

International Law Commission

Organization: International Law Commission

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Description The International Law Commission (ILC) was established by the United Nations (UN) in 1947. Its mandate is to facilitate the development and codification of international law. It is based in the European Office of the UN in Geneva.

The ILC has forty-three members, elected by the UN General Assembly, and is intended to assure representation of the main forms of civilization and of the principal legal systems of the world. Members sit in their individual capacity and not as representatives of their government. To fulfill its mandate, ILC prepares draft treaties on subjects that are not sufficiently formalized in international law, and will consider proposals for such from UN organizations and agencies. There is extensive state involvement at all stages of treaty preparation, during which the ILC may consult with any international or national organizations, official or non-official. Once drafted, treaties are submitted to the General Assembly, often with a recommendation to hold a conference to gain states' approval. Completed projects include the Formulation of the Nuremberg Principles, the Law of the Sea, and the Law of Treaties.

Given the multitude of pressing and often-overlapping global issue areas, such as trade, the environment, finance, HIV/AIDS, migration, and the interconnected nature of contemporary international law, the ILC's responsibilities have grown increasingly significant. The ILC is required to maintain an effective consultative process that can ensure that these unprecedented global legal challenges are met. The recognition of this complexity is reflected in its 2003 Agenda: The Fragmentation of International Law: Difficulties Arising from the Diversification and Expansion of International Law.

Suggested Reading: **International Law Commission website.** www.un.org/law/ilc (accessed 16 March 2005).