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THE UNITED STATES SHOULD OPPOSE EXPANSION OF THE U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL

Brett D. Schaefer

Jay Kingham Fellow in International Regulatory Affairs

During the 1992 presidential campaign, Bill Clinton ignited debate about expansion of the United Nations Security Council by advocating permanent membership for Germany and Japan. The ambitions of many countries to join the five permanent members of the Security Council, long frustrated by U.S. opposition to an enlarged Council, were bolstered further by former Secretary of State Warren Christopher and former Ambassador to the United Nations Madeleine Albright, both of whom indicated support for expansion in 1993.¹ But even though it has been a constant preoccupation at the U.N. over the past four years, this issue has received little attention elsewhere, because conflict among the member states prevented the formation of any consensus and the Clinton Administration failed to pursue expansion proposals actively.

This inattention ended on July 17 when Bill Richardson, Albright's successor as U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, unveiled a proposal to create five new permanent seats on the U.N. Security Council, increasing the total membership from 15 to 20. Under current voting proportions, this would require approving votes from 12 member states, including all veto-wielding members, to pass a resolution.

This plan is deeply flawed. Expanding the Security Council would reduce U.S. influence, lead to gridlock and inefficiency, do little to reduce the U.S. assessments for U.N. peacekeeping operations, and remove any association between Security Council membership and global power relations.

1 Comments by President Clinton; former Secretary of State Warren Christopher in a public address on January 25, 1993; and current Secretary of State Madeleine Albright at Senate hearings on her confirmation as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. See Department of State Daily Press Briefing, January 26, 1993, gopher://gopher.state.gov.

Expanding the Security Council requires an amendment to the U.N. Charter. It must be approved by two-thirds of the General Assembly, including all permanent members of the Security Council, and be ratified by their legislatures. In the case of the United States, the amended charter must be passed by two-thirds of the Senate, some members of which have been highly critical of the Clinton Administration's plan. Senate leaders should put President Clinton on notice that they will reject any amendment to the U.N. Charter that includes an enlarged Security Council.

PRESSURE TO EXPAND THE SECURITY COUNCIL

During the drafting of the U.N. Charter, the Security Council was described as the first among six equal bodies in the U.N. system, including the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, the Secretariat, and the International Court of Justice. The Security Council, however, indisputably is the U.N.'s premier political body, both because it is charged with maintaining international peace and because the General Assembly must abide by its resolutions. Nearly every important U.N. decision must originate in or be approved by the Security Council. For example, the Council nominates candidates for Secretary General as well as new members of the General Assembly. It also is the only body that can initiate U.N. peacekeeping missions and impose economic sanctions.

The U.N. Charter created an 11-member Security Council that included five permanent seats for the victorious powers of World War II—the United States, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, France, the Republic of China, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—and six elected seats which the other member states could hold for two-year staggered terms.

Between 1945 and 1965, the General Assembly more than doubled in size, increasing from 51 members to 111. Most new members were former colonies of European powers, and the five permanent members yielded to pressure from these new members to expand the Security Council. A 1963 amendment to the Charter (which went into effect in 1965) added four more elected seats for a total of 15 members. It was at this time that the tradition of "assigning" a specific elected seat to a geographic region became fixed.² Membership in the U.N. now totals 185, and many members again are clamoring for an expansion of the Security Council. Germany, Italy, and Japan have campaigned for permanent seats, and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), a U.N. General Assembly coalition of developing countries, also has called repeatedly for expansion of the Council. The NAM proposal is even more radical than the Clinton Administration's: It calls for an 11-seat expansion of the Council, with the majority of the new seats going to developing countries.

It is little wonder that developing countries are becoming increasingly insistent on expansion. During the Cold War, the Security Council often was ineffective, paralyzed by the threat or use of the veto by permanent members—principally the Soviet Union and the United States—to block resolutions that would infringe upon their national interests. For example, the Soviet Union utilized the veto to block any resolution condemning its actions

² According to the United Nations Department of Public Information, nonpermanent Security Council seats are allocated to groups of countries divided by geographic regions: 20 Arab states of the Middle East and North Africa, 37 Asian states, 22 East European states, 33 Latin American and Caribbean states, 44 sub-Saharan African states, and 24 West European states (which includes Canada). The Clinton Administration's proposal would allow the African, Asian, and Latin American regional groups to decide which countries from their region would become permanent members.

in Afghanistan, and the United States has a long tradition of using the veto to protect Israel from harmful U.N. resolutions.

