Politics and Process at the United Nations

The Global Dance

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Member States and Delegates

THE UNITED NATIONS IS A COMPLEX NETWORK OF INTERCONNECTED BODies: assemblies, councils, committees, commissions, programs, agencies, and funds. This reality is often obscured by journalists and politicians who talk in terms of a single United Nations that either succeeds or fails when it acts. For example, in the first half of 2003 numerous analyses bemoaned the failure of the United Nations to prevent the United States from acting outside the authority of the Security Council when it launched a military campaign against Iraq. Calling the United Nations "irrelevant" or worse, these pundits themselves committed a rather startling failure in their inability to understand that the UN is, first and foremost, an intergovernmental body whose successes and failures, however judged, result from political processes through which its member states interact. Viewing the UN in this manner helps us understand that the Council's inaction against Iraq was not the fault of the United Nations; it resulted directly from the fact that the Council's members could not arrive at a common approach for dealing with continued Iraqi noncompliance with its disarmament obligations.

To clarify what the UN is and is not, and thus allow for more nuanced and accurate assessments of its performance, one eminent international organization scholar has spoken of "two UNs" (Claude, 1996, pp. 290–292). In this conceptualization, the "first UN" is composed primarily of the organization's staff of international civil servants, who are dependent on the organization's members for resources but can act alongside them at times with considerable independence. The "second UN" is a collective entity composed of its member states, who use the organization as a forum for promoting their own interests and preferred outcomes. Sometimes states find that this forum facilitates finding common approaches to pressing issues; however, just as

often these efforts can result in stalemate and inaction, as happened in the case of Iraq in March 2003. Naturally, these two UNs operate in very different ways. The "first UN" is mainly concerned with rendering impartial assistance to parties in need through noncoercive, consensual, and neutral mechanisms; the "second UN" by its very nature is essentially judgmental, partisan, and coercive.

Other scholars use a different vocabulary to discuss essentially the same dichotomy. For example, Thomas Weiss, David Forsythe, and Roger Coate describe the UN as both an "actor" and a "framework" (2001, pp. 12–15). At the heart of their discussion of these roles lies the issue of organizational autonomy: when, if ever, is it possible to talk about the UN as an actor that operates independently of the preferences of its members? While there is substantial debate among scholars and practitioners on this point, the consensus view is that the range of issues and tasks in which the UN is an independent actor is necessarily limited. In the great majority of situations, the UN is most accurately viewed as a framework through which its members pursue their goals in international politics, often at the expense of other states. While some examples of how the UN's staff can act independently of its membership will be offered in Chapter 4, "The Secretariat and the Secretary-General," this view of the "second UN" as a framework for its members will dominate the discussion in this chapter and in Part 2 of the book, on UN procedures and processes.

Conceptualizing the UN as an intergovernmental framework is logical, given the fact that its members have two important mechanisms for controlling the organization: the power of vote and the power of the purse. In terms of voting, all authoritative decisions made on behalf of the United Nations are taken by the member states that sit on a particular body. In some cases this involves all 191 members; in other cases it may involve only a small fraction of them (such as the fifteen-member Security Council). As was mentioned in the introduction, there are certainly other actors that play a role in the political processes of the UN and that will be surveyed in the following chapters; however, at the end of the day only the member states have the ability to move the organization to action through their dominance of its structures and procedures for decisionmaking. As if the power of vote were not enough, states also have the ability to dominate the organization by controlling its resources, since all UN funding is provided by its members, either through required assessments for the regular and peacekeeping budgets or through voluntary contributions for specific agencies or funds. A number of proposals for reforming UN financing would modify these arrangements (Mendez, 1997, pp. 297–304), but none of them have achieved much mileage politically, because member states continue to value having two different means of exercising control.

Because of this dominance, any discussion of the participants in the global dance of parliamentary diplomacy must begin with a focus on member states and how they represent their interests at the United Nations. This involves three separate but related areas of concern in this chapter. First, the roles that various types of member states play in the United Nations are examined. These roles vary based on the power capabilities of the state in question and based on its past and future policy priorities at the UN. Second, variations in the permanent missions of member states, in terms of both the size and structure of their delegations, are discussed. Finally, the chapter considers how the personal attributes of individual delegates can have a significant impact on their effectiveness in achieving their state's interests within the give-and-take of the UN's political processes. Variations in delegate autonomy are discussed in this section, and four different general types of UN delegates are described.

State Roles at the United Nations

Article 2, Paragraph 1 of the United Nations Charter says that "the Organization is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all of its Members." This equality is most directly reflected in the voting formula used in all UN bodies: one state, one vote. While there are some distortions of this equality in voting, such as the great-power veto in the Security Council, one could look at the UN's decisionmaking procedures discussed in Part 2 of this book and conclude that every member state has essentially the same degree of influence over outcomes, since each possess just one of 191 votes in all bodies where the full membership is represented. However, this sovereign equality on paper must be understood in terms of the political realities in which the UN operates; some UN members are clearly more equal than others. The differences in influence among UN members are often attributed to the fact that the international system is composed of states with varying degrees of power, and these power differences translate into corresponding differences in influence within the UN (Keohane, 1967, p. 222). Thus understanding what a state can achieve at the UN has much to do with appreciating the resources and other capabilities it can use to push the organization in the direction it desires.

However, looking solely at state power does not provide a complete picture of the different roles that states can play in the political processes of the United Nations. This is true because, at a very basic level, dif-

ferent members have different visions of what the UN is and what it should be doing. Writing originally in 1961, UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld identified two distinct ways member states viewed the UN:

> Certain members conceive of the Organization as a static conference machinery for resolving conflicts of interest and ideologies with a view to peaceful coexistence, [whereas] other members have made it clear that they conceive of the Organization primarily as a dynamic instrument of governments through which they, jointly and for the same purpose, should seek such reconciliation but through which they should also try to develop forms of executive action. (Hammarskjöld, 1967, p. 109)

While one could disagree with the exact nature of the two schools that Hammarskjöld identified in the 1960s, his general point is an important one: member states that see the UN in different ways will enjoy distinct advantages and disadvantages in their efforts to influence its decisions. The following paragraphs will seek, then, to arrive at some general observations regarding how two distinct considerations have an impact on a country's role at the UN: its ability to exercise influence and its desire to do so.

From the start, it should be clear that the roles that certain UN members play in the organization have evolved over time. For example, from the founding of the United Nations to the present, the United States has remained one of the most dominant (or, as many would say, the most dominant) of its members. However, over this same period, both the ability and the desire of the United States to influence outcomes at the UN have changed. Over the first two decades of UN activity, the United States was able to draw on its support in Latin America and its large financial contributions to use the UN as a means of legitimizing its desired actions (Karns and Mingst, 1995, p. 412). However, this dominance clearly waned across the 1970s and 1980s, as the membership expanded and the United States lost its long-held voting majority. Though the United States continued to be the largest financial contributor to the UN, its ability to secure preferred policy outcomes was severely diminished (Luck, 1999, pp. 111–114). This, in turn, resulted in a decreased US desire to even try to influence the UN, as it was seen as a "dangerous place" for US interests (Moynihan, 1978). Fortunately, the situation changed in the early 1990s. The US financial contribution remained large, and its control over votes (especially in the General Assembly) remained limited, but its desire to wield influence certainly increased in the aftermath of the successful US-UN partnership during

the Gulf War in 1991. However, this euphoria was soon followed by renewed disengagement on the part of the United States (Gregg, 1993, p. 143), a development that marked the beginning of a pattern of rapid and tumultuous changes in the US role in the UN. These changes have persisted through the frustrations associated with how to best handle Iraq in 2003 (see Smith, 2004).

The United States provides a telling example of how changes in a country's ability and desire to influence the UN can significantly affect its role in the UN—and the US experience is far from unique. Other major powers in the United Nations have seen their interests and roles in the organization evolve over time. For example, as Japan moved to the status of one of the UN's largest financial contributors in the 1980s, its desire to wield influence in the political processes of key UN bodies also increased. Such activism had not been apparent in Japan's relationship with the UN in previous decades, and it has clearly resulted in a new set of policy priorities focused on UN reform (Ogata, 1995, pp. 231–232). However, other active UN members have exhibited a greater consistency in the role they have played at the UN. Two middle powers that are often identified in this regard are Canada and the Netherlands. Part of their consistency in the UN may be due to the fact that the ability of these states to wield influence has not undergone much change, as it has for the United States and Japan; however, it also results from the fact that these members have made unwavering support for the UN a cornerstone of their foreign policy (Krause, Knight, and Dewitt, 1995, p. 132; Baehr, 1995, pp. 272–273). Regardless of any changes in their ability to influence UN processes, they have consistently served as an example to other members of how states with a strong desire to work through the UN can use it as an effective instrument to achieve their goals.

Clearly both the ability to influence UN decisionmaking and the desire to do so can cause a particular member state to assume a specific role in the organization (Cox and Jacobson, 1973b, pp. 20–21). This raises an important question: what factors affect whether or not a state will have the ability and desire to exercise influence in the UN? While there are many possibilities, the following pages will discuss four factors that can affect a member state's ability to exercise influence and four separate but related factors that can affect its desire to work through the organization. Factors affecting a state's ability include its position in the international system, its financial resources, its use of voting coalitions, and how vital its participation is in addressing the issue at hand; factors affecting a state's desire include the nature of its political system, its policy history related to the UN, its reputation or status in the organization, and its expertise on salient "niche issues."

Factors Affecting State Ability to Wield Influence

The first factor that affects a state's ability to exert influence in the political process of the United Nations is its relative position in the international system. All international organizations operate within a larger environment that can have a decisive impact on the organization's behavior and performance by acting as both a constraint and determinant of decisions (Cox and Jacobson, 1973b, p. 25; Ness and Brechin, 1988, p. 249). In the case of the United Nations, this environment consists of the entire international state system; when the position of specific countries within this system changes, their ability to wield influence in the United Nations also changes (Haas, 1968, p. 170). As can be expected, much of this interaction between the United Nations and broader dynamics of international politics is based on the coalitions, groups, and blocs that are formed as part of the organization's political processes. These collective actors will receive detailed attention in the following chapter. It is also true that an important relationship exists between the power of individual states in general international affairs and their ability to exercise influence in specific international organizations (Cox and Jacobson, 1973b, pp. 20, 27–28).

