

## Milestones

- 16 November 1994** - the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) enters into force
- March 1997** - the sixth Meeting of States Parties to UNCLOS elects 21 members of the Commission
- June 1997** - the Commission holds its first session at United Nations Headquarters in New York and elects Mr. Yuri B. Kazmin as its first Chair
- 12 September 1997** - the Commission adopts its Rules of Procedure (currently CLCS/40/Rev.1)
- 13 May 1999** - the Commission adopts its Scientific and Technical Guidelines (CLCS/11 and Add.1)
- 1 May 2000** - the Commission holds an Open Meeting under the theme "UNCLOS and the delineation of the continental shelf: Opportunities and challenges for States"
- 20 December 2001** - the Commission receives its first submission, made by the Russian Federation
- 23 April 2002** - the twelfth Meeting of States Parties to UNCLOS elects 21 members of the Commission
- 27 June 2002** - the Commission approves its first Recommendations, namely those in regard to the submission made by the Russian Federation
- May 2006** - the Commission receives the first joint submission made by France, Ireland, Spain and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in the area of the Celtic Sea and the Bay of Biscay
- June 2007** - the seventeenth Meeting of States Parties to UNCLOS elects 21 members of the Commission
- May 2008** - the Commission receives a tenth submission
- May 2009** - the number of submissions reaches 50
- April 2010** - the number of Recommendations by the Commission exceeds ten
- June/December 2012** - the twenty-second Meeting of States Parties to UNCLOS elects 21 members of the Commission
- August 2012** - the Commission agrees to work 21 weeks per year
- March 2014** - the Commission approves its twentieth Recommendation
- August 2016** - the number of Recommendations reaches 26
- October 2016** - the total number of submissions, including revised submissions, reaches 82
- January-March 2017** - the Commission holds its forty-third session and celebrates its twentieth anniversary with an Open Meeting

## The Commission

The Commission is a body of 21 experts in the fields of geology, geophysics or hydrography, established pursuant to article 2 of Annex II to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). They are elected for a term of five years by the Meeting of States Parties to the Convention from among their nationals having due regard to the need to ensure equitable geographical representation. The Members serve in their personal capacities.

The Commission makes recommendations to coastal States on matters related to the establishment of the outer limits of their continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured. These recommendations are based on the scientific and technical data and other material provided by States in relation to the implementation of article 76 of the Convention. The recommendations do not prejudice matters relating to the delimitation of boundaries between States with opposite or adjacent coasts, nor prejudice the position of States that are parties to a land or maritime dispute, or application of other parts of the Convention or any other treaties. The limits of the continental shelf established by a coastal State on the basis of these recommendations shall be final and binding.

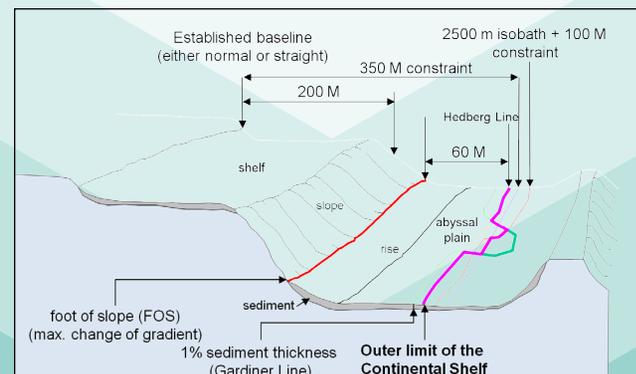
The second function of the Commission is to provide scientific and technical advice, if requested by the coastal State concerned during the preparation of submission data.

**Secretariat of the Commission**  
**Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea**  
**Office of Legal Affairs (OLA/DOALOS)**  
**Room DC2-0450**  
**United Nations**  
**New York, New York 10017**  
**USA**

© United Nations, 2017



## Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf



**Celebrating the twentieth anniversary of its establishment (1997-2017)**

## Interesting Facts

Over the past 20 years, States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) elected from among their nationals 49 members to the Commission from 37 States. Four members have been serving on the Commission since its establishment. No woman has ever served on the Commission to date.

As at 31 December 2016, 67 coastal States have made 82 submissions, including seven joint submissions, several partial submissions as well as five revised submissions which were made after recommendations had been issued.

The Commission expects to receive further submissions for consideration. Approximately 25 of the future submissions are expected to follow preliminary information submitted by certain coastal States, under a decision of the Meeting of States Parties to UNCLOS, in order to meet the time limit for submissions prescribed by UNCLOS. Such preliminary information is not considered by the Commission. Other expected submissions are further partial and revised submissions, as well as further submissions from coastal States that recently became parties of UNCLOS or those that may become parties in the future.

Thirteen submissions, including two revised submissions, are currently under active consideration, while another 43 submissions, including one revised submission, are still awaiting consideration. With no new submissions having been received over the past two years, the backlog of submissions awaiting consideration ("the queue") has started to decrease from a maximum of 48 reached by the end of 2014. As at 31 December 2016, the Commission issued 26 recommendations; two of them were for revised submissions. Currently, the time that a submission awaits in the queue, i.e. the time from its receipt to the establishment of a subcommission, stands at about seven to eight years.