Since the end of the Cold War, however, the use of the veto by all permanent members has declined, and U.N. peacekeeping has become more commonplace.³ Unprecedented expansion of U.N. peacekeeping missions since 1989 made it apparent that the U.N. was taking an increasingly active role in world events, and this has prompted many countries to lobby for a place at the Security Council table.

THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION'S CASE FOR EXPANSION

While avoiding a formal proposal, the United States has supported permanent seats for Germany and Japan since the Bush Administration. Concerns over the efficiency of a larger Security Council and the dim prospects of securing seats for Germany and Japan without commensurate seats for developing countries, however, cooled any U.S. enthusiasm for expansion of the Council.

This position changed with the arrival of the Clinton Administration, which has supported permanent seats for both Germany and Japan since taking office in 1993. The proposal unveiled in July by Ambassador Richardson envisions the most fundamental restructuring of the Security Council since its inception: five new members, to include Germany, Japan, and three developing countries (one each from Africa, Asia, and Latin America), with all new members permanent. The result would be a 20-member Security Council of ten elected and ten permanent members.

The proposal does not identify which developing countries would fill the three permanent seats for Africa, Asia, and Latin America. There are several candidates for each region, and bitter rivalries between regional powers will likely drag out confirmation of the new permanent members indefinitely. For example, prominent candidates for the Asia seat are India, Indonesia, and Pakistan. India and Pakistan have been in conflict for decades, and each would prefer no expansion to allowing its rival to have a permanent seat. While their differences are not as heated, Brazil, Argentina, and Mexico also would fight for a permanent seat. One solution, advanced by Brazil, would have these permanent seats rotate among a smaller number of regional powers. This solution would merely increase the number of regional seats and sidestep the issue of permanent membership.

The Administration has avoided taking a position on whether to extend the veto to the new permanent members—an issue that also could derail Security Council expansion. This is one of the most contentious issues surrounding expansion of the Council. The permanent five have been reluctant to approve extension of the veto to other members and have opposed its elimination. Germany and Japan oppose taking permanent seats without the privileges of permanent membership—mainly the veto. Developing countries have

3 The veto was cast only eight times between 1991 and 1997, an average of about once a year. Between 1945 and 1990, however, the veto was used nearly 250 times—an average of over five times a year. For an analysis of the increasing prevalence of U.N. security initiatives and its impact on U.S. national interests, see John Hillen, "American Military Intervention: A User's Guide," Heritage Foundation *Background* No. 1079, May 2, 1996; Kim R. Holmes and Thomas G. Moore, eds., *Restoring American Leadership: A U.S. Foreign and Defense Policy Blueprint* (Washington, D.C.: The Heritage Foundation, 1996), pp. 224–228; and Stuart M. Butler and Kim R. Holmes, eds., *Mandate for Leadership IV: Turning Ideas into Actions* (Washington, D.C.: The Heritage Foundation, 1997), chapter 12, "Defining the Proper U.S. Role in Global Security," and chapter 20, "Reforming and Working with the United Nations."

expressed strong opposition to extending the veto power to Germany and Japan if it is not also extended to developing country permanent members.

Arguments for Expansion. The Administration has presented a number of arguments for expanding the Security Council. One is that expansion will make the Council more representative of the world's nations, and thus reflect the modern world more accurately.

This argument rests on a confused understanding of the U.N.'s origins and history. The Security Council has never been, and was never intended to be, a representative body. By limiting its membership to 11 of the U.N.'s 51 member states, the drafters of the U.N. Charter obviously intended the Security Council to be a select body. Consultation with or approval of all, or even a majority, of the member nations was not considered vital. If it had been, deliberations on the use of force would be conducted in the General Assembly, which includes representatives from every member state.

