

Rule of Law Committee for the Oceans

Why Should the US Ratify the LOS Convention?

Support our Navy: Our naval strength depends increasingly on collaboration with our allies and with regional maritime forces. The Convention was negotiated specifically to meet US requirements for naval mobility. It will enhance US national security programs such as the Proliferation Security Initiative and other efforts in our Global War on Terrorism. Failure to ratify UNCLOS is a continuing source of friction with other coastal and maritime states and undercuts our relationships with members of our Navy's Global Maritime Partnership Initiative.

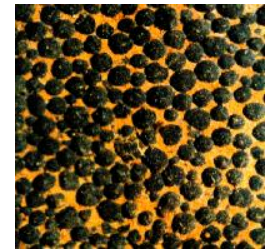
Extend Our Sovereign Territory: The LOS Convention provides international recognition of national claims to the continental shelf beyond 200 miles from shore. Deposits rich in oil, gas and methane hydrates are located in areas that will be recognized as US territory if the US files its claim to the area through the Convention's Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf - the US will also gain status to protest over-extensive claims by other countries.



Areas in blue indicate potential claims beyond 200 miles.

Reinvigorate Our Deep Seabed Mining Industry: American companies were the leaders of seabed mineral development, receiving US recognition of four extensive minesite claims in the 1980s. Now one of those sites has been given up, applications to renew claims for two more have been set aside by the US government due to lack of funds for processing and the fourth has been transferred to

German firms acting under the Convention's International Seabed Authority. If the US fails to ratify UNCLOS, the last opportunity for US flag mining of the mineral wealth of the seabed will move overseas.



Seabed nodules rich in nickel and cobalt from the seabed of the Pacific Ocean

Regain Our Diplomatic Edge: In 1982, President Reagan refused to ratify the original Convention unless it was revised to address his



Renegotiation of the LOS Convention to meet US needs is an example of US power and influence in multilateral diplomacy

objections to the provisions on deep seabed mining. In 1989 the US was approached by developing countries and our allies and consultations on the changes required were begun. A new agreement that fulfilled President Reagan's standards was achieved and signed by the US in 1994. As the US has delayed ratification, diplomatic efforts to rectify problems in other international accords are hampered by its example of failing to accept a convention in spite of modifications specifically negotiated to meet the requirements imposed by the US.

Promote our Interests in Environment, Fisheries and Marine Science:

The LOS Convention is an extension of the traditional law of the sea that the US has accepted throughout the existence of the nation. These extensions were provide the legal and political basis upon which to build international agreements for fisheries, environmental protection and conduct of marine science that further the interests of the United States.