Translating power outside an organization into power inside the organization is never an exact science, but it is not surprising that major powers that possess military or economic strength might be accorded special deference or influence in certain decisions. For example, if a member's military power is considered crucial to the success of a particular peacekeeping mission, then that state will enjoy greater leverage in determining the nature and scope of the mission. The efforts of major powers to draw on their international position to increase their influence within an international organization can at times be rather blatant; however, these processes often unfold without resort to explicit threats or pressure (Keohane, 1967, p. 223). In the case of Security Council deliberations on Iraq in February and March 2003, the six undecided members (Angola, Cameroon, Chile, Guinea, Mexico, and Pakistan) came under intense pressure by both the states that favored military action (the United States, Britain, Spain, and Bulgaria) and those that wanted the weapons inspectors to have more time (France, Germany, Syria, Russia, and China). Public discussion of these efforts stressed that neither side was using overt economic leverage on the so-called middle six but that the sizable aid packages and other ties between these states and the various major powers did weigh heavily in the discussions (Weisman and Barringer, 2003).

A second factor that can affect a member state's ability to influence UN decisionmaking is its financial contribution to the organization.

While most UN voting is based on the sovereign equality of the members, UN financing is governed by a formula based on a state's capacity to pay: states with larger economies pay more, while states with weaker economies pay less. Each member is assessed a percentage of the UN's regular operating budget based on its average per capita gross national product (GNP). This basic assessment is modified for the majority of UN members in the case of expenditures for peacekeeping operations; the permanent members of the Security Council pay an extra premium so that states with weaker economies, arranged in eight different groups, get varying amounts of discount.

The results of this system have important implications for the ability of different member states to influence UN decisions. Based on the scale of assessment for the regular budget in 2002, the top seven contributors (who also happen to be the members of the Group of Seven [G7], the world's largest industrialized democracies) are the United States at 22 percent, Japan at 19.7 percent, Germany at 9.9 percent, France at 6.5 percent, the United Kingdom at 5.6 percent, Italy at 5.1 percent, and Canada at 2.6 percent (*United Nations Handbook*, 2002, pp. 360–364). Thus just seven members contribute 71.4 percent of the UN's regular budget, with the 184 other members providing the remaining 28.6 percent. In fact, only eleven other members even break the 1 percent threshold with their contributions, and if their contributions are set with those of the G7, then eighteen UN members provide just under 90 percent of the organization's regular budget. The imbalances found on the regular scale are even more pronounced on the peacekeeping scale, because the G7 countries all pay at the same or even higher rates, and many of the 184 other members receive corresponding discounts.

The major financial contributors to the United Nations have repeatedly demonstrated willingness to use their financial muscle to express displeasure or opposition to certain UN programs and activities. The most dramatic examples of these efforts led to the three major financial crises that have beset the organization (Karns and Mingst, 2002, pp. 273–276). The first of these was in the early 1960s, when France and the Soviet Union questioned whether all members should be required to contribute to new peacekeeping missions in the Middle East and the Congo. The second financial crisis emerged in the mid-1980s, when the United States started withholding part of its dues because the Reagan administration objected to certain UN policies and the politicization of some UN agencies. The United States also sought to force changes in some UN procedures, especially those associated with budgeting, and it was supported by seventeen other UN members that withheld payments for similar reasons. These efforts resulted in new budgeting arrange-

ments that allowed the organization's major financial contributors to have greater influence. The third financial crisis arose in the late 1990s when again the United States used the "withholding tool" in an effort to secure twenty UN reforms contained in the Helms-Biden Agreement, passed by the US Congress in 1999. While the effort to fully resolve this round of arrears remained incomplete as of 2004, two of the most important objectives of the United States were achieved in late 2000 when US assessments for the regular budget and peacekeeping were lowered (see Smith, 2004). All three crises demonstrate that the major financial contributors to the UN have a powerful means of influence that they have been able to use effectively.

The first two factors affecting a state's ability to exercise influence at the United Nations, international position and financial contribution, generally benefit only the most powerful UN members. However, the preceding discussion sheds light on one of the most important mechanisms of influence available to medium and smaller UN members: the fact they represent a majority of UN members. If these states work cooperatively, they can relatively easily command a dominant voting majority in every UN body except the Security Council and forums that rely on consensus decisionmaking. Like-minded states realize that their power is multiplied when they form common negotiating groups (Keohane, 1967, p. 223). Such groups maximize the bargaining power of their members and allow for a division of labor across negotiations that are often detailed and complex (Hong, 1995, p. 280). These groups will be discussed as collective actors in the following chapter; for now it is important to understand that many of the UN's political processes can be understood in terms of members' trying to empower themselves through the use of coalitions and groups (Morphet, 2000, p. 261). Sometimes these groups remain fractured and disjointed; however, they can be a powerful tool for augmenting the ability of small states to pursue their interests through UN processes (Trent, 1995, p. 467). One of the most dramatic examples of the power of a large group of small states working together was seen in the 1970s, when such a group effectively set the agenda of the UN on issues such as the legacies of colonization and demands for a new international economic order (NIEO).

A fourth and final factor that can affect the ability of a member state to get its way in the UN is its role in regard to the specific issue at hand. Some UN members possess sufficient power, money, or allies to exert influence across a wide range of UN issues; however, other members may lack all three of these resources and still be able to change the direction of UN action. This is true even in the case of relatively isolated smaller powers where they are directly involved in either causing or

solving a problem (Keohane, 1967, pp. 228–232). States directly affected by a situation tend to be more committed to seeing their preferred outcome achieved. More powerful states for which the issue has less salience may see clear advantages in deferring to the normally less influential member in this particular case. Even if the more powerful members remain directly involved, small, isolated members can influence the UN's decisionmaking when it is their behavior that the UN is addressing. For example, across the 1990s Iraq's sovereignty was severely circumscribed by the Security Council, as it authorized inspection regimes, no-fly zones, and strict controls on Iraqi oil exports. However, at least until early 2003, Iraq was able to have a significant impact on the nature of Council deliberations, since it was Iraq's behavior the Council wanted to change. Iraq repeatedly used this to its advantage by offering last-minute concessions that frequently sidestepped key issues but created enough disunity among Council members that dire consequences were avoided. In essence, being a target of UN actions was itself a source of leverage within the UN's political processes.

Factors Affecting State Desire to Wield Influence

As we turn from factors that affect a state's ability to exercise influence at the UN to factors that affect its desire to do so, it is important to consider the political processes through which a state determines its policy at the UN. Classic writings on international organizations often conceptualized this dynamic in terms of different types of domestic political regimes. A rather obvious focus, given the realities of the cold war, was on competitive (democratic) versus authoritarian regimes (Cox and Jacobson, 1973b, pp. 29–32); however, special attention was also paid to "revolutionary regimes" and how their goals and priorities in international organizations were to a large extent based on their histories of exploitation (Haas, 1968). An undercurrent in these writings is the assumption that democratic regimes would desire to play a more active and supportive role in international organizations, since their domestic political system is premised on the role that institutions can play in effective governance. However, the roller-coaster relationship between the United States and the United Nations over time, discussed above, suggests that trying to categorize a country's desire to work through the UN based simply on its regime type is fraught with difficulty.

More recent studies have offered greater detail in conceptualizing the relationship between a state's domestic political system and its desired role in the UN. For example, the conclusion of one investigatation of how eight UN members (Algeria, Canada, France, Japan, the

Netherlands, Nigeria, the United Kingdom, and the United States) formed their foreign policy in relation to the organization was that while some states' policy was formed by a small group of political elites in the executive branch, other states' policy was influenced by legislatures and public opinion as well (Trent, 1995, pp. 494). These differences resulted in some states' having a consistent and stable view of their role in the UN, while others, generally those with a more decentralized policy process, moving between UN engagement and UN neglect. The conclusion of a companion study that examined the same issue in regard to a different set of seven UN members (Germany, India, Sweden, Romania, Chile, Jamaica, and Sierra Leone) looked instead at variation in the relationship between the state and civil society (Knight and Krause, 1995, pp. 250–255). In countries with a strong state apparatus, the state's orientation toward multilateralism in general, and the UN in particular, was often influenced by the desires of the top leaders. In some such cases, like Romania and Sierra Leone, there was little desire to work through the UN, but others, like Sweden, developed the opposite orientation. In cases where society was relatively autonomous from the state, like Jamaica, the study found that the country's orientation to the UN was more variable, based on the interests that captured the state at various times.

A second factor that affects a state's desire to exert influence at the UN concerns the state's past history, both within and outside of the organization. In terms of a state's general history, a variety of experiences can cause the state to favor or not favor multilateral venues such as the United Nations: its colonial history (as master or subject), its reputation in terms of protecting the human rights of its people, its traditional allies and enemies, its geographic location, its position in the global economy, and its endowment of natural resources, to name some of the most cited examples (Trent, 1995, pp. 476–479; Knight and Krause, 1995, pp. 248–250). These historical experiences may not apply to all states, and the considerations just mentioned may push the same state in contradictory directions in terms of its orientation toward the UN; in any case, these experiences, where relevant, act as a filter through which a state must decide what role the UN will play in its foreign policy.

A related consideration is the state's past history specifically in relation to the UN. One way to think about this is the state's historical "presence" in the organization (Pentland, 1989, p. 6). This certainly relates to the state's power and financial contribution, but it also involves its level of participation in the organization: is it an active member, and has it provided Secretariat personnel, peacekeeping

troops, or leadership in UN bodies? Another aspect of a state's history with the UN concerns any instances when the country has been on the receiving end of UN programs: has it been given assistance for development or decolonization, been the subject of a peacekeeping mission or human rights investigation, or been punished with multilateral sanctions? Finally, both large and small members are likely to calculate the future utility of the UN in light of how useful a tool it has been in the past (Trent, 1995, pp. 472–474). If the state has sought UN approval for a previous course of action, whether or not it received that support will weigh heavily in any future decisions about seeking UN legitimacy for its policies.

A third factor that provides clues for understanding why some states choose to be more active in the UN's political processes than others is their reputation in the organization. If a particular member enjoys a positive reputation in the eyes of its fellow members, its desire to draw on that reputation in order to achieve preferred outcomes can be significantly enhanced. This is especially true for those small and middle powers that over time have come to assume the role of brokers or "bridge-builders" in the United Nations (Kaufmann, 1980, pp. 17–18). These actors will receive additional attention in the following chapter and in Part 2 of the book; at this juncture it is important to stress simply that these states can enjoy a degree of influence in the UN well beyond what their power or financial contribution would suggest.

