

Committee: General Assembly, Fourth Committee (SPECPOL)

Chair: Ishika Adapa

Topic: Measures to ease tensions in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine

Introduction

The Crimean Peninsula has been the subject of multiple territorial disputes, starting all the way back from around the 5th century BC. In most recent times, it had been an oblast (area) first of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic before later being handed over to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic wherein the territory was covered by the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol City within independent Ukraine. However, this peace was only short-lived, with the Russian Federation claiming their so-called rightful ownership over the Crimean peninsula, and acting upon it with an event known as the Russian military intervention of 2014. This occurred in the aftermath of the 2014 Ukrainian Revolution and was a part of wider unrest across southern and eastern Ukraine. After the Russian ‘little green men’ took over the building of the Supreme Council of Crimea and strategic sites across the region, they began to set in motion their plan to ‘return Crimea to Russia’.

This led to an installation of a Pro-Russian Sergey Valeryevich Aksyonov led government in Crimea. Due to the citizens of Eastern-Ukrainian Crimea’s belief of their collective ties being closer to Russia historically and culturally, the possibility of the Crimean peninsula being under Russian control was not met with as much backlash with citizens compared to the international community. There was a referendum held called the Crimean status referendum, which was a controversial vote on the political status of Crimea that was held on the 16th of March 2014. The referendum questioned the citizens as to their wishes in the matter of joining Russia as a federal subject of restoring the 1992 Constitution of Crimea and remain as a part of Ukraine. The official result was a 97% vote for the integration of the region into the Russian Federation from the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the government of Sevastopol respectively. Following this, the Supreme Council of Crimea and Sevastopol city council declared themselves independent from Ukraine and requested to join the Russian Federation. Russia recognized the Republic of Crimea as a sovereign state on the same day. However, the referendum is not recognized internationally by a majority of nations.

Following this, Multiple other regions in eastern Ukraine with the same beliefs took this as an opportunity to voice their opinions. There were protests by Russian-backed anti-government groups that took place in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts of Ukraine, also known collectively as ‘Donbas’. These were a part of a wider group of concurrent Pro-Russian protests across southern and eastern Ukraine. However, these soon escalated into an armed conflict between the separatist forces of the self-declared Luhansk People’s republic and the Donetsk People’s republic, and the government of Ukraine. During the 22nd to 25th of August 2014, Russian forces, self-named a ‘humanitarian convoy’ crossed the border into Ukrainian territory without the Ukrainian government’s authorization. These events were characterized as a ‘direct invasion by Russia of Ukraine’. Russia’s stance on the incident had been vague but stated that they were ‘forced’ to deploy them to ‘defend the Russian-speaking population’. As a result of these events, the separationist forces regained much of the territory they lost to the Ukrainian government’s preceding military offensive. Due to these incidents, multiple ceasefire agreements were created and eventually mutually violated on both sides. In the months to follow, there were minor skirmishes along the line of contact, but no territorial

changes. This state of stalemate led to the war being called a 'frozen conflict'. However, it was still a war zone and dozens of soldiers and civilians were killed each month.

Definition of Key Terms

Annexation

Annexation is the action and concept in international law that relates to the forcible acquisition of one state's territory by another state and is generally held to be an illegal act.

Autonomous

(of a country or region) having the freedom to govern itself or control its own affairs.

Little Green Men

Masked Russian soldiers in unmarked green army uniforms carrying Russian military equipment and weapons that appeared during the 2014 Ukrainian Crisis.

Proto-state

A proto-state is a political entity that does not represent a fully institutionalized or autonomous sovereign state.

Referendum

A general vote by the electorate on a single political question which has been referred to them for a direct decision.

Background Information

Geographic Ukraine

Geographically, Ukraine is in between Europe and Russia, leading to a variety of cultural influences over the years that play a major role in this particular territorial dispute. Ukraine is roughly divided into two parts; Eastern Ukraine and Western Ukraine. Western Ukraine directly faces Europe, and this part is considered more Ukrainian. More people have Ukrainian as their first language, and this side tends to have more national pride, especially in terms of culture and heritage. Eastern Ukraine, on the other hand, tends to prioritize their Russian roots over their Ukrainian ones, with the majority of them speaking Russian as their first language and feeling more in sync with Russian culture and values as opposed to Ukraine.

