture, support for children's rights, and the advancement of women, the United States opposed the resolutions as flawed in practice, inconsistent with federated states' legal systems, and excessively costly. There were, nevertheless, some notable successes, including a U.S.-cosponsored resolution on the elimination of honor crimes against women and another on combating trafficking in women and girls, both adopted without a vote. Also, the United States joined the two-thirds majority in voting for resolutions on the human rights situation in several countries, including Sudan, Iraq, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The United States voted in favor of the Sudan resolution for the first time in two years to help maintain international attention on that country's human rights misdeeds, despite preferring stronger language condemning slavery and religious persecution, which the United States expressed in a strong explanation of vote. The United States co-sponsored the resolution condemning Iraq's grave violations of human rights.

On budget and reform issues, the United States was a supporter, participating actively in the negotiating process, of a resolution related to the latest reform initiative of the Secretary-General. While respecting his authority as the UN's chief administrative officer, the resolution also emphasized the role of member states in approving and changing mandates. In addition, the United

States joined consensus on two budget resolutions. The United States endorsed the 2002–2003 program budget increase from \$2.625 billion to a revised level of \$2.890 billion, which took into account several new and unforeseen initiatives, such as enhanced security measures at UN facilities and the UN Mission in Afghanistan, which the United States supported. The 2004–2005 proposed program budget outline was adopted, reflecting an estimated level of \$2.876 billion, below the current revised budget level.

On legal issues, an annual resolution on measures to eliminate international terrorism was adopted without a vote, however, negotiations on a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism remained at an impasse. The United States was able to join consensus on a Sixth Committee procedural decision on human cloning, which deferred discussion of the issue until the next UNGA. However, the United States again objected to and did not participate in a consensus resolution on the International Criminal Court.

FORMAT AND METHODOLOGY

The format and presentation of this report are consistent with provisions of Public Law 101–246, and the methodology employed is the same since the report’s inception.

The tables in this report provide a measurement of the voting coincidence of UN member countries with the United States. However, readers are cautioned about interpreting voting coincidence percentages. In Section III (General Assembly Overall Votes) and Section IV (General Assembly Important Votes and Consensus Actions), the percentages in the last column of the tables, under “votes only,” are calculated using only votes on which both the United States and the other country in question voted Yes or No; not included are those instances when either state abstained or was absent. Abstentions and absences are often difficult to interpret, but they make a mathematical difference, sometimes significant, in the percentage results. The inclusion of the number of abstentions and absences in the tables of this report enables the reader to consider them in calculating voting coincidence percentages.

The percentages in the second to last column of the tables, under “including consensus,” offer another perspective on General Assembly activity. These figures, by presenting the percentage of voting coincidence with the United States after including consensus resolutions as additional identical votes, more accurately reflect the extent of cooperation and agreement in the General Assembly. Since not all states are equally active at the United Nations, the report credits to each country a portion of the 234 consensus resolutions based on its participation in the 106 recorded Plenary votes. Each country’s participation rate was calculated by dividing the number of Yes/No/Abstain votes it cast in the Plenary (i.e., the number of times it was not absent) by the total number

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of Plenary votes. However, this calculation assumes, for want of an attendance record, that all countries were present or absent for consensus resolutions in the same ratio as for recorded votes.

Moreover, the content of resolutions should be considered in interpreting the figures in either of the aforementioned columns. There may be overwhelming agreement with the U.S. position on a matter of less importance to the United States and less support for a resolution it considers more important. These differences are difficult to quantify and to present in two coincidence figures.

Questions about this report may be directed to the Bureau of International Organization Affairs in the Department of State.