That certain small and middle powers would play a central role in the UN is not surprising; in fact, certain UN activities like peacekeeping were designed specifically to take advantage of the characteristics of these states (Bennett and Oliver, 2002, p. 157). The most important of these characteristics are, first, their perceived impartiality or neutrality on key issues, which allows them some freedom to maneuver within the complex and shifting coalitions often found in UN bodies, and, second, their high level of consistent support for all UN activities, given that the principles of the UN are seen as forming an integral part of their national interest. The activities of brokers extend to nearly all issues on the UN's agenda. For example, on human rights small and middle powers, especially those who are truly nonaligned with the major powers or offending states, were instrumental in moving the UN from simply drafting standards to actual monitoring and implementation in the 1980s (Forsythe, 1988, p. 254; Egeland, 1984, p. 208). Likewise, on the Law of the Sea negotiations in the late 1970s and again in the early 1990s, small and middle powers were instrumental in building the complex package agreements that were required to create the seabed mining regime and then modify its structure (Sanger, 1987, pp. 194, 210;

Joyner, 1996, p. 46). Member states that have performed this role include Canada, the Nordic countries, the Netherlands, Australia, New Zealand, Senegal, Brazil, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Italy, India, Mexico, the Philippines, Argentina, Fiji, and Indonesia. The influence of brokers has become so important in UN decisionmaking that participants in its political processes are quick to lament their absence where they have chosen not to be active on certain issues, such as the negotiations to reform the Security Council in the mid-1990s (Smith, 1999, p. 191).

The fourth and final factor that can affect a state's desire to influence UN politics is certain areas of specialization or "niche issues" on which some states assume an active and constructive role (Hong, 1995, p. 283). This is especially important in the case of small states that lack the power or resources often associated with influence and whose participation is not required for resolving the problem at hand. In this case, the states want to influence the decisions simply because they find the issue highly salient to them or because they have developed some degree of expertise on technical aspects of the problem. Other members do not *need* to allow these states to wield influence, but they can find it useful to allow them to play an active role due to their passion, knowledge, and willingness to look for innovative solutions. Examples of small and middle states that have developed "niche issues" include Malta on the Law of the Sea and climate change, New Zealand on the safety of UN personnel, Singapore on UN reform, the Nordic countries and Fiji on peacekeeping, Sri Lanka on the Indian Ocean, and Mexico on nuclear disarmament (Hong, 1995, p. 283).

A Typology of State Roles

As was mentioned above, the roles that any state plays in the United Nations are not constant and immutable; they often evolve over time based on changes in the state's ability to wield influence and its desire to do so. However, over the course of UN history, numerous attempts have been made to categorize member states in groups based on the roles they play in the organization. These efforts are most commonly made by former practitioners, but international organization scholars have also offered observations in this regard. The results are often quite illuminating for outsiders who want a basic understanding of the dynamics at play in the UN; unfortunately, the typologies they offer are useful only as long as the constellation of state abilities and desires that they capture remains unchanged. The typology that will be presented here involves eight groups of states identified by Taylor (2000a, pp. 299–304) in the conclusion of a volume evaluating the UN at the turn of the century. His typology is especially useful since his criteria for grouping UN members are very much consistent with the two sets of factors discussed above: "the orientation of their governments towards the organization and their status in the hierarchy of states at the global and regional levels" (ibid., p. 299).

Taylor's first four groups of states are major and middle powers that play an active role in the organization. His first group is status quo powers whose position in the organization is consistent with their status in the international system. The members in this group, the United States, China, and the Russian Federation, are all generally (though not always) willing to work through the organization because it contains certain structural elements (like the veto) that protect their perceived role and interests in international affairs. His second group is composed of status quo powers like Britain and France, whose position in the UN exceeds their status in the international system. These states see the UN as "suiting their interests": their position in the organization enhances their status outside it by enabling them to "punch above [their] weight" (ibid., p. 300). His third group of states is "reformist"; members of this group, Germany, Japan, and Italy, consider their formal status in the organization to fall far below their significant contributions to it and their rising informal status. These states want to reform the organization such that their formal position in it is enhanced to better reflect the actual role that they play. The fourth group identified by Taylor is made up of "system-reinforcing problem-solvers" like Sweden, the Netherlands, Norway, Finland, and Canada. These members are significant contributors to the organization and enjoy a high informal status within it; however, they are relatively unconcerned about obtaining a match between their status in international politics and their formal position in the UN.

Turning to the developing world, Taylor offers four groups in order to capture some great differences between states that are often lumped together in other typologies. His fifth group again consists of "reformist" states, but in this case their claims for increased formal status within the organization are not matched by a corresponding status in the international system or a substantial enough contribution to the organization. For these states, including Brazil, India, and Nigeria, much of their claim for an enhanced status is based on their leadership in their respective regions; however, in each case this leadership has been questioned by other regional powers, like Mexico, Argentina, Pakistan, South Africa, and Egypt. The sixth group is composed of "system loading claimants" from the developing world, including most members of the Group of 77 (G77). These states have little to contribute

to the organization but still want to work through it, since they are on the receiving end of UN programs designed to help with their economic and social problems. This group is internally diverse, with some of its members fairly described as developing and other members more accurately seen as being close to collapse. The seventh group is also composed of "claimants"; however, these members (e.g., Yemen, Cuba, Sudan, Malaysia, Indonesia, and sometimes Algeria) believe that the organization is in drastic need of reform before it will be able to fully address their interests. Their focus is on structural reforms and collective action. Taylor's final group consists of pariah states like Libya, Iran, Iraq, and Burma, which see no real positive benefit in their UN membership but remain in the organization solely in order to avoid the added costs they would suffer if they left.

It is certainly possible to disagree with how Taylor has classified certain members, especially those whose role has changed due to new foreign policy priorities and capabilities. One could also question where certain states (like Israel) would fit in his scheme. Nevertheless, his typology is a useful mechanism for thinking about how the membership of states with different resources and different visions of the UN falls into distinct patterns. This in turn sets the stage for considering how member states actually go about representing their interests at the UN. While some of this discussion must wait until UN procedures are examined in Part 2, the next section of this chapter begins the process by exploring how members organize their permanent missions and structure their delegations.

Permanent Missions and Delegations

United Nations members have varying priorities and visions for the organization; however, by and large all of them are in the organization because they receive certain tangible and intangible benefits from membership. Every member state has established mechanisms for pursuing its interests at the UN, most often in the form of a permanent mission and delegations. It is common for those unfamiliar with UN processes to lump these two mechanisms together, since their roles and functions are interrelated. Unfortunately, this simplification glosses over some important distinctions (Kaufmann, 1980, p. 103). A permanent mission is essentially a country's embassy to the United Nations; its primary responsibility is to represent the interests of the state in the organization, much as an embassy would in a foreign capital. It is typically headed by an ambassador, staffed by foreign service officers, and functions continuously once established. A delegation, on the other hand, is composed of the personnel who are accredited to represent a country at a particular UN meeting or series of meetings. Their membership is temporary and often more diverse.

A country's permanent mission to the UN and the delegations it sends to UN meetings must work in a complementary fashion (Peterson, 1986, pp. 288–289). For starters, staff from the permanent mission are often included in delegations for specific meetings or conferences. In addition, one of the main functions of the permanent mission is to provide each delegation with the necessary support to effectively represent the country's interests in negotiations. This support can include providing information on past UN efforts to address the issue at hand, analyzing key negotiating texts circulated before the meeting begins, identifying key individuals from other member states who are potential allies or adversaries, communicating with the home government, acting as the institutional memory for the delegation from one meeting to the next, and training new personnel in the dynamics of parliamentary diplomacy if necessary. The importance of this interaction will become evident as the basic features of permanent missions and delegations are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Permanent Missions

The use of permanent missions in multilateral diplomacy is a development that really occurred only after the UN was established. More than forty members of the League of Nations created "permanent delegations" in Geneva; however, scholars have concluded that this development was of "no serious significance" (Walters, 1952, p. 199) and that the League essentially operated without them (Peterson, 1986, p. 288). The UN Charter did not specifically call for member states to create permanent missions in New York. Thus it is rather remarkable that by 1948 permanent missions were an integral feature of the United Nations. Several explanations for this rapid emergence have been offered: the fast-paced tempo of postwar diplomacy, the increase in meeting activity in the UN as compared to the League, and the fact the new organization was not located in a state capital where members might have already had a permanent diplomatic presence (Kay, 1967, p. 93; Appathurai, 1985, pp. 96–97). In addition, Article 28, Paragraph 1 of the UN Charter mandates that "the Security Council shall be so organized as to be able to function continuously. Each member of the Security Council shall for this purpose be represented at all times at the seat of the Organization." It is likely that other states were simply fol-

lowing the example of Council members when they established their own permanent missions (Peterson, 1986, p. 288).

In any case, permanent missions perform a variety of important functions for the member states beyond the services they provide to delegations. In many respects their functions are quite similar to those of any embassy: representing the interests of their country in all negotiations, reporting on developments that have either an immediate or a potential future impact on the country's policy priorities, gathering information about the interests and positions of other participants, disseminating propaganda, and contributing to the process of formulating the country's policy in the first place (Kay, 1967, p. 93; Aggrey-Orleans, 1998, pp. 50–51). However, there are also some functions of permanent missions that set them apart from bilateral embassies (Finger, 1990, pp. 18–22). For example, all the tasks just mentioned do not take place within the context of one other government; they are carried out in an environment where up to 190 other perspectives must be considered when one is drafting policy, designing negotiating strategies, and delivering propaganda. In addition, permanent missions must be aware of how to manipulate UN rules of procedure and be ready to offer specific proposals on a much wider range of issues than bilateral embassies must address.

These differences have led some to suggest that permanent missions can function as if they were mini or shadow foreign ministries, somewhat free of direction from the home government (Finger, 1990, p. 22). The degree to which this is true depends on a number of considerations, including the nature of the issue, the quality of the mission's staff, the size of the foreign policy bureaucracy in the home capital, and the attitude of the government toward the UN. These variations also have much to do with the personal attributes of the diplomats involved, so they will receive detailed attention in the discussion of delegate autonomy in the last section of this chapter. However, one general observation has been offered by several diplomats with experience in both bilateral and multilateral postings: these individuals felt that they enjoyed increased freedom of action in multilateral settings (Jacobson, 1979, p. 110). This conclusion is echoed by Seymour Finger: "The wide range of questions promotes a greater degree of autonomy for the mission, as few governments can keep track of so many details and the government is more dependent on the mission for relevant information" (1990, p. 20).