Euromaidan Protests

When considering the history of Ukraine and its previous partnership with the Soviet Union, there is a lot of historical relevance of Russian influence on the methods of Ukraine. However, in modern-day times, this certain obligation to its previous ties with Russia can be combated with its current ties with the European Union. This exact concept is what sparked the Ukrainian revolution of 2014. When the Ukrainian government decided to suspend the signing of an association agreement with the European Union and instead chose closer ties to Russia and the Eurasian economic union, citizens took to the independence square in Kyiv to protest against this decision. The scope soon widened with the perception of President Victor Yanukovich and his government's "widespread government corruption", "abuse of power", and "violation of human rights in Ukraine."

The Crimean Referendum

The Referendum that took place on March 16th was in the opinion of many world leaders, unfair. The referendum's available choices did not include the option of keeping Crimea and Sevastopol as they were at the time of the referendum. Also, the constitution of 1992 gave greater power to the Crimean parliament, including the full ability to establish relations with other states. Many western and Ukrainian commentators argued that due to this, the two available options would result in separation from Ukraine. Another point to consider was the presence of Russian soldiers overseeing public buildings and Ukrainian military installations throughout the duration of the Referendum. There was a resolution put forward by the United Nations Security Council to declare the referendum invalid that was voted in favor of by 13 members, but it was vetoed by Russia. The Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People had also called for a boycott of the referendum, stating that the actual turnout for the referendum could not have exceeded 30-40%, which was the normal turnout for votes in the region; as opposed to the 83% and 89% turnout percentage that was officially reported.

Kerch Strait Incident

This international incident occurred on 25 November 2018 involving the Russian Federal Security Service Coast Guard and Ukrainian Navy Vessels. Under a 2003 treaty, the Kerch Strait and the Azov Sea are intended to be shared territorial waters of both countries, and freely accessible. However, the Russians did not honor the treaty in this particular event, where the Russian Federal Security Service coast guard fired upon and captured three Ukrainian vessels in shared territorial waters. They claimed that these were Russian territorial waters and that they had repeatedly asked the vessels to leave, saying they had not followed proper procedure, were maneuvering dangerously and were not responding to radio communications. Ukraine said that advance notice had been given, that the ships had tried to make radio contact but received no response, and cited the 2003 treaty in response to the wrongful claim of it being "Russian territorial waters". After turning back to return to port, the Russian coast guard pursued them as they left, and later fired upon and seized the vessels in international waters.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Ministry for Temporary Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons

This establishment was officially created on 20 April 2016 to conduct and control the occupied parts of the Donetsk, Luhansk, and Crimea regions affected by the 2014 Russian military intervention. The ministry aims to search for solutions and reintegration strategies in order for Ukraine to regain its control over Crimea and the historical Donbas region.

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is the world's largest regional security organization. It acts as a platform for joint action to improve the lives of individuals and communities. According to the official website, "OSCE responses to the crisis in and around Ukraine include high-level diplomacy and multilateral dialogue; monitoring the security situation on the ground; promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; and strengthening democratic institutions and practices."

North Atlantic Treaty Organization

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a body consisting of 29 member states. Their purpose is to guarantee the freedom and security of their members through political and military means. NATO and Ukraine's partnership has developed into one of the most substantial ones, and since the wake of the conflict in 2014, cooperation has been intensified in critical areas. NATO's practical support for Ukraine has been shown in the Comprehensive Assistance Package for Ukraine.

Ukraine

The country of Ukraine is one that is most affected and involved in the current territorial dispute of the Crimean and Donbas regions. Due to the Russian military intervention in 2014, the Ukrainian government had lost their control over these regions, and have been trying to regain power ever since. Commonly referred to as the Russo-Ukrainian war, it has led to the death of more than 10,000 civilians and close to 1.5 million Internally Displaced People (IDPs).

The Russian Federation

The Russian Federation's involvement in this territorial dispute is significant. The illegal annexation of Crimea and support and backing for the separatists' fighters of the DPR and LPR collapsed the relations between both nations. Due to the various incidents involving the Russian Federation such as the war in Donbas and the Kerch Strait incident, the international community has condemned the acts of Russia and its constant breach of international law.

