I - INTRODUCTION

This is the 19th annual report to Congress on voting practices in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and the Security Council. It is submitted in compliance with Section 406 of Public Law 101–246. It covers voting in 2001. The report statistically measures the voting of UN member states at the 56th UNGA session in the fall of 2001 in comparison with the U.S. voting record (Section II). 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 2001. It also lists and describes UNGA resolutions selected as important to U.S. interests, again with tables for regional and political groups (Section III). Security Council resolutions for the entire year are described, and voting on them is tabulated (Section IV). A final section pulls together information from the other sections and presents it by country (Section V).

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The 56th session of the General Assembly opened on September 12 and held 92 plenary sessions before recessing on December 24. It adopted 287 resolutions, about the same as in each of the past few years, and below the 332 of 1990. This reflects the success of the United States and others in their effort to reduce the number of resolutions—by combining some issues, considering others only every two or three years, and dropping some entirely. 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 to be primarily about arms control, the Middle East, and human rights.

Of the 287 resolutions adopted, 223 (77.7%) were adopted by consensus. This figure and those of recent years (76.0% in 2000, 76.9% in 1999, 78% in 1998, 75.2% in 1997, 72.9% in 1996, 76.6% in 1995, and 77.4% in 1994) illustrate the high rate of consensus agreement in the work of the General Assembly. Combining the 223 resolutions and the 81 of 83 decisions adopted by consensus, the percentage of questions adopted by consensus was 82.2%. (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 2001 was 31.7%, down significantly from 43.0% in 2000 and reflecting the general down–trend since 1995 (see the table below), when the voting coincidence reached 50.6%. 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 several years following the end of the Cold War. (See the graphs at the end of this section.) The 50.6% in 1995 was the first time the coincidence figure had exceeded 50% since 1978, and is more than three times the low point of 15.4% in 1988.

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 (85.0%), which more accurately reflects the work of the General Assembly, is slightly below the 86–88% range recorded since it was first included in this report in 1993. It was 87.6% in 2000, 86.4% in 1999, 88.3% in 1998, 87.3% in 1997, 87.3% also in 1996, 88.2% in 1995, 88.8% in 1994, and 88.3% in 1993.

The coincidence figure on votes considered important to U.S. interests (29.9%) is even lower than the percentage registered on overall votes (31.7%). The graphs at the end of this section illustrate this point. A side–by–side comparison of important and overall votes for each UN member is at the end of Section III.

The following table illustrates the gradual decrease in voting coincidence with the United States since the post–Cold War high of 50.6% in 1995. This decrease is reflected also in the votes on human rights. On Middle East issues, the vote in 2001 was back up from the previous year, and more in line with other post–1995 years. The trend had been generally up on arms control votes, except for the drop to a 5–year low in 1999 and the significant drop in 2001. (See also the graph on votes by issue categories at the end of this section.)

Year	Arms Control	Middle East	Human Rights	Overall Votes
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%

As in past years, Israel (91.7%), Micronesia (93.2%), the Marshall Islands (91.9%), and the United Kingdom (71.7%) were among the highest in voting coincidence with the United States. Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, France, and Canada were also in the top 10. The Baltic countries, Australia, Germany, and Hungary were close behind.

In general, 2001 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 54.4%, which is down from 61.5% in 2000, 67.1% in 1999, 65.2% in 1998, and 70.9% in 1997. There has been a growing divergence between the United States and the European Union (which, at 53.5%, was down from 62.5% in 2000, 68.5% in 1999, 66.7% in 1998, and 73.0% in 1997). The Eastern European group was also down in 2001, at an average of 48.8%, which was down from 58.0% in 2000, 61.7% in 1999 and 1998, and 68.6% in 1997 and 1996. After this group's meteoric rise in coincidence with the United States following the dissolution of the Soviet bloc, it largely matched the coincidence level of the Western European countries before its decline in the past four years. The NATO and Nordic countries also decreased in voting coincidence with the United States again in 2001, reversing the rise in 1999 and previous recent years. The African and Asian groups, the Islamic Conference, and the Non–Aligned Movement all declined in voting coincidence with the United States, as did the Latin American and Caribbean group. (See the graph at the end of this section.)

More than 80 countries agreed with the U.S. vote less than 25% of the time, far more than the usual 15–25 countries.

Realization of U.S. Priorities

The United States accomplished its top objective at the 56th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA): strengthening the global coalition against terrorism. The terrorist attacks of September 11 in the United States redefined the agenda for the UNGA, which unanimously condemned international terrorism in its first resolution. Solidarity with the United States after September 11, combined with U.S. repayment of its arrears in assessed contributions, set a more positive tone. Counter–terrorism was the focus of an unprecedented week–long UNGA plenary session and emerged as the common theme for member state speeches during the general debate. Most UNGA members declared opposition to terrorism and support for UN Security Council Resolution 1373, but familiar divisions persisted, especially over a supposed distinction between terrorism and resistance to foreign occupation. The UNGA took a constructive approach to Afghanistan, adopting a U.S.–sponsored resolution calling for implementation of the Bonn Agreement.

The United States also succeeded in promoting human rights, peacekeeping reform, and UN budget reform at the UNGA session, as well as electing U.S. candidates to key UN offices. The U.S. delegation joined consensus on most of the resolutions adopted, but continued to differ with most UN members on such issues as the Middle East, economic rights, some arms control matters, the International Criminal Court, climate change, and the U.S. embargo on Cuba.