Clearly permanent missions are an indispensable tool for members that desire to play any type of serious role in the United Nations. In February 2003 there were 191 UN members, 189 of which maintained

permanent missions at UN headquarters in New York (United Nations, 2003). The two member states not maintaining permanent missions were Kiribati and Palau; they did send representatives to UN meetings as they deemed necessary. In addition to member states, both the Holy See and Palestine sent observer missions to UN headquarters, the Holy See based on its status as a nonmember state and Palestine based on a standing invitation from the General Assembly to participate in its work. Twelve intergovernmental organizations, mainly regional in scope, and four nongovernmental organizations also sent observer missions to New York based on a standing invitation from the General Assembly. Finally, thirteen UN specialized agencies and related organizations maintained permanent liaison offices at UN headquarters. In addition to this extensive diplomatic presence in New York, most member states had permanent missions in Geneva to deal with the considerable number of UN bodies and meetings located in and around the Palais des Nations, and a number also maintained a permanent presence in Vienna, Austria, where the UN's offices dealing with atomic energy, drugs, and crime are based. Finally, depending on a member state's priorities and resources, it may also send small permanent missions to the offices of different UN programs, funds, regional economic commissions, and specialized agencies based in nearly fifteen other cities around the world.

In spite of these many centers of diplomatic activity, the heart of the UN's political processes lies in New York, and so the permanent missions there are generally staffed with the largest number and highest quality of personnel. Still, there is considerable variation in the size of permanent missions at UN headquarters from one country to the next. The largest mission by far is maintained by the United States, which had 125 diplomatic personnel in 2003 (United Nations, 2003). This size is due in part to the active role played by the United States in nearly every UN body and based on the fact that the US mission must perform a number of unique tasks given its role as host state. Other permanent members of the Security Council also maintain large missions, though not nearly as large as that of the United States. In 2003 the number of diplomatic personnel at the Russian mission was eighty-three, at the Chinese mission sixty-three, at the British mission forty, and at the French mission twenty-eight. Five other members maintained missions of thirty or more diplomatic personnel (Germany at sixty-one, Japan at fifty-two, Cuba at thirty-seven, South Korea at thirty-six, and Brazil at thirty). Nearly all other developed countries have missions in the neighborhood of fifteen to twenty-five, and the missions of a number of developing countries are this large as well. However, the majority of

developing states maintain only five to ten diplomatic personnel, and twenty-one members have missions with a staff of three or fewer. In 2003, the Central African Republic, the Marshall Islands, and Timor-Leste (East Timor) had the smallest missions, staffed solely by an ambassador in each case.

Not surprisingly, one of the primary explanations for this variation in the size of permanent missions is the costs associated with maintaining them, both in New York and in Geneva (Aggrey-Orleans, 1998, p. 48). This has always been especially true for newly independent developing states. However, other factors also play a role in determining the size of a country's UN mission. For example, an additional reason developing states tend to have small missions is that these members often have a shortage of trained personnel, based on their colonial experiences (Kay, 1967, p. 96). Nevertheless, many new members have a strong desire to overcome this obstacle and maintain a mission that is larger than one might expect given their limited resources, because they see diplomatic service at the UN as an effective mechanism for increasing the training and experience of their foreign service personnel. Other reasons that small states may desire to have large missions include the common perception that a permanent presence in New York is an important manifestation of newfound independence and the fact that their UN mission is actually the centerpiece of their entire system of foreign representation (Ziring, Riggs, and Plano, 2000, p. 78; Kay, 1967, p. 97). Many developing states find UN headquarters to be an important venue for interacting with a wide range of other member states with whom they cannot afford to maintain a bilateral embassy. Another common practice is for members to have their diplomatic personnel at the UN also handle their country's relationship with the United States, since travel time between Washington, D.C., and New York City is quite brief.

As the figures above indicate, there is also considerable variation in mission size among states that have the financial capacity to send as many personnel as they feel they need. Part of this variation has to do with a country's view of the importance of the United Nations in its foreign policy and the utility the United Nations provides it for reaching its international goals (Ziring, Riggs, and Plano, 2000, p. 76). Further, the UN is only one of many possible international organizations a state may join. If a state is also a member of a cohesive and integrated regional organization, like the European Union, then it may not require as many of its own personnel at the UN, since its positions on key issues will likely be coordinated amongst all the members of the regional organization. A final reason that a member state might increase the size of its

mission has to do with a change in its role or position within the organization. For example, when small states serve as elected members of the Security Council, they often increase the size of their UN mission to handle the extra workload for that two-year period. A similar reasoning applies when a diplomat from a particular country is elected to a leadership position. The president of the General Assembly for its 57th Session, from September 2002 to September 2003, was Jan Kavan from the Czech Republic; during that time the Czech mission doubled in size, from ten to twenty diplomatic personnel, to cover both the mission and the president's office (United Nations, 2003).

All missions are headed by a "permanent representative" who enjoys the rank of ambassador. Most mission staff members are foreign service officers stationed at the mission as part of their normal rotation of postings. However, beyond these similarities, there is considerable variation in how permanent missions are structured in terms of their vertical and horizontal patterns of authority. Directly under the permanent representative is usually a deputy permanent representative, who may also enjoy ambassadorial rank, who fills in for the permanent representative when necessary and helps run the mission on a day-to-day basis. Some missions appoint additional representatives with ambassadorial rank for key UN issues. For example, the US permanent representative, deputy permanent representative, alternate representative for special political affairs, and representatives for economic and social affairs and UN management are all ambassadors confirmed by the US Senate.

Directly below the ambassadors in many missions are ministers, counselors, or minister-counselors (the exact title varies) who are often in charge of a general area of UN activity like peace and security, political affairs, economic and social affairs, development, legal affairs, or administration. Below this level the differences across missions increase. Most missions have first secretaries who are in charge of specific issues like terrorism, peacekeeping, human rights, gender, and so on; in fact, the majority of personnel across all missions hold this rank. Missions that are more hierarchical in structure, as in the case of Japan, may also use second secretaries, third secretaries, and even attachés and assistant attachés. Some missions are structured in a more horizontal fashion, where everyone below the rank of minister or counselor is simply given the title of first secretary or adviser, as is the US practice.

Permanent representatives are nearly always "senior diplomats of distinction" (Nicholas, 1975, p. 198); in many countries this posting is considered to be one of the most high-profile and prestigious of the entire diplomatic service. At a minimum the permanent representative is

among the handful of top ambassadorships; at a maximum it is a direct stepping-stone to foreign minister or secretary of state, with Madeleine Albright being a recent example of this pattern in the United States. Many permanent representatives in New York already have ambassadorial experience, either in bilateral postings or at the UN's offices in Geneva. Some UN ambassadors also have experience in top positions within the foreign ministry, such as deputy foreign minister, or have worked in the office of the head of state or head of government. Even members who draw their permanent representatives from outside their diplomatic service tend to select senior political figures of great reputation who enjoy close ties to the country's top political leaders (Finger, 1990, p. 15). In the case of the United States, the permanent representative has frequently, though not always, been a member of the president's cabinet alongside the secretary of state. As a result, even though the permanent representative should technically report to the assistant secretary of state in charge of the Bureau of International Organization Affairs in the State Department, she or he often has direct access to the president when important issues are being discussed at the UN. The first term of President George W. Bush marked an exception to this general pattern, since his UN ambassador at the time, John Negroponte, was not a member of the cabinet. However, even with this reduced rank, Negroponte enjoyed a very close relationship to Secretary of State Colin Powell, having served as Powell's deputy on the National Security Council in the late 1980s.

Delegations

Permanent missions serve as the embassies of member states at UN headquarters; however, the job of representing a country's interests at the UN falls to the specific delegations that the country sends to each meeting or series of meetings. In the case of the General Assembly session each year, Article 9, Paragraph 2 of the UN Charter states, "Each member shall have not more than five representatives in the General Assembly," and the travel expenses for these are reimbursed out of the UN budget (Kaufmann, 1980, p. 106). The Assembly's rules of procedure also allow for the appointment of five alternate representatives and "whatever number of experts and advisors a member state cares to send" (Peterson, 1986, p. 284). No matter how many delegates and advisers are sent, each member has one vote in the General Assembly as specified under Article 18, Paragraph 1. Other UN bodies can adopt their own specifications regarding delegation size; however, wherever feasible it is left up to the member states to decide how many delegates to send to a meeting.

UN delegations typically include at least some personnel from the permanent mission (Kaufmann, 1980, p. 103). Nearly always this includes the permanent representative and any other officials in the mission who hold ambassadorial rank. However, these individuals are frequently outranked on the delegation by their foreign minister or secretary of state, or in some cases even by their head of state or head of government (Ziring, Riggs, and Plano, 2000, p. 80). While some states fill their entire delegation with diplomats and senior government officials, other states follow a common practice of including members of their legislature, other government departments, and even private individuals of national importance (Kaufmann, 1980, p. 106). In the case of the United States, the delegation typically includes three or four ambassadors stationed at the US mission, two members of Congress (one from each political party), and four or five others chosen for various reasons: "prominence in politics, industry, labor, the arts, or the sciences; regional balance; payment of political debt; ethnic balance; religious considerations; and the need to have at least one woman" (Finger, 1990, p. 26).

Beyond membership, states also include a more diverse crew of support personnel for a delegation than would typically be stationed at the mission. Again, staff of the mission do serve the delegation, but at a minimum they would be joined by experts from other government agencies and departments appropriate to the issues under debate. One example of this would be sending staff from the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency to the US mission in preparation for the 1995 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review and Extension Conference in New York (S. Williams, 1999, p. 136). Such "reinforcements" are common anytime meetings are in session (Smouts, 2000, p. 33); however, like permanent missions, delegations are most likely to grow larger when the permanent representative or the state itself is performing a leadership role at a particular meeting or session.

Members of a delegation are accredited to the meeting in much the same way that bilateral diplomats are accredited to foreign capitals: through a formal letter of appointment from the head of state. However, in the case of UN meetings, there is no requirement that the secretary-general give prior approval to a permanent representative or to other delegation members, as would typically be the case when a diplomat is posted to another country (Bailey, 1963, p. 42). Member states are usually free to send any persons they choose on their UN delegations. There are two exceptions, however, to this general rule. First, the United States has on rare occasion denied entry visas to delegation members it deemed politically unacceptable; such a decision does provoke serious diplomatic protest, as it violates the spirit of the host-coun-

try agreement. Second, the General Assembly's Credentials Committee usually accredits delegation members without much debate or fanfare, but this committee or the Assembly Plenary can at times create problems for some delegations (Smouts, 2000, p. 34). Some examples of complications in accreditation arose with Chinese representation before 1971 and Cambodian representation from the mid-1970s to mid-1980s; examples of rejected credentials include the South African delegation in 1974 and the Israeli delegation in 1975.