The Administration also claims that the Council should be expanded to reflect the modern world, not the power structure of 1945. However, if the Administration truly wishes to create a Security Council that reflects the current global power structure, it should propose to reduce—not increase—the number of permanent members. Only the United States has the resources, will, and broad-based interests to accomplish the mandate of the Security Council: to defuse, contain, or confront threats to global security.

Of the current permanent members, Russia (successor to the Soviet Union), France, and the United Kingdom are no longer the great powers they were when the U.N. was created, and China—despite its growing strength—has yet to become a global power. Meanwhile, no other nations have risen to claim places at the Council table as global powers. Germany and Japan are recognized as economic powers, which drives many to support creating permanent seats for them. However, neither country has recent experience in military action, and both have substantial restrictions and societal reservations against sending troops abroad.⁴ Nor has any developing country reached the point where it should be considered for permanent membership. Few have the economic strength, and none has the military power and influence to justify such a position.⁵

Because the U.N. membership certainly will not accept the United States as the sole permanent, veto-wielding member of the Council, the best solution is to restrict that power to the current permanent five. They are among the handful of countries that possess both nuclear weapons and the means to send them anywhere on the globe. They also can field modern, powerful conventional forces that can fight and win regional conflicts with transport capabilities to project those forces within their regions, if not around the globe. Moreover, they remain economic forces, with France, Russia, and the United Kingdom ranking 4th, 14th, and 5th, respectively, in total gross national product in 1995.⁶

4 Japan's post-World War II constitution, for example, prevents it from sending troops overseas.

5 Some proponents of expansion argue that the developing world itself must be recognized as a power and granted a permanent seat on the Security Council. But even if the seat reserved for Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union were excluded, developing nations would be likely to fill at least seven seats, thereby acquiring the power to oppose any resolution they deemed unacceptable. Seven negative or abstaining votes represent a de facto veto, because nine approving votes are needed to pass a Council resolution.

6 1997 *World Development Indicators on CD-ROM*, The World Bank, Washington, D.C.

EXPANDING THE SECURITY COUNCIL: AGAINST U.S. INTERESTS

Even more alarming is the fact that the Administration's rationale for expanding the Security Council ignores the probability that such an action would undermine American interests. Contrary to claims by the Clinton Administration, an expanded Security Council would:

- **Undermine U.S. power and influence.** Developing countries see expansion of the Security Council as an opportunity to increase their power and influence in the U.N. and in global affairs generally. Many countries make no effort to hide the fact that a primary benefit of this power redistribution would be a reduction in the power of the current permanent members. Ambassador Rizali Ismail, Malaysian delegate and president of the General Assembly for 1997, for example, insisted that "If we get it right, then the Security Council that we will have in the future will be quite different from the one that was put together in 1945."⁷ Venezuela's foreign minister in 1992, General Fernando Ochoa

Antich, derided Security Council actions as subject to the "aegis of the values of the victors" of World War II who "can outline an international scenario according to their interests."⁸

Expanding the Council, however, would decrease the power and influence of *all* members of the Security Council, both permanent and elected.⁹ Moreover, there would be a particularly negative impact on U.S. initiatives if the new permanent members shared a political stance generally opposed to that of the United States.

Permanent Members of the U.N. Security Council	Percentage of Votes Against the U.S. Position
United States	---
Russian Federation	40.7%
United Kingdom	20.9
France	22.2
People's Republic of China	70.3
Potential Permanent Members	
Argentina	39.3%
Brazil	57.6
Egypt	60.6
Germany	25.8
India	76.9
Indonesia	68.1
Italy	26.6
Japan	27.6
Mexico	61.2
Nigeria	68.7
Pakistan	63.8
South Africa	55.7

Source: U.S. Department of State, *Voting Practices in the United Nations 1996*, Report to Congress, March 31, 1997, p. 10-4.