The United States of America

The United States of America has been very vocal about its support for Ukraine. The Administration has continued to pressure Russia over its involvement in eastern Ukraine. The country has imposed sanctions on multiple individuals and companies linked to the conflict and has provided \$1 billion in aid since 2014 to Ukraine.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of Event
21 November 2013 - 23 February 2014	The Euromaidan protests took place in the capital city of Kyiv and were sparked by the Ukrainian President Yanukovich's decision to reject a greater economic integration with the European Union in the form of a deal. Due to the escalation of the conflict, the President fled the country in February 2014.
March 2014	Russian troops took control of Ukraine's Crimean region, and after Crimeans voted to join the Russian Federation in a disputed local referendum, the peninsula was formally annexed.
May 2014	Pro-Russian separatists in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of eastern Ukraine held a referendum to declare independence from Ukraine.
5 September 2014	Ukraine, Russia, the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR), and the Luhansk People's Republic (LPR) signed an agreement to establish a ceasefire, called the Minsk Protocol.
February 2015	France, Germany, Russia, and Ukraine began attempts to broker a cessation in violence through the Minsk Records.
1 October 2019	Ukraine, Russia, the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR), the Luhansk People's Republic (LPR) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) agreed to a roadmap for an end to the conflict.

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

The following is a list of relevant UN treaties, resolutions, and events that have been enacted or attempted to solve the concerned issue.

- Territorial Integrity of Ukraine (A/68/L.39)
- Situation of Human Rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine (A/71/484) (A/72/439) (A/73/589)

- Problem of the militarization of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine, as well as parts of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov (A/73/L.47)

Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

Alongside constant international pressure on Russia to cease all operations in eastern Ukraine, there have been multiple attempts to solve the conflict;

- Starting with the sanctions applied by numerous countries and international organizations against the Russian Federation and against Ukrainian citizens involved in and responsible for the escalation. The United States and the European Union, for example, have imposed sanctions.
- On 5 September 2014, the Ukrainian government and representatives of the self-proclaimed DPR and LPR signed a provisional truce. However, the ceasefire imploded during intense new fighting in January of 2015.
- Another ceasefire agreement has been in operation since mid-February 2015 but has failed to put an end to the fighting.
- The United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/73/L.47 affirmed the General Assembly's commitment to the territorial integrity of Ukraine and condemns the Kerch Strait Incident.

Possible Solutions

The issue of the territorial dispute between Russia and Ukraine can only be solved through diplomacy of the highest order and cooperation between nations. A few plausible solutions to consider would be;

- The forceful eradication of the DPR and LPR.
- Collaborative work between the Ukrainian government and the separatist parties to compromise on the issue and reach a feasible solution.
- Territorial division of the Crimean Peninsula between the Russian Federation and Ukraine.
- Declaring the Crimean referendum as invalid.
- Reconciliation between the Russian Federation and Ukraine through the implementation of amended treaties and agreements, in the interest of both parties involved.
- Introducing an option of shared Russian and Ukrainian nationalism in Eastern Ukraine.

Additional Suggested Research

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Committee: General Assembly, Fourth Committee (SPECPOL)

Chair: Junhui Lee

Topic: The Question of Antarctic Territorial Claims

Introduction

Antarctica is the largest uninhabited continent on Earth that has been set aside as a scientific preserve by the Antarctic Treaty, signed in 1959 (enforced since 1961). Being the only continent without an indigenous human population, it has received significant global attention throughout history as sealing and whaling sites. Especially after its underground resources and scientific research value was brought to the spotlight, Antarctica has become even more economically valuable. Therefore, various countries have claimed ownership of the continent, with the United Kingdom making the first claim to a territory forming a triangular wedge with its apex on the South pole in 1908. Ever since, Argentina, Chile, Norway, Australia, France, and New Zealand have made similar claims, and while such claims haven't been reputed by the 1959 Treaty, they haven't been approved. Also, the above claims have only been approved by the claimants and not the broader international community.

Antarctica opens up room for imperialistic conflict not only between concerned nations and signatories of the Antarctic Treaty but also for the entire global society as it houses 70% of the world's total freshwater resource. What happens to Antarctica's freshwater would affect the sustainability of the Earth overall, as well as what happens to the underground crude oil and other fossil fuels. Additionally, suspected ongoing military movements in parts of Antarctica are making tensions rise between countries interested in getting their share of the continent.

Despite the pressing issues, no global consensus on how the process of governing Antarctica would be undertaken has not been reached. Although the Antarctic Treaty still stands, whether the protocols are being followed through are unclear. In 2048, when the environmental protocol of the Antarctic Treaty is to be up for review, the fragile treaty will face its greatest tests.