The changing composition of member-state delegations to the United Nations means that two elements must be managed carefully if the delegation is to be effective in negotiations. The first of these is the need to make sure that the various members of the delegation are offering a consistent message based on a common strategy and the same set of goals (Peterson, 1986, pp. 287–289). UN negotiations are complex affairs, with many participants discussing multiple issues all at the same time. Large delegations have the advantage of dividing up the work, drawing on more areas of expertise, attending all concurrent sessions, and talking to more allies and adversaries. However, they also face the challenge of avoiding inadvertent contradictions or misleading statements of the country's position by "speaking from different pages." The main vehicle for addressing any problems of coordination is the delegation meeting. While these vary in frequency and formality from one delegation to the next, they are so important to effective negotiation at the UN that most UN meetings do not start until 10:00 or 10:30 a.m. so that delegations have adequate opportunity to coordinate their activities each day.

A second challenge faced by most UN delegations concerns their relationship with their home government. Of necessity, the delegations are operating far from their home ministry, which makes face-to-face direction impossible. Furthermore, it is not uncommon for the home ministry to have a quite different view of how the negotiations are developing from that of the delegation actually at the meetings (Kay, 1967, pp. 93–94; Finger, 1990, pp. 36–37). Of course, for centuries diplomacy has been conducted at a geographical distance, and modern travel and technology make these problems less severe than they once were. But these developments give rise to yet another problem: many members now have bureaucratic structures at home that have capacity to heavily manage how their delegates behave at the UN. This is certainly true in the case of major powers like the United States (Jacobson, 1979, pp. 121–122; Ziring, Riggs, and Plano, 2000, pp. 76–77), and by now the effects of this problem have become pervasive across all missions and delegations to varying degrees. Of various factors that affect

the nature of the relationship between the home government and its UN personnel, one of the most important is the "political strength, stature, and personality of the permanent representative" (Finger, 1990, p. 16). For this reason, the last section of this chapter will consider how the personal attributes of individual delegates influence how much autonomy they have and the types of roles they can play in UN politics.

Personal Attributes and Delegate Autonomy

The first section of this chapter considered how both a country's ability and its desire to wield influence in the United Nations can lead it to play certain types of roles in the organization. Yet it is important to remember that these attributes are properties of the member state as a collective whole. As such, they represent only a part of the dynamics at work, given that the actual process of representing a country's interests at the UN falls to that member's permanent mission and the delegations it sends to specific UN meetings. These missions and delegations, in turn, are staffed by individuals who have varying strengths and weaknesses in the art of multilateral diplomacy; some are quite comfortable and skilled at participating in the global dance described in the introduction, but others are not. Many classic studies of member-state influence in international organizations, such as Cox and Jacobson (1973b, p. 20), stress that the personal attributes of individual delegates must be considered alongside the abilities and priorities of the state that they represent.

Variation in attributes among delegates at the UN is made even more challenging to understand, since these individuals are forced to balance the sometimes contradictory challenges of simultaneously representing the interests of their state and participating in the give-and-take of UN politics (Jacobson, 1979, pp. 120–124). The characteristics and behaviors necessary to effectively perform one of these roles may not always match those that are the most beneficial for playing the other role. This final section of Chapter 2 will consider the attributes of individual delegates and how they interact with the dynamics previously discussed, such that members of the organization are able to participate in its decisionmaking. Personal attributes are discussed first, followed by variations in their autonomy and the different roles they can play.

Personal Attributes

Within the writings of academic scholars and former diplomatic practitioners, there are numerous discussions of the role of personal attributes in UN political processes. While authors may highlight different skills

and characteristics, there is substantial overlap in their ideas when it comes to identifying the attributes that are most important for effective delegates. Eight such sets of attributes will be discussed here: past experiences, knowledge competencies, charisma, character, perseverance, tolerance, ambition, and negotiating skill. Possession of at least some of these skills can help delegates be more successful at achieving their goals in UN decisionmaking regardless of the attributes of the country they represent.

It is important that delegates have at least some diplomatic experience, whether inside or outside the United Nations. While this usually is the case for personnel of permanent missions, a number of member states include members of legislatures and prominent individuals from the private sector on their UN delegations (Kaufmann, 1980, p. 106). Diplomatic training for these participants can be extremely beneficial to help them understand how multilateral negotiations typically unfold and make sure that they have the basic administrative skills required (Cox and Jacobson, 1973, p. 20). It can be valuable for delegates to have prior experience in multilateral diplomacy, since its dynamics and challenges are somewhat different from those of bilateral diplomacy; however, participants at the UN who have had only bilateral postings previously are often able to be quite active (Alger, 1967, pp. 75–78). Another useful area of experience would involve past service on the particular body in question, both for mission personnel and members of delegations (Keohane, 1969, p. 883; Cox and Jacobson, 1973, p. 20). Such experience is especially useful, since it provides delegates with a better understanding of the rules of procedure used in the body—knowledge that can be critical in contentious negotiations (Nicholas, 1975, p. 106; Mills, 1999, p. 33; Nyerges, 1998, p. 177).

Possessing certain key knowledge competencies is extremely helpful for a UN diplomat. While a number of authors mention intelligence as an important general attribute, given the complex, fluid nature of multilateral diplomacy (e.g., Keohane, 1969, p. 883), others have suggested that high intelligence should be joined with specific areas of knowledge (Cox and Jacobson, 1973, p. 20; Alger, 1989, p. 3). In addition to having an understanding of the particular issues under discussion, delegates should be strong in three skill areas: (1) language versatility, since negotiations may take place in another language or delegates may find it more useful to address a colleague in that individual's native tongue; (2) general knowledge of important academic disciplines such as economics, history, law, and statistics; and (3) the ability to speak and write in a precise, persuasive manner even without the luxuries of preparation time and multiple drafts (Mills, 1999, p. 33; Nyerges, 1998, pp. 175–177; Kaufmann, 1988, pp. 135–140).

Personal charisma is often mentioned as being a vital component of success in all political negotiations, including those in international organizations (Cox and Jacobson, 1973, p. 20). However, charisma is also notoriously difficult to define, due to its subjective character; people are often described as being charismatic only *after* they have influenced others, as if being considered charismatic was a result of their success rather than a cause of it. That being said, certain personal characteristics that are commonly linked with charisma are highlighted in the literature on UN delegates. For example, since UN meetings involve as many as 190 other member states, individual delegates must be extroverted, outgoing, and comfortable mixing with strangers (Mills, 1999, p. 33). Skill at remembering new faces, thoughtfulness to ask about their families, a well-timed sense of humor, and an ability to regale audiences with entertaining stories can all help delegates build a network of contacts and friendships that can benefit future negotiations (Nicholas, 1975, p. 106). Finally, charisma certainly requires that delegates be passionate and engaging in their arguments, so that others might rethink their views, even those that have been rather entrenched.

A fourth set of attributes have to do with the character and reputation of the delegate. Like charisma, the quality of a delegate's character is often determined subjectively (Keohane, 1969, p. 883). A positive reputation can be an invaluable resource for a delegate, who is likely to be interacting with the same group of colleagues on multiple issues over time. Delegates must clearly convey to other participants the underlying ideology of their positions and make sure that these foundations remain consistent over time; this will buttress their perceived legitimacy (Cox and Jacobson, 1973, p. 20). In addition, delegates need to earn the trust and confidence of their colleagues, so that others can be sure that any information offered is accurate and that any promises made will be kept (Alger, 1967, pp. 75–77). Such trust will be built by their honesty over time and their loyalty to other members of negotiating groups, so that politically sensitive compromises are kept private (Kaufmann, 1988, pp. 134, 139).

A fifth set of attributes are those that enable the delegate to persevere in the face of long and difficult negotiations (Cox and Jacobson, 1973, p. 20). On a simple level, this requires that participants be able to avoid boredom despite repetitive and long-winded speeches (Nicholas, 1975, p. 106) and that they remain patient in search of areas of potential agreement in their favor (Kaufmann, 1988, p. 137). However, persever-

ance also involves a more active component, for delegates must maintain persistence and engagement in the face of slow progress and disappointment (Alger, 1989, p. 3). Several personal qualities can help delegates not only endure long negotiations but actually thrive in them; these include energy and capacity for hard work (Keohane, 1969, p. 883; Alger, 1989, p. 3) and zeal and passion for the material at hand (Kaufmann, 1988, p. 137).

The sixth set of attributes useful for delegate success reflect tolerance in the face of other cultures and preferences (Keohane, 1969, p. 883). Part of this involves having a thick skin, so that delegates do not take needless or unintended offense when legitimate differences of opinion lead to spirited exchanges (Nicholas, 1975, p. 106). The most effective delegates are those with an even temper, who can remain calm in the face of confrontation (Kaufmann, 1988, pp. 136–137). This requires that participants not betray strong emotions to other delegates, except in rare cases where this can be done in a controlled fashion for negotiating effect. Finally, two diplomatic practitioners have observed that one of the best ways to demonstrate tolerance of other viewpoints is to approach negotiations in the posture of a student—in the mode of listening and gathering information rather than immediately seeking to rebut positions advanced by others (Mills, 1999, pp. 32–33; Nyerges, 1998, p. 175).

A seventh, possibly more controversial, set of attributes relate to the issue of ambition. Clearly it is important for delegates to be ambitious about representing the interests of their state, since that is by far their most important task (Keohane, 1969, p. 883). However, some writers have argued that modesty is also an important trait for participants in multilateral diplomacy (Kaufmann, 1988, p. 137). Individual delegates should avoid acting out of vanity, ego, or personal ambition, but they should be as active as possible on behalf of their country's foreign policy goals. Another way to think about this is in terms of courage: delegates must be ready and willing to take advantage of opportunities when they arise (Kaufmann, 1988, p. 140). Courage, when taken to an extreme, can lead to negative outcomes through excessive risk taking. Still, delegates must be ready to carefully exploit any openings that might allow them to mobilize additional resources, persuade other delegates, or shape their own instructions (Cox and Jacobson, 1973, p. 20).

The eighth set of attributes that can enable delegates to be more effective in UN politics have to do with their negotiating ability (Mills, 1999, p. 33, Nyerges, 1998, p. 175; Cox and Jacobson, 1973, p. 20). Of course many of the attributes listed above relate to negotiating ability, but two additional personal characteristics merit special attention under

this category. First, effective negotiators must be flexible so they can adapt to the fast pace of multilateral diplomacy, and their various skills must be "mobile," usable in different situations (Alger, 1967, pp. 75–78; Kaufmann, 1988, pp. 138–140). One specific manifestation of these skills is creativity in finding ways around existing or potential roadblocks on the path to agreement (Alger, 1989, p. 3). Second, multilateral diplomacy requires that delegates possess an excellent sense of timing as negotiations are unfolding (Nicholas, 1975, p. 106). Not surprisingly, some individuals are better than others at listening to the music of the global dance and sensing the most appropriate junctures for attempting new initiatives. Unfortunately, this particular skill is a difficult one to learn, requiring years of experience in UN politics to acquire, and even then its use is far from an exact science (Ramaker, 1998). This dynamic will receive additional attention in Part 2 under leadership and informal networking; for now it is important to stress that a delegate who can accurately sense the timing and pace of negotiations can help secure a successful outcome even when it seems that failure is imminent. One oft-cited example is the role of Jayantha Dhanapala of Sri Lanka in the 1995 negotiations that led to an indefinite extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (S. Williams, 1999, pp. 146–149).