7 Barbara Crossette, "At the U.N., a Drive for Diversity," *The New York Times*, October 24, 1994, p. A6.

8 William Strobel, "Big Five Face Fight for Seats," *The Washington Times*, October 4, 1992, p. A1.

9 A study by Professor Barry O'Neill of Yale University shows that increasing the number of non-veto-wielding members of the Security Council would decrease the power of all non-veto-wielding members significantly, while the power of veto-wielding members would remain roughly the same. Increasing the number of veto-wielding members, however, significantly reduces the power of veto-wielding members.

A look at U.N. voting records shows why this is likely to be the case. Excluding the three developed candidates for permanent Council seats (all of which are U.S. allies), only Argentina voted with the United States a majority of the time at the U.N. General Assembly in 1996 (see Table 1). The situation is particularly acute with respect to the three most likely candidates for the regional permanent seats: Brazil, India, and Nigeria. India voted against the U.S. 76 percent of the time in 1996—more often than Iran—and Nigeria and Brazil voted against the United States 69 percent and 58 percent of the time, respectively.¹⁰ It therefore appears likely that adding any of the prospective permanent members from the developing world would increase the opposition faced by the United States in the Council.

Evidence provided by the U.S. Department of State supports this conclusion. In regular reports to Congress, the State Department identifies a number of “important issues” that relate to U.S. foreign policy priorities and records how each nation votes in the U.N. on these issues. In line with their votes generally, the candidates for permanent seats on the Council have a dismal record of supporting U.S. priorities. Specifically, in the 12 most important U.N. votes of 1996, Mexico and Brazil voted with the United States just seven times; South Africa, six times; Egypt and Indonesia, four times; Nigeria and Pakistan, three times; and India, only twice.¹¹

Based on these voting patterns, it is logical to conclude that U.S. foreign policy priorities will meet even more opposition in an expanded Security Council than is currently the case. For example, a larger Security Council could be expected to:¹²

- **Undermine U.S. efforts to combat terrorism.** The United States has used the U.N. many times as a platform from which to oppose state-sponsored terrorism. In 1992 and 1993, for example, it secured passage of several Security Council resolutions intended to sanction Libya for the Pan American flight 103 bombing. Yet Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, and Pakistan all voted for a Libyan resolution to eliminate coercive economic measures that essentially would have outlawed sanctions against terrorist states. If these countries had been permanent members of the Security Council in 1992, even without the veto, it is likely that Libya would not have been punished for sponsoring terrorism.
- **Hamper American support for Israel.** The Security Council currently reflects the anti-Israel sentiments of the General Assembly. Since 1994, the Council has passed two resolutions condemning Israeli actions: one on injuries committed against Palestinians and the construction of a tunnel near the Al Aqsa Mosque, the other condemning the Hebron massacre in 1994. Even though more than 230 Israelis have been killed by Islamic terrorists since September 1993, however, the Security Council has issued no resolution condemning these actions.¹³ Anti-Israeli resolutions would likely increase in both number and intensity if the Council were expanded, forcing the United States to increase its use of the veto

10 See Bryan T. Johnson, “Does Foreign Aid Serve American Interests? Not at the United Nations,” Heritage Foundation *F.Y.I.* No. 136, April 15, 1997.

11 Information in these examples is drawn from U.S. Department of State, *Voting Practices in the United Nations 1996*, Report to Congress, March 31, 1997, pp. 139, 153, 165–166, 181, 188, 190, 204.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 165.

13 James Phillips, “After the Summit: Preventing the Collapse of Israeli–Palestinian Negotiations,” Heritage Foundation *Executive Memorandum* No. 463, September 10, 1996.

and perhaps undermining U.S. relations with other countries.