Therefore, addressing the issues of Antarctic territorial claims to prevent the monopolizing of natural resources, historical heritage and scientifically valuable resources in Antarctica is an important step in promoting sustainable and equal development across the global community.

Definition of Key Terms

Territorial Claims

Territorial claims are statements of countries concerning the ownership of land and/or water. 7 countries including Chile, Argentina, the United Kingdom, Norway, Australia, France, and New Zealand, have made claims to the Antarctic. Unlike other territorial claims, it must be noted that the

territorial claims regarding Antarctica overlap-but there hasn't been severe competition over the overlapping areas.

The seven countries above have made official territorial claims while Russia and the U.S.A. have a "basis of claim", which means that they have only reserved their right to make claims in the future. A portion of West Antarctica has been left unclaimed.

Peripheral Possession

This is the claim, made by countries with claims to a portion of Antarctica, that a country is not required to occupy all of the territories to be able to possess it. A country may only control areas on the periphery, and from these lay claims to vast swaths of territory.

Abeyance

Abeyance is defined as "a state of temporary disuse or suspension" This is clearly stated in the Antarctic Treaty which says, "no acts or activities taking place while the present Treaty is in force shall constitute a basis for asserting, supporting or denying a claim to territorial sovereignty in Antarctica or create any rights of sovereignty in Antarctica. No new claim, or enlargement of an existing claim, to territorial sovereignty in Antarctica, shall be asserted while the present Treaty is in force". Therefore, the territorial claims of Antarctica have neither been reputed nor fully approved.

Research Station

Research stations are stations built for the purpose of scientific research only. Although the Antarctic Treaty does state that there will be no military maneuvers or testing of weapons in Antarctica shall be used for peaceful purposes only, it "does not prevent the use of military personnel or equipment for scientific research or for any other peaceful purpose." Countries are prohibited from using such stations for military operations. Russia and China's construction of research bases with concerns of them being used for military purposes, which has become one of the main controversies regarding this issue. There are 70 permanent research stations in the Antarctic from 29 different countries, all signatories to the Antarctic Treaty.

Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCRS)

The Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) is a thematic organization of the International Science Council (ISC) and was created in 1958. SCAR is charged with "initiating, developing and coordinating high quality international scientific research in the Antarctic region (including the Southern Ocean), and on the role of the Antarctic region in the Earth system."

Background Information

In the upcoming 2048 review of the Antarctic Treaty, there will be far more voices involved since there are far more signatories. Countries are positioning themselves for the day when the confines of the current Antarctic Treaty System may not apply to satisfy their economic purposes of investing in Antarctic exploration.

The Antarctic Treaty

The Antarctic Treaty was signed in Washington on 1 December 1959 by the twelve countries whose scientists had been active in and around Antarctica during the International Geophysical Year (IGY)

of 1957-58. It entered into force in 1961 and has since been acceded to by many other nations. The total number of Parties to the Treaty is now 54. Below are the key provisions of the Treaty:

Art. I Antarctica shall be used for peaceful purposes only

Art. II Freedom of scientific investigation in Antarctica and cooperation toward that end... shall continue

Art. III Scientific observations and results from Antarctica shall be exchanged and made freely available

Initially signed to prevent military action in Antarctica during the Second World War, the Antarctic Treaty has kept peace in the continent for over six decades. However, the Treaty does not state clearly as to how countries that violate the provision stated, which has led to many countries carrying out operations in Antarctica that other countries have actively disapproved of. In fact, the matter had never been much addressed, as in 1959 there was no need for any country to go against denuclearization and demilitarization of the Antarctic region. The Antarctic Treaty is up for review in 2048.

Tourism

Tourism is one of the greatest areas of tension, as it is one of the most lucrative points for many countries that are in line with their strategic economic interests. The fastest-growing source of new visitors last year was China, which was second only to the US in the ranking of total tourists. At the same time, Beijing is investing heavily in missions to Antarctica, part of its plan to become a “polar great power”—moves that have not always been welcome.

Tourists in Antarctica generally outnumber researchers. The popular season is summer which is during winter in the northern hemisphere. In the summer of 2007/2008, there were nearly 50,000 tourists compared to 4000 researchers. Since then tourists in the high 30,000 have been there every year. This high number leads to the number of tourists permitted per year to be limited. Ships with over 50 passengers can no longer travel to Antarctica and ship regulation there is one of the best and strictest, although there have still been spills and stranded ships. The regulation of tourism is conducted by the International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators.