This section has highlighted eight sets of attributes that are beneficial for UN delegates to possess. Needless to say, it is highly unlikely that one individual delegate could possess all of these different, and sometimes opposite, skills and characteristics. The keys to success are to possess as many as possible and, even more important, to recognize one's own limitations. Fortunately, individual delegates only rarely serve on delegations alone; they usually have colleagues or advisers on whom they can depend for the skills they personally lack. Such relationships can be of mutual benefit to delegates and increase their overall effectiveness in pursuing their country's preferred outcome in negotiations (Kaufmann, 1980, p. 106).

Delegate Autonomy

As noted above, delegates to the United Nations must balance two roles: representing the interests of their country and participating in the give-and-take of the organization's political processes (Jacobson, 1979, pp. 120–124; Nicholas, 1975, pp. 136–137). Whatever mix of these roles they perform at any given time, individual delegates have the potential to augment their effectiveness if they possess the right constellation of personal attributes. Therefore, understanding the behavior of

any participant in UN decisionmaking requires an exploration of the often contradictory pressures they face in deciding when they need to focus more directly on their country's interests and when they can afford the luxury of engaging in creative thinking about compromise solutions. Part of this decision regarding representation versus participation may be left to the delegate; in these cases, they are able to make strategic calculations regarding whether hard-nosed bargaining or package dealing is the best negotiating route to pursue. However, it is far more common for delegates to have this choice made for them by their home government, which ultimately decides how much autonomy its UN delegates should have. Almost all delegates get some instructions that limit their freedom to act; nevertheless, effective delegates are often able to win a degree of latitude and flexibility in terms of how they meet their goals.

Delegate autonomy is an important consideration. Participants who are forced to advance positions and policies drafted thousands of miles away may not be able to engage in the kind of bargaining that can lead to successful outcomes in UN politics: they will be limited in the types of state resources and personal attributes they can utilize as leverage in negotiations. In addition, if delegates are kept dependent on extensive instructions from home, they can be overtaken by events when decisions must be made but specific guidance from the country's political elites is not available (Kaufmann, 1988, p. 172). Participants who have more room to maneuver can gain influence beyond what their state might normally possess, since they have extra freedom to shape negotiations as they unfold. In the above discussions of permanent missions and delegations, it was observed that delegates in multilateral settings generally enjoy greater autonomy than their colleagues in bilateral postings, due to the greater complexity and faster pace of the negotiations (Jacobson, 1979, p. 110; Finger, 1990, p. 20). Still, even multilateral delegates "are diplomats acting under more or less comprehensive instructions from their governments about the goals that they should seek, the opinions they should express and the general line of conduct they should follow" (Peterson, 1986, p. 284). Furthermore, as technology has increased ease of communication between a home ministry and delegates in the field, it has become possible for instructions to be sent on an almost constant basis in the course of negotiations (Peterson, 1986, p. 286), so that levels of delegate autonomy have decreased among all member states at the United Nations.

Despite this general decrease in autonomy, there is still substantial variation in the instructions received by delegates of different member states across issues and negotiating forums (Ziring, Riggs, and Plano, 2000, p. 80). One former practitioner has indicated that the "ideal instructions" should result from careful study by all relevant departments, be approved by the country's highest political authorities, be specific regarding objectives and degree of activity required, but allow considerable freedom of action if events take an unexpected turn (Kaufmann, 1980, p. 110). Unfortunately, instructions frequently fall short of this ideal. Some delegates are not provided with any instructions at all, even when they ask for them; the home ministry has sent those delegates to New York to "take care of that part of the policy" for the country. At the other extreme is a delegate who, "it is told, not only gets detailed instructions about every vote, but has all of his speeches sent verbatim from his capital with instructions of when to speak with sincerity and when to inject an ironic inflection" (Edvard Hambro, quoted in Peterson, 1986, p. 285). The autonomy of most delegates falls somewhere in between these extremes. Many get instructions on voting, either as to the specific vote that should be cast or in reference to the voting pattern of another state or regional group: for example, to vote either the same as or the opposite of other members, or simply to make sure that their state does not end up in an isolated position (Kaufmann, 1980, p. 110; 1988, p. 171; Peterson, 1986, pp. 285, 287). Some individuals have violated the voting instructions they received; however, this can be done only by delegates of the highest political stature (Jacobson, 1979, p. 109). It is common for all delegates to get instructions at the outset of debate on a particular issue. Once negotiations begin, some delegates proceed without further consultations, while others may get instructions throughout the process, up to the last minute before the vote. While ongoing consultations can create problems when events unfold rapidly, most UN bodies operate in a manner that accommodates last-minute instructions through informal consultations before a formal meeting is held, by setting the agenda in advance of a meeting, or by allowing for a "strategic postponement" so that delegates have time to consult with home ministries before voting commences (Kaufmann, 1980, p. 111; Peterson, 1986, p. 286).

Variations in instructions are never entirely predictable across countries, issues, individuals, or time. However, certain patterns, tendencies, or rules of thumb regarding delegate autonomy have been discerned by practitioners like Johan Kaufmann (1980, pp. 110–111; 1988, pp. 170–172), Seymour Finger (1990, p. 22), and Jaap Ramaker (1998), and scholars like M. J. Peterson (1986, pp. 284–287), Harold Jacobson (1979, pp. 109–110), and Lawrence Ziring, Robert Riggs, and Jack Plano (2000, p. 80). Based on their insights, there are eight possible factors involved in determining how detailed a delegate's instructions will

be. First, all of them identified the salience of the issue to the particular member state as the most important influence: the more a country cares about a specific outcome, the more likely it is to give its representatives detailed instructions about how to achieve that outcome. Second, a country's size and the level of its economic development have a direct impact on autonomy. Countries that are larger and more economically developed tend to have larger bureaucracies in the home capital that can micromanage their delegates at the UN. Conversely, smaller and less developed states tend to have a smaller cadre of experts on each issue, and they may in fact be serving as the delegates, which means the home ministry will be more inclined to defer to their judgment. Some writers have observed that delegates from Western states tend to receive the most detailed instructions, while African delegates usually enjoy considerable autonomy and Latin American and Asian delegates fall in between. These first two factors, salience and size, often but not always have complementary effects on delegate autonomy, since larger and more developed states tend also to consider more issues to be salient.

Third, autonomy is influenced by the relationship between the delegate and officials in the home ministry or government. For the permanent representative this involves his or her standing with the foreign minister and head of government; for lower-level delegates this relates to their network of contacts with colleagues in the ministries and departments dealing with the issue under debate. In all cases, the stature or reputation of a delegate rests on his or her expertise and the level of confidence their government has in them; these elements can determine whether they are able to participate in shaping their own instructions before negotiations even begin. Fourth, the role a delegate is playing in the negotiations influences their autonomy: those serving in leadership positions on UN bodies often have more freedom to act, since they need to be able to manage the negotiations in addition to, or sometimes instead of, representing the interests of their state. Fifth, the attitude of the country toward the United Nations can affect delegate autonomy: representatives of states wary of the organization, or targeted by it, will receive more detailed instructions than those from states that are supportive of the UN across the board. This can also vary from one UN body to the next, as delegates may have less autonomy on the Security Council than in the General Assembly, for example. It can also vary based on the state's domestic political structure: democratic systems have more constituencies whose interests must be carefully balanced in the UN policy, and thus more detailed instructions may be required.

Sixth, delegate autonomy is generally higher regarding procedural issues than regarding substantive issues, although this is certainly not always the case. In addition, different types of substantive decisions can result in different degrees of freedom to act, with delegates most likely to be constrained in their voting for any substantive decisions that involve financial commitments. Seventh, as might be expected, delegates often receive more detailed instructions regarding the goals of the state than they do on the tactics for reaching those goals. This means delegates may be able to draw on their personal strengths and their networks of fellow delegates in designing a strategy for building winning coalitions. Eighth, geography has been frequently mentioned as having an impact on autonomy, as delegates from states farther away from UN bodies tend to have more autonomy than those from nearby. However, other observers point out that the impact of this factor has decreased in recent years, as improved communications technologies have made distance much less of an obstacle for a ministry that wants to closely monitor its UN delegates.

Bringing It All Together: Four Types of United Nations Delegates

This chapter has covered a wide range of factors that must be considered when one is trying to understand how member states participate in the UN's political processes: their ability and interests, the structure and composition of their mission and delegations, and the personal attributes and autonomy of their delegates. In each case, various patterns of influence have been identified, but the challenge of thinking about how these interrelated elements work together remains. Conceptualizing these diverse dynamics into a coherent package is certainly a daunting task, but one way to take the first steps in this direction is to think about different types of roles that individual delegates play at the UN based on the state they represent, the structure of the mission or delegation in which they work, their personal attributes, and their autonomy. One especially illuminating typology of delegate roles at the United Nations was developed by Navid Hanif, first secretary in the permanent mission of Pakistan to the United Nations in 1998 (Hanif, 1998). He describes four different types of delegates that bring together the various elements discussed across this chapter: hunters, farmers, traders, and trappers.

Hunters are delegates who represent states that have a very clear goal in mind on the issue in question; they will do whatever they can to make sure that the interests of their state are reflected in the decision that is made. The negotiating strategy favored by hunters tends to be rather crude and blunt; they move like a bulldozer, focused on clearing the path ahead. Such a role is likely to be most necessary for delegates

who enjoy very little autonomy in terms of both goals and tactics, and it is likely to be most effective for the representatives of larger states that have the resources and power to throw their weight around at the UN. Personal attributes such as ambition and perseverance are essential, and the mission is likely to be rather hierarchical to maintain a unified focus on the desired outcome. This can be a very effective role; however, this approach to parliamentary diplomacy is heavy-handed and can leave other participants feeling frustrated.