- **Aid the spread of weapons of mass destruction.** American efforts to prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction would face greater difficulty in an enlarged Security Council. The Council, for example, passed several resolutions requiring Iraq to dismantle its weapons of mass destruction and submit to inspection by U.N. teams to confirm compliance. A larger Security Council would make it more difficult to achieve such strict enforcement mechanisms. Specifically, this resolution probably would not have passed if such countries as Egypt, India, Indonesia, and Pakistan, all of which possess weapons of mass destruction or have a record of sympathizing with Iraq, had been permanent members of the Council—especially if they possessed the veto.
- **Complicate and possibly prevent the formation of U.N. military coalitions to protect American security.** Though much of the U.N. system is ineffective, wasteful, and even corrupt, the organization sometimes does prove useful to the United States.¹⁴ The main arena for this is the Security Council, and the most recent and prominent example was the U.N.-sanctioned war in the Persian Gulf. While the United States was willing and able to act on its own, U.N. approval certainly aided the effort by smoothing the ruffled feathers of the Arab states.

However, military action in the interests of the United States would be less likely to receive U.N. approval in an expanded Security Council. As it stands, the United States must receive the approval of nine members, or three-fifths, of the Security Council, and all the veto-wielding permanent members of the Council must approve or abstain. This means that under current conditions, the United States must get four elected members to support a measure even if all permanent members support it.

The Administration's proposal would create five new permanent members. If the current formula is maintained, an expanded Council would require 12 votes—three more than is currently necessary—to pass a resolution. One way to gauge the likely impact on U.S. interests is to speculate how an enlarged Security Council would have affected U.N. support for the Gulf War—arguably the most important U.S. foreign policy initiative of the 1990s. Jeffery Laurenti of the United Nations Association of the United States of America cautions that “adding another ten stops to [former Secretary of State James] Baker's flying diplomacy to firm up that many votes would have made decisive action in the Iraq case considerably more difficult.”¹⁵ Former Alternate U.S. Representative to the U.N. Charles Lichenstein concurs, adding that an enlarged Security Council probably would not have passed the resolution supporting the campaign against Iraq.¹⁶

The situation would become more complex if the new permanent members on the Security Council were granted veto power. If the new permanent members proposed by the Administration were granted the veto, all five new members would have to support or abstain from voting on any proposed military action. Laurenti has noted

14 For information on inefficiency, waste, and corruption at the U.N., see Brett D. Schaefer and Thomas P. Sheehy, “Reforming and Working with the United Nations” in *Mandate for Leadership IV*, pp. 701–732.

15 Jeffrey Laurenti, “Reforming the Security Council: What American Interests?” *United Nations Association of the United States of America Occasional Paper*, July 1997, p. 12.

16 Editorial, “Guaranteeing U.N. Futility,” *The New York Post*, July 20, 1997.

that “if the veto were also extended to some large developing countries as part of the tradeoff on Council reform, the likelihood of that any one of them might eventually block initiatives by a current permanent member is high.”¹⁷

The likely result of expanding the Council, especially if that expansion included veto-wielding members, would be to relegate the U.S. role to one of obstruction and further marginalize the U.N. as a tool for protecting both U.S. and international security.

- **Undermine the ability of the Council to act decisively.** Proponents of expansion hold that the effectiveness of the Security Council will be enhanced because greater representation will grant additional legitimacy to Council resolutions. Many experts disagree. History and experience, they insist, suggest that expansion will impede the ability of the Security Council to act promptly and decisively. Marshaling the affirmative votes needed for the Council to act in politically sensitive situations, which would include most proposals for peacekeeping missions and economic sanctions, becomes less likely as more voices are added to the discussion. According to former Assistant Secretary of State John Bolton, “the complexity of negotiations in the Council does increase geometrically with the addition of new members, especially permanent ones.”¹⁸ Ambassador Lichenstein is even more critical, noting that “nothing is more certain than that the resolutions of this larger Security Council would be either blander or fewer, or both,” inevitably forcing the Council toward “impotence and irrelevance.”¹⁹

Concern over the negative impact of expansion has led even advocates to call for minimal expansion. Ambassador Richardson has stated unequivocally that the United States has “no flexibility above and beyond 20–21 seats on a reformed Council” and that the United States “would oppose any resolution calling for higher numbers.”²⁰ Jeffrey Laurenti admits, however, that even a small increase in the Council would harm its operations because the Council “must be small if decisions in crisis situations are to be reached with dispatch.” Moreover, “At 15 members, the Council already has to accommodate more speech making than might be optimal in a crisis; reckless expansion could hamper its capacity to act.”²¹