On **disarmament and international security matters**, the U.S. delegation persuaded many states to abstain and a few to vote No on Russia's ABM Treaty resolution, but the plenary still succeeded in adopting it. The United States voted alone or nearly alone on a number of high profile resolutions, including one on the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

On **economic and financial issues**, the most contentious resolutions involved climate change, poverty, least–developed countries, science and technology, and the regular budget resolution. The U.S. delegation was able, however, to insert forward–leaning biotechnology language in the science and technology resolution. Debate on the climate change resolution revealed widespread opposition to the U.S. stance on the Kyoto Protocol. There was also a continued North–South divide on development strategy, with the South calling for greater outside assistance and the North emphasizing individual national responsibility. In the budget resolution, North–South differences also emerged, with the South seeking real growth in the UN budget, while the North stressed budget discipline.

On **social, humanitarian, and cultural matters**, the UNGA adopted over 70 human rights resolutions, including U.S–cosponsored texts on Iran, Iraq, Cambodia, and Burma (Myanmar). The United States also cosponsored thematic resolutions on religious intolerance, human rights defenders, disabled

persons, literacy, youth, volunteerism, anti–drug efforts, and refugees. The U.S. delegation voted against resolutions on mercenaries, Palestinian self–determination, globalization and human rights, the right to development, and the right to food. Because of a reference to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the U.S. delegation called for a vote on the paragraph urging implementation of the Convention, but then joined consensus on the resolution on the girl child.

The United States voted against eight resolutions on **Israeli–Palestinian issues**, joined consensus on a resolution on the UN Relief and Works Administration (UNRWA), and abstained on a resolution on assistance to Palestinian refugees.

The **budget** for 2002–2003 was set at $2.65 billion, which represents a 1.5 percent increase per year over the last biennium budget. This level is $76 million below the roughly $2.7 billion sought by the Secretary General and many UN delegations but above zero nominal growth. It is a level within **"zero real growth"** because the increase can be attributed to anticipated inflation and exchange rate costs. For the first time, the budget reflects a **results–based–budgeting** format, a key UN reform initiative that should enhance program evaluation and monitoring efforts. The budget resolution also asked for the Secretary General to establish priorities for mandates and programs. The UNGA also approved U.S.–supported staff increases to strengthen UN peacekeeping capacity and enhance security for UN personnel in the field.

On **legal issues**, negotiations on an India–sponsored comprehensive convention on international terrorism failed to reach resolution due to disagreements over the definition of terrorism. The UNGA authorized preliminary consideration of a possible convention to ban reproductive cloning of humans; expert discussions will follow. The United States objected to and did not participate in a consensus resolution on the International Criminal Court.

SECURITY COUNCIL

The Security Council was again in 2001 a major focus of U.S. attention in the United Nations. The continuing tendency toward consensus among its members facilitated the Council's adoption of 52 resolutions during the year, fewer than during the post–Cold War peak of Security Council action in 1992–1994, but far more than during the Cold War era when Council action was often frustrated. The Council also issued 39 presidential statements; these are consensus documents issued by the Council president on behalf of the members. The large number of resolutions adopted and statements issued reflects the continuing reliance of member countries on Security Council action to assist in resolving threats to peace and security following the end of the Cold War.

The Security Council was again heavily involved in giving direction to UN peacekeeping and mediation efforts throughout the world in 2001. The Council's resolutions are described in Section IV.

Voting coincidence percentages for Security Council members were again high. Most resolutions were adopted unanimously: 51 out of 54 (94%), one of which was adopted by acclamation, i.e., without a vote (to fill a vacancy on the International Court of Justice). The United States vetoed two resolutions on the Middle East—one of which expressed the Council's readiness to establish a UN observer force—because they embodied attempts to impose a solution in the absence of agreement between the two sides. There were no other No votes. The United States abstained on a resolution on ending some sanctions on Sudan. There were six other abstentions, all on the two resolutions vetoed by the United States. See the table on voting summaries at the end of Section IV.

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.

This report also includes an additional column in the tables in Section II (Overall Votes) and Section III (Important Votes), which presents the percentage of voting coincidence with the United States after including consensus resolutions as additional identical votes. Since not all states are equally active at the United Nations, we have credited to each country a portion of the 223 consensus resolutions based on its participation in the 88 recorded plenary votes. Each country's participation rate was calculated by dividing the number of Yes/No/Abstain votes it cast in plenary (i.e., the number of times it was not absent) by the total of plenary votes. These added columns, by including consensus actions, provide another perspective on UN activity. In our view, they reflect more accurately the extent of cooperation and agreement in the General Assembly.

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. The percentages in the last column, using the older methodology, 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 abstained or was absent. Abstentions and absences are often difficult to interpret, but they make a mathematical difference, sometimes major, in the percentage results. Inclusion of the number of abstentions and absences in the tables of this report enables readers to include them in calculating voting coincidence percentages if they wish to do so. The percentages in the second column from the right reflect

more fully the activity of the General Assembly. 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 column. There may be overwhelming agreement with the U.S. position on a matter of less importance to us and less support on a resolution we consider more important. These differences are difficult to quantify and to present in one or two coincidence figures.

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. Nevertheless, 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 regularly makes in letters of instruction to new U.S. ambassadors. This is also why copies of this report are presented to UN member foreign ministries throughout the world and to member state missions to the United Nations in New York. The Security Council and the General Assembly are arguably the most important international bodies in the world, dealing as they do with such vital issues as threats to peace and security, disarmament, development, humanitarian relief, human rights, the environment, and narcotics—all of which can and do directly affect major U.S. interests.

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