Farmers are essentially at the opposite end of the spectrum from hunters. Where hunters are relentless in pushing for their preferences, farmers are willing to adopt a long-term view of the decisionmaking process and work to build consensus around a package deal that offers significant benefits to all participants. Farmers favor strategies that allow them to act as brokers between different hunters and other delegates. Here too, perseverance is an important attribute, since cultivating consensus can be a difficult task in the face of divergent interests; this role also requires expertise on the issue at hand, tolerance of different viewpoints, the trust and confidence of other delegates, and negotiating skill to build upon areas of potential agreement. This type of role is certainly not available to all delegates, for it requires that their state have a strong reputation in the UN and that they personally enjoy a significant degree of autonomy. Farmers typically represent small and middle powers that are active UN members.

Traders represent a mix between hunters and farmers. Like hunters, they have a clear idea of what they want to achieve; however, their approach to the process involves a mindset closer to that of a farmer. Where hunters prefer to bulldoze and farmers prefer to cultivate, traders adopt strategies that center on bargaining and striking deals between competing interests. These deals may relate to the same issue, or they may stretch across issues and over time. Traders must be charismatic and enjoy the confidence of other delegates. In addition, issue expertise and negotiating skill are important attributes for identifying possible deals. Traders often have little autonomy regarding the goals they need to achieve, but they may enjoy considerable freedom regarding the tactics they can use. They usually represent a developed state, or perhaps a group of developing states, for they must have sufficient resources to deliver on the promises that they make when striking a deal.

Trappers are by far the most conniving of all delegates, but fortunately they are also the rarest at the United Nations. Similar to traders, trappers seek to create deals, securing help from other delegates in achieving their desired goals in exchange for later assistance on another issue. So similar personal attributes can be useful for traders and trappers. However, the similarities end there. The deal offered by trappers is always a false promise that they have no intention of fulfilling; their goal is to secure enough support from other delegates for what they need to accomplish and then feign ignorance or worse when it comes time to reciprocate. This role can be effective only a very limited number of times before the delegate's character becomes so questionable that no other participants will deal with them. Since this role has serious long-term costs, it is likely to be used only as a last resort when a state or delegate has exhausted all other possible avenues of negotiation. It is most common in the case of delegates from so-called pariah regimes that have few resources and are engaging in some type of behavior that other member states want to see changed; the trapper can use the possibility of change as leverage.

It should be clear from this brief discussion that the roles in this typology are not set in stone; individual delegates can take on different roles on different issues over time, depending on the interests of their state and the leverage they possess in relation to the issue at hand. In addition, different states can change roles over time, selecting permanent representatives who have the personal attributes most conducive to one role or another, as the United States did when Madeleine Albright (usually a hunter) was replaced by Richard Holbrooke (closer to a trader) in President Bill Clinton's second term. Furthermore, the typology offered here is not watertight; there are certainly other roles that delegates can play. However, the typology is still helpful for thinking about how member states and their delegates can best achieve their goals at the United Nations. Each constellation of state abilities and interests requires a different type of individual to pursue them, and no single strategy will work in all situations, no matter how powerful or active a member state is. And member states are not operating alone at the UN; the cast of characters in the global dance is diverse, and each type of participant has its own set of resources for exercising influence in the organization's political processes. The following chapters will address the roles of other actors at the United Nations.

3

Groups and Blocs

BUILDING WINNING COALITIONS IN MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY IS A COMplicated and challenging process; the cast of characters involved is usually large, with each one pursuing interests that can be quite different from those advanced by other participants. As a result, nearly every discussion of United Nations decisionmaking highlights the role played by collectivities of member states working together as groups or voting blocs. The fact that group politics is considered to be so important in the UN is not that surprising. Most UN bodies include 50 or more states, and many include all 191 members of the organization. Simple common sense suggests that the larger the body becomes, the harder it will be for it to make decisions, since the range of potential interests that must be reconciled will be more diverse and the patterns of interaction between members will likely be more diffuse and complex. Getting 191 different parties to agree on anything, even on relatively benign and uncontroversial matters, can be daunting, and many issues on the UN's agenda are neither benign nor uncontroversial.

However, this straightforward view of the relationship between the size of a decisionmaking body and its difficulty with reaching the necessary agreement to act overlooks important considerations that can facilitate coalition building even in large groups (Kahler, 1993, pp. 297–299, 319). Some of the considerations mentioned by Miles Kahler include the increased benefits that come from having more participants in the group, the willingness of major powers to take a leading role in advancing certain solutions, and the role of smaller groups in building agreement on key issues that can then spread to the decisionmaking body as a whole. Thus, while it might be possible to question whether larger size makes agreement more difficult, it is reasonable to conclude that larger decisionmaking bodies require the use of subgroups if they are to function

effectively. The benefits of states' working through groups are not limited to large deliberative bodies. Research on small group decisionmaking in foreign policy has long highlighted that even small committees can have difficulty reaching agreement when competing interests get locked into a bureaucratic stalemate (Hermann, 1993, pp. 180–181). This suggests that group politics can be a potentially useful tool for building agreement in a wide variety of settings in multilateral diplomacy, regardless of the overall size of the decisionmaking body, if the members involved have divergent interests that must be reconciled.

Since most UN bodies, even relatively small ones like the Security Council, are composed of members whose interests are often in conflict, numerous groups and blocs are mentioned in both academic and practitioner writings on the United Nations. Some of these observers have questioned the ultimate impact of these groups on UN outcomes. For example, Hayward Alker Jr. argues, "The suggestion that political conflicts preoccupy members of the United Nations implies that the national interests of UN members, shaped as they are by domestic, regional, political, economic, and ethnic considerations, are more causally determinative of UN policy positions than caucusing-group pressures" (1967, p. 179). There is certainly some merit to Alker's claim; as was discussed in Chapter 2, member states base their UN policy on their capabilities and interests, both of which relate to considerations other than group politics, such as the nature of a state's political system, its colonial history, its level of economic development, the nature of its military power and alliances, and its patterns of trade and foreign aid.

However, other authors have concluded that the existence of groups and blocs at the United Nations affects how states calculate both their capabilities and interests. For example, Sally Morphet argues that "most states [have] found it essential to promote their interests (both political and economic) more effectively at the global level by forming groups that could work both within and, sometimes, outside of the UN system" (2000, p. 224). It is not that states must ignore or overcome political, military, economic, or historical considerations for groups to matter in UN decisionmaking; rather, these groups provide states with certain avenues of action that would not be possible if they were acting individually. Lawrence Finkelstein goes even further: "Decisionmaking in the UN system is strongly influenced, if not determined, by convergence of groups of members to accumulate voting power. . . . The practice has become so well entrenched, and is of such significance, that both scholars and practitioners have referred to some such groupings as political parties" (1988c, pp. 20–21).

While other writers may contend that comparing UN groups to domestic political parties overstates both their cohesiveness and their power, they do echo Finkelstein's view that groups play a central role in the UN's political processes. Like Alker, H. G. Nicholas acknowledges that "where an important political question is at stake a state casts its vote the way its government's assessment of its national interests dictates"; however, he says groups are both "natural" and "indispensable" to the functioning of the UN, since "it is impossible to imagine how the UN could work if there were no groupings of member states to provide elements of stability and predictability" (1975, pp. 133–134). Quite simply, an increasingly diverse membership, an ever-growing agenda, and the fact that each member state has an equal vote mean that groups are a crucial mechanism for making the global dance at the United Nations more fluid and effective (Peterson, 1986, p. 247).

The Role of Groups at the United Nations

The use of groups in multilateral diplomacy predates the founding of the United Nations. For all the failings of the League of Nations, one lesson to come out of that experiment was that stable clusters of like-minded states could emerge and persist in an international organization (Peterson, 1986, p. 290). In the case of the league, these groups included the Latin Americans, the United Kingdom and its dominions, the "Little Entente" of Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia, and looser groupings of Balkan states and Central European states (Austria, Hungary, Italy, and Germany). Despite this experience, however, the UN Charter and the rules of procedure for UN bodies like the General Assembly neglected to make any formal provisions for the role of groups (Peterson, 1986, p. 290). The UN's founders realized that consultation and negotiation between members would be required to build sufficient majorities, but they believed that none of these necessary groups would be stable enough to merit explicit mention. Instead, they crafted the language of the Charter and rules of procedure with enough latitude to allow groups to become important players, at least in an ad hoc fashion.

It was not long before member states seized upon this limited opening and began to think in terms of forming groups based on shared experiences and common interests. The first distinct UN group emerged in late 1945, after the Charter was drafted but before the UN had even started to hold meetings (Morphet, 2000, p. 227). Based on the initiative of Eduardo Angel, the Colombian delegate to the Charter-drafting conference in San Francisco, the Latin American states decided to "work

together with solidarity" in order to assume leadership positions in the new organization and avoid having to make do with "crumbs" cast off by the great powers. Based on this initiative, these states formed a group that included the votes of twenty-six countries, a majority of the UN's fifty-one members, enough to elect Angel president of the UN Preparatory Commission in 1945.

From this successful beginning, groups have emerged as pervasive and important actors in UN decisionmaking. While there is great diversity in membership and objectives of UN groups (as is discussed below), there are important similarities in terms of how they work: most are based on members' efforts to arrive at some sort of agreement favoring their preferred outcome to a particular UN debate. This agreement is usually achieved through a process of consultation and consensus building, so that all members have a voice in the policy, rather than through majority voting, where individual members of the group could find themselves at odds with the group position (Morphet, 2000, p. 225). Leadership of a group is typically shared among its members, either through a pattern of rotation or through formal elections.

These common processes matter at the UN, since groups perform a number of important and beneficial functions in decisionmaking. However, some scholars have wondered whether certain negative consequences of group politics might not outweigh these positive contributions, at least in regard to certain bodies and issues. Many observers do seem to agree with Kaufmann's assertion that while it is hard to generalize about the benefits and limitations of groups across issues and over time, on balance their overall effect is positive (1988, pp. 156–157). Here we will consider both positive and negative aspects of the functions that groups perform in UN politics.

On the positive side, the use of groups in UN decisionmaking empowers certain states to have a much greater impact on policy outcomes than would otherwise be possible (Morphet, 2000, pp. 260–261; Ziring, Riggs, and Plano, 2000, p. 96; Behnam, 1998, p. 199). This is especially true in the case of like-minded smaller and less developed states, which need a collective voice if they are to take the initiative in UN debates. Acting as a group can enable them to raise new issues on the international agenda, set up new agencies or conferences, push for reform of existing institutions, and advance new norms of international law. A second positive contribution of groups is that they encourage members to begin preliminary discussions on the issue at hand early in the negotiation process (Kay, 1967, pp. 99–100; Ziring, Riggs, and Plano, 2000, p. 96; Behnam, 1998, p. 199). This allows for greater opportunities to exchange information, harmonize policy priorities, and

coordinate strategies vis-à-vis other groups. This process of developing common positions is potentially beneficial to all member states—those big and small, and those for and against a particular policy proposal (Kaufmann, 1980, pp. 90–92). The benefits of this policy harmonization within groups are greatest in situations where members hope to reach a consensus that all the different states and groups can support (or at least not block); however, it can also be helpful in majority-rule decisions where any single group lacks sufficient votes to approve policies on its own (Peterson, 1986, p. 248; Behnam, 1998, p. 200).