Even among developing countries, there is a belief that too much expansion will lead to inefficiency. Modesto Seara-Vasquez, an expert on international organizations and professor at the National University of Mexico, cautions that expansion would lead to inefficiency and marginalization, citing the “precedent of the largely ineffectual Economic and Social Council, whose membership was increased from the original number of eighteen to the current fifty-four.”²²

17 Laurenti, “Reforming the Security Council,” p. 13.

18 John Bolton, “No Expansion for U.N. Security Council,” *The Wall Street Journal*, January 26, 1993, p. 21.

19 Ambassador Charles Lichenstein, “In the U.N., Bigger Isn’t Always Better,” *The Wall Street Journal Europe*, August 6, 1997.

20 United States Mission to the United Nations, Press Release #128–(97), July 17, 1997, p. 1.

21 Laurenti, “Reforming the Security Council,” p. 11.

22 Modesto Seara-Vasquez, “The UN Security Council at Fifty: Midlife Crisis or Terminal Illness?” *Global Governance*, Vol. 1 (1995), p. 288.

Table 2

The Impact of Security Council Expansion on U.N. Peacekeeping Assessments

Permanent Members of the Security Council	Regular Budget Assessment	Peacekeeping Budget Assessment	Net Increase in Peacekeeping Budget Assessment if Permanent Member
United States	25%	31.15%	—
Russian Federation	5.68	7.077	—
United Kingdom	5.27	6.567	—
France	6.32	7.875	—
People's Republic of China	0.72	0.897	—
Potential Permanent Members			
Argentina	0.48	0.097	0.50108%
Brazil	1.62	0.326	1.69252
Egypt	0.07	0.014	0.07322
Germany	8.94	8.978	2.16124
India	0.31	0.062	0.32426
Indonesia	0.14	0.028	0.14644
Italy	4.79	4.81	1.15834
Japan	13.95	14.009	3.3727
Mexico	0.78	0.157	0.81488
Nigeria	0.16	0.032	0.16736
Pakistan	0.06	0.012	0.06276
South Africa	0.34	0.341	0.08264
Maximum Increase in Peacekeeping Budget (5 New Permanent Members)			7.718%
Maximum Increase in Peacekeeping Budget (Germany and Japan)			5.534%

Source: United Nations Information Center, data for 1995.

- **Not reduce U.S. peacekeeping costs.** Proponents argue that an expanded Security Council would spread the financial burden of peacekeeping among more countries. Because the United States pays the lion's share of U.N. peacekeeping costs, the Administration has used this argument to seek support for its proposal from Congress. According to this justification, the new permanent members will increase their peacekeeping budget assessment—to match the formula now applied to permanent members—and make it more likely that the U.N. will lower the U.S. peacekeeping assessment (See Table 2).

Under the most optimistic scenario, expanding the Council would cause the new permanent members to assume an additional 7.7 percent of the peacekeeping budget. This, however, is unlikely. Germany and Japan would shoulder 5.5 percent of this increase, but they already are assessed 8.98 percent and 14.01 percent, respectively, under the 1995 assessment schedule.²³ They shoulder a greater share of the burden than any other country except the United States—including the other permanent members—and cannot be expected to shoulder much more, especially if they are denied the veto.²⁴

Developing countries also are unlikely to contribute the remaining 2.2 percent. These countries currently pay a smaller percentage of the general and peacekeeping budgets than comparable developed nations pay.²⁵ The three new developing country permanent members would have to forego this special consideration for any benefit to be realized by the United States, but experience indicates that this is not likely to happen. China, the only current developing country permanent member, pays much less than all of the other permanent members: only 0.72 percent of the regular budget and 0.897 percent of the peacekeeping budget. Thus, permanent membership does not necessarily ensure that developing countries will pay large portions of the peacekeeping budget.