Due to its high workload, the Commission increased the number and length of sessions held in New York. Under working arrangements implemented in 2012, the Commission is currently meeting in New York for three sessions a year, each of seven weeks, for a total of 21 weeks per year. Apart from meeting in plenary, the Commission is working by way of three subcommissions meeting simultaneously, with each group actively considering three to four different submissions throughout a session. By the end of the forty-third session, the Commission will have held 212 weeks of meetings at United Nations Headquarters, 62 of which will have been plenary weeks, and 150 weeks at the level of the subcommissions. Factoring in that several subcommissions meet simultaneously, this will amount to more than 350 weeks of meetings at the subcommission level alone.

As at 31 December 2016, the Secretary-General of the United Nations has received six deposits permanently describing the outer limits of the continental shelf based on recommendations by the Commission.

The number of work weeks spent by a subcommission on the consideration of a submission varies depending on the volume of data and their complexity, the timeliness of responses by the submitting State(s) to requests by the subcommission for additional data and/or clarifications, and the number of exchanges with the delegations of coastal States. So far, the shortest examination of a submission required two weeks of meetings of a subcommission, and the longest required 26 weeks over the period of four years.

Apart from considering submissions made by coastal States, members of the Commission also substantially supported capacity-building efforts of OLA/DOALOS to assist coastal States in the implementation of article 76 of UNCLOS. In particular, they contributed to a comprehensive training manual and lectured at eleven regional, sub-regional and national training courses held between 2005 and 2015.

## Members of the Commission (1997-2017)

Hilal Mohamed Sultan Al-Azri (Oman) (2002-2007)  
Alexandre Tagore Medeiros de Albuquerque (Brazil) (1997-2012), Chair 2007-2012  
Muhammad Arshad (Pakistan) (2012-2017)  
Osvaldo Pedro Astiz (Argentina) (1997-2012)  
Lawrence F. Awosika (Nigeria) (1997-2017), Chair 2012-2017  
Aly Ibrahim Beltagy (Egypt) (1997-2002)  
Samuel Sona Betah (Cameroon) (1997-2007)  
Harald Brekke (Norway) (1997-2012)  
Galo Carrera Hurtado (Mexico) (1997-2017), Chair 2012  
André C.W. Chan Chim Yuk (Mauritius) (1997-2002)  
Francis L. Charles (Trinidad and Tobago) (2007-2017)  
Peter F. Croker (Ireland) (1997-2012), Chair 2002-2007  
Indurlall Fagoonee (Mauritius) (2002-2012)  
Noel Newton St. Claver Francis (Jamaica) (1997-2007)  
Mihai Silviu German (Romania) (2002-2012)  
Ivan F. Glumov (Russian Federation) (2012-2017)  
Kazuchika Hamuro (Japan) (1997-2002)  
Richard Thomas Haworth (Canada and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) (2012-2017)  
Martin Vang Heinesen (Denmark) (2012-2017)  
Karl H.F. Hinz (Germany) (1997-2002)  
A. Bakar Jaafar (Malaysia) (1997-2012)  
George Jaoshvili (Georgia) (2007-2015)  
Mladen Juračić (Croatia) (1997-2007)  
Emmanuel Kalngui (Cameroon) (2007-2017)  
Yuri Borisovitch Kazmin (Russian Federation) (1997-2012), Chair 1997-2002  
Iain C. Lamont (New Zealand) (1997-2002)  
[Nenad Leder (Croatia) (2015)] \*  
Wenzheng Lyu (China) (1997-2017)  
Mazlan Bin Madon (Malaysia) (2012-2017)  
Estevao Stefane Mahanjane (Mozambique) (2012-2017)  
Jair Alberto Ribas Marques (Brazil) (2012-2017)  
Chisengu Leo M'Dala (Zambia) (1997-2002)  
Simon Njuguna (Kenya) (2012-2017)  
Isaac Owusu Oduro (Ghana) (2007-2017)  
Yong Ahn Park (Republic of Korea) (1997-2017)  
Carlos Marcelo Paterlini (Argentina) (2012-2017)  
Fernando Manuel Maia Pimentel (Portugal) (2002-2012)  
Sivaramakrishnan Rajan (India) (2007-2014)  
Rasik Ravindra (India) (2014-2017)  
Daniel Rio (France) (1997-2002)  
Walter R. Roest (Netherlands) (2012-2017) †  
Michael Anselme Marc Rosette (Seychelles) (2007-2012)  
Krishna-Swami Ramachandran Srinivasan (India) (1997-2002)  
Philip Alexander Symonds (Australia) (2002-2012)  
Kensaku Tamaki (Japan) (2002-2011)  
Naresh Kumar Thakur (India) (2002-2007)  
Tetsuro Urabe (Japan) (2011-2017)  
Szymon Uścińowicz (Poland) (2012-2017)  
Yao Ubuènalè Woledji (Togo) (2002-2007)

\* See SPLOS/291

† Nominated by France