A third contribution of groups to UN decisionmaking has to do with their comparatively informal mechanisms for doing business. Since members of groups can often interact without cumbersome procedures, simultaneous translation, or a written record, they may be much more willing to talk freely about the issues at hand (Behnam, 1998, p. 199). This, in turn, can allow for greater creativity, more effective brainstorming, and a potential for consultations among groups (Kaufmann, 1988, p. 155). Fourth, groups are a useful mechanism for making sure that all UN bodies function in a manner that draws on the full diversity of the UN's membership. The UN Charter calls for equitable geographic representation in limited-membership bodies, the organization's staff, and the distribution of top leadership positions; the use of groups in UN decisionmaking helps to make sure these Charter principles are reflected in practice (Nicholas, 1975, p. 133; Kay, 1967, p. 99; Kaufmann, 1980, p. 92). A fifth benefit of groups in UN decisionmaking is their ability to serve a "tutorial function" for new member states and new delegates, providing advice on how to pursue their goals, guidance on which issues deserve their focus given limited resources, and generally shortening their period of socialization into the intricacies of multilateral diplomacy (Kay, 1967, p. 100; Peterson, 1986, p. 294; Ziring, Riggs, and Plano, 2000, p. 96). The final contribution of groups to UN politics centers on efficiency; since groups adopt common positions, they often choose to have their ideas presented by just one member. This saves time, avoids unnecessary repetition, and allows more space for other viewpoints to be expressed (Kaufmann, 1988, p. 156; Ziring, Riggs, and Plano, 2000, p. 96).

Despite these positive benefits, there are some drawbacks to the extensive use of groups in UN processes. First, when individual member states choose to act through a group, they are essentially giving up their own voice in favor of a common policy advanced by all (Nicholas, 1975, p. 133). As long as this policy is consistent with the state's interests, the sovereign equality of members reflected in the one-state, one-vote formula is maintained; however, these groups can adopt positions

that represent watered-down least-common-denominator solutions or be hijacked by an extremist member (Ziring, Riggs, and Plano, 2000, p. 96; Behnam, 1998, p. 200). In either scenario, the interests of member states in the group are compromised, and any policy outcome that does result is questionable at best. A second negative consequence of group politics is that these dynamics ultimately distort the realities of international power and influence (Nicholas, 1975, pp. 134–145; Ziring, Riggs, and Plano, 2000, p. 96). Groups do empower smaller and less developed members, but this gives certain states the power to move the organization to action (or block it from action) even when they lack the resources to implement the decisions they are making. When states that lack the ability to act push others to do so, or when states that have the ability to act are pressured not to, frustration and recrimination are common results.

Finally, the use of groups can result in a slow and rigid negotiating process (Behnam, 1998, p. 200; Ziring, Riggs, and Plano, 2000, p. 96). All the factors that make groups useful vehicles for building agreement among their members can also make it difficult to build agreement across different groups. Once a group arrives at a common position, changes to that position can become difficult, since they might upset the delicate balance that has been forged (Kaufmann, 1988, p. 157). This is especially true when the process of getting the group to agree has been long and difficult. The result is something of a catch-22: groups make multilateral diplomacy easier by allowing scattered, heterogeneous interests to be narrowed down to a few key issues (Alger, 1989, p. 3); however, they can also make it harder to build a final agreement unless each group remains willing to engage in further compromise. These potential negative consequences of group politics force UN practitioners and observers to make careful judgments about the overall contribution of these actors to UN decisionmaking. But regardless of what judgment is reached, the reality of UN politics is that, for better or worse, groups are central players in the global dance. So their influence must be considered.

Types of Groups and Voting Blocs

Since groups of states acting together are such a pervasive feature at the United Nations, and since these groups perform a wide variety of functions in the organization's political processes, it is not at all surprising that there is considerable variation in their membership and purposes. This variation, in turn, has resulted in some confusion among practitioners and scholars regarding the basic terminology for groups and

blocs at the UN. Much of the early research on these actors at the UN focused on using powerful statistical techniques to analyze General Assembly voting records in search of stable patterns across members and issues (Alger, 1970, pp. 433–437). As might be expected, many of these efforts, such as Rowe (1969; 1971), looked for the effects of the cold war in UN politics across the 1950s and 1960s by examining East and West voting blocs. Once the membership of the Assembly expanded to include more developing states, scholars began to uncover a North-South dimension to UN voting blocs as well (Holloway, 1990, p. 280).

However, these inductive studies often found a more complex picture of group voting at the UN than a simple East-West or North-South dichotomy, since each of these blocs was found to have internal divisions. For example, Bruce Russett studied the Eighteenth General Assembly in 1963 and uncovered six voting blocs: the Western Community, Brazzaville Africa (mainly former French colonies), Afro-Asians (cold war "neutralists"), the Communist Bloc, Conservative Arabs, and Iberia (1968, pp. 77–79). Writing a year later, Hanna Newcombe, Michael Ross, and Alan Newcombe analyzed all regular plenary sessions of the Assembly from 1946 to 1963, to see how bloc voting had evolved over the first two decades of the UN (1969, pp. 102–110). Across this time period they discovered that Latin America had moved closer to Western states, while Afro-Asian states had moved closer to the Soviet bloc. Outside of these larger blocs, they also uncovered stable voting patterns for Scandinavian states, pro-Western neutral states, and imperial states. Finally, another study of the General Assembly by Alker during this same period looked at how the internal cohesion of East-West and North-South voting blocs varied across controversial issues such as self-determination, UN membership disputes, peacekeeping finance, apartheid, and so on (1967, pp. 172–177).

Despite the fact that the percentage of General Assembly resolutions that actually come to a vote has substantially decreased over time (Marin-Bosch, 1987), more recent studies have also used voting records to see if these blocs have persisted over time. Based on data through 1985, Steven Holloway (1990, p. 296) concluded that three voting blocs were still present in the Assembly. Most cohesive was a bloc composed of the Warsaw Pact joined with Cuba, Afghanistan, Vietnam, and Syria; second was a still cohesive bloc of nonaligned states held together by the organizational efforts of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the Group of 77 (G77); and finally, there was a much more internally divided bloc of Western states and other members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). However, Holloway also indicated that a major realignment of blocs appeared to

be beginning and would certainly have implications for the cohesion of all three groups he uncovered. This expectation is confirmed in a post–cold war analysis of voting records completed by Soo Yeon Kim and Bruce Russett (1997, pp. 33–48), who found that four clusters of UN members in 1983–1985 had diffused into five clusters of members by 1991–1993 and that even groups that remained relatively stable across this period did experience some changes in membership.

These voting studies can provide illuminating pictures of the main lines of conflict within UN bodies; however, they face two shortcomings when it comes to clarifying the actual decisionmaking of these organizations. First, these studies examine votes only after they are taken; they are unable to provide an explanation or underlying logic for the bloc members' choice to favor a particular policy outcome. Second, as the brief summary above has indicated, these blocs have problems with internal cohesion to varying degrees across issues and over time. This results in some conceptual confusion, since the classic definition of a bloc in the UN context is "a group of states which meets regularly in caucus and the members of which are bound in their votes in the General Assembly by the caucus decision" (Hovet, 1960, p. 30). Based on this definition, the only group of states that could reasonably be called a true voting bloc would be the former Soviet bloc (Morphet, 2000, p. 225); the other blocs all faced issues on which they were internally divided. As a result, some scholars have preferred to focus their attention on UN groups more broadly conceived: all collections of states that engage in periodic meetings and have some degree of organizational structure (Kay, 1967, p. 99).

Defining groups in such a broad fashion is important because it captures the great diversity that exists within this type of actor at the United Nations. Many groups active in UN decisionmaking emerge on a temporary or ad hoc basis as part of the negotiation process itself (Hovet, 1960, pp. 45–46; Kay, 1967, p. 99). However, there are also many groups whose functions at UN meetings are so common that they essentially represent permanent fixtures on the UN landscape. Johan Kaufmann has identified four such well-known types of groups (1980, pp. 87–90; 1988, pp. 147–152): (1) regional groups such as African states, Asian states, Latin American states, Nordic states, Eastern European states, and Western European states; (2) political groups like the Commonwealth, the League of Arab States, NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization), the Warsaw Pact, and the nonaligned states; (3) groups based on formal international economic agreements like the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), the European Community, and the OECD; and (4) groupings based on a common

level of development or some other common interest, like the Group of 77. Rather than focusing on their different origins as Kaufmann has done, Thomas Hovet (1960, pp. 29–46) classifies UN groups according to their composition and function. He identifies forty-six different UN groups as of 1960, including the Soviet bloc and five other general types of UN groups: eight caucusing groups dealing mainly with procedural matters, six geographic distribution groups based on formal and informal agreements in the UN, twenty-one regional groups whose members are "bound" together through regional organizations outside of the UN, seven common-interest groups whose members are not located in close geographic proximity but share a common outlook on key issues, and three temporary groups that have been instrumental in regards to a particular UN issue or debate.

Building on the classification schemes offered by Kaufmann and Hovet, the remainder of this chapter will examine three different dimensions of group politics, each with different implications for the global dance. The first dimension is the five geographically based electoral groups (Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, and Western Europe and Other States) that are used to select the members of all limited-membership bodies and the candidates for all leadership positions. The second dimension is groups based on common issue positions, ranging in size from as few as three members to as many as 130. This dimension also includes the regional international organizations that often try to speak with one voice in UN debates. The third dimension of group politics in the UN is small, often temporary, negotiating groups used to resolve critical issues that have reached an impasse in larger membership bodies. In practice this last type of group politics blurs the line between groups as actors and groups as a process, so they receive attention in Part 2 of the book as well.

Electoral Groups

A key dimension of group politics that influences the political processes of the United Nations comprises geographically based electoral groups. Currently there are five such groups; their number and composition have evolved as the membership of the UN has expanded. The roots of these groups lie in the need to manage electoral contests in the General Assembly in an efficient and equitable way (Ziring, Riggs, and Plano, 2000, p. 91). Immediately after the UN started meeting in 1946, the Assembly was faced with two controversial tasks: (1) electing its own leadership in the form of a president, seven vice presidents, and chairpersons of its six main committees, and (2) selecting six nonpermanent