There are numerous options for reducing U.S. peacekeeping contributions without enlarging the Security Council. For example, peacekeeping costs increase along with the number, size, and scope of peacekeeping missions. Therefore, if the Council reduced the number of missions, the peacekeeping budget would decline. Another option would be to restrict the mandates of peacekeeping missions. U.N. missions in the post-Cold War era, such as those in Bosnia and Somalia, generally are more ambitious and dangerous than traditional U.N. peacekeeping missions and, therefore, require more resources, which increase expense.²⁶

A third option would be for the U.N. simply to adjust the assessment schedule for the peacekeeping budget to distribute the costs more equitably. The United States has the largest peacekeeping assessment at 31.15 percent; 56 other countries have the lowest—0.001 percent, or about \$120,000, of the 1997 peacekeeping budget. The U.S. peacekeeping assessment could be reduced by 5.28 percent if the minimum assessment were increased to 0.05 percent of the estimated \$1.2 billion peacekeeping budget in 1997, which is only about \$600,000.²⁷ Another option is for the United States to reduce payments unilaterally, which Congress did in 1995 when it capped U.S. contributions to U.N. peacekeeping at 25 percent of the total peacekeeping budget.

Ambassador Richardson claims that the Administration's proposal to expand the Security Council is a bold step to "increase the voice of the developing nations [and add] new, fresh perspectives on the diverse problems we address at every meeting [of the

- 23 Assessments for the peacekeeping budget are based on the regular budget assessments of four groups of countries: permanent members of the Security Council, developed countries, less-developed countries, and poor countries. In the 1995 assessment schedule, the United States has the largest regular and peacekeeping assessments at 25 percent and 31.15 percent, respectively; the lowest regular budget assessment, shared by 93 countries, is 0.01 percent; and the lowest peacekeeping budget assessment, applied to 56 countries, is 0.001 percent.
- 24 Both Germany and Japan have expressed interest in becoming permanent members of the Security Council and have received support from the United States. Both also have indicated they would not be satisfied with a second-class permanent seat without the veto. The Clinton Administration has stated no opinion on granting the veto to the new permanent members. It is unlikely, however, that the three developing countries would accept permanent seats without the veto if Germany and Japan were granted the power. It is equally unlikely that any of the current permanent members would accept an expansion proposal that gave five new members the power to veto Security Council resolutions.
- 25 The U.N. assesses its member states a percentage of its regular budget according to a formula based on each country's gross national product and per capita income.
- 26 For more information, see Schaefer and Sheehy, "Reforming and Working with the United Nations," pp. 704–705, 719–722.
- 27 All peacekeeping assessments based on the 1995 assessment schedule provided by the United Nations Information Center, Washington, D.C.

Council].”²⁸ Adding new perspectives should not be the primary goal of U.S. representatives to the U.N., however; the primary goal should be to protect U.S. interests. The Administration’s proposal fails this test.

CONCLUSION

The Administration’s proposal to enlarge the United Nations Security Council assumes that expansion would democratize the Council and grant greater legitimacy to its resolutions. The more likely results would be gridlock or impotent resolutions that undermine the interests of the United States. These interests would be harmed because the Security Council would become a less effective vehicle for the advancement of U.S. policy goals.

The Administration cannot implement this shortsighted proposal unilaterally. Expansion of the Security Council requires an amendment to the Charter of the United Nations. To be considered, an amendment must be approved by two-thirds of the General Assembly, including all of the permanent members of the Security Council, and ratified by their respective legislative bodies. As a treaty amendment, therefore, any proposal to expand the Security Council must be passed by two-thirds of the U.S. Senate.

Some Members of Congress recognize that an expanded Security Council would harm U.S. interests. A spokesman for Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC), Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, issued a statement highly critical of the plan, noting that “if we are going to double the number of vetoes in the U.N. Security Council, then it’s not worth participating in.”²⁹ Other Senators should follow Senator Helms’s lead. Senate leaders should notify President Clinton that they will reject any amendment to the U.N. treaty that includes the Administration’s ill-conceived proposal to expand the Security Council.

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28 Betsy Pisik, “U.S. Seeks to Expand U.N. Security Council,” *The Washington Times*, July 18, 1997, p. A1.

29 *Ibid.*