For most tourists—who pay between \$10,000 and \$100,000 for a trip—visiting Antarctica involves stepping off the boat at just a handful of highly regulated landing sites. But there are loopholes in the system, such as private yachts that flout permitting rules, as well as a growing number of tours that involve activities such as kayaking or skiing.

Increased tourism has also taken a toll on the Antarctic environment. “It’s becoming a bit of an adventure playground, and the trouble is the unregulated tourism,” says Prof Francis, at the British Antarctic Survey. “It has become much easier for people just to sail their yachts to Antarctica, to fly their private aircraft to Antarctica.”

Military

The use of military in the Antarctic is allowed as long as they are only used for peaceful, scientific purposes.

Chile and Argentina, for instance, both maintain a permanent army presence on the Antarctic mainland, and the worry is that some countries are either not reporting military deployment, or may instead be recruiting civilian security contractors for essentially military missions.

Antarctic skies are unusually clear and also unusually free from radio interference - they are ideal for deep-space research and satellite tracking. But they are also ideal for establishing covert surveillance networks and remote control of offensive weapons systems.

The Australian government recently identified China's newest base as a threat, specifically because of the surveillance potential, saying that "Antarctic bases are increasingly used for 'dual-use' scientific research that's useful for military purposes."

Scientific Research

Autonomous freedom of activity by signatory countries is legitimized through the fact that the vast scientific opportunities of the Antarctic must be shared equally among nations. This is important for two reasons: scientific research has legal priority, and those new signatories can become decision-makers when they do science.

The “freedom of scientific investigation” is preserved in Article II of the Antarctic Treaty. It directs that signatories to the treaty can conduct scientific research of any kind anywhere in the Antarctic, without another country’s permission.

Scientific research is conducted and subsidized by the national governments of the nations yet is shared and coordinated internationally because of the efforts of the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR).

Environmental Concerns

Pressing environmental concerns surround the Antarctic. In order to preserve the natural habitat in the Antarctic, the Treaty outlines rigorous measures. Mining and drilling any part of Antarctica is completely and strictly banned.

The protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty Article was signed in 1991 and came to force in 1998. As mentioned above, Article 25.5 prohibits the removal of the banning of mineral extraction unless another legally binding framework is in place concerning the issue. It also states that all activities in the Antarctic shall not cause any significant effects on weather patterns, ecosystems, marine environments and species, especially endangered ones. The treaty does not reference activities outside of the Antarctic.

Apart from the Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP)’s Protocol, the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Seals (CCAS) has been hugely successful. The treaty came into effect in 1978 in response to seals being endangered due to active sealing in the area. The measure taken has been largely effective, thus putting Antarctic seals out of endangerment.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Secretariat of the Antarctic Treaty

The Secretariat of the Antarctic Treaty is located in downtown Buenos Aires, Argentina. The Argentine Government provides the office for the Secretariat. The Secretariat and its work are funded

by the Consultative Parties. The Secretariat's budget is approved each year at the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) while Financial Regulations govern its management.

The Secretariat mission is “to assist the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) and the Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP) in performing their functions, with the aim of strengthening the Antarctic Treaty system and ensuring that all activities in Antarctica are consistent with the purposes and principles of the Antarctic Treaty and its Protocol on Environmental Protection.”

It also facilitates information exchange between the Parties of the Treaty and the Environmental Protocol and collects/archives relevant information about the Antarctic and the concerned nations for the ATCM.

China

Among ATS signatories, China has the fastest growing presence, with four Antarctic bases and a fifth underway near the South Pole. Beijing has also in recent years ramped up research expenditures, signed a fueling partnership with Australia, constructed a new icebreaker, announced a permanent airfield and grown its polar tourism industry exponentially. In addition, Australia warned other nations that China may have already breached parts of the treaty through unreported military and development activities—mirroring a similar disregard for international law in the South China Sea. This is partly due to the location of China's next Antarctic base—the South Pole is included in multiple's countries' territorial claims and has military-strategic benefits, should armed conflicts occur.

Whether China has a formal long-term “Antarctic strategy” is unclear.

The United States of America

The USA was one of the first signatory nations of the Antarctic Treaty. It has a historic presence in the Antarctic. It holds no current territorial claims but has reserved its rights to do so. The USA is currently engaged in substantial scientific research activity in Antarctica, including Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station, McMurdo Station, Ross Island, and Palmer Station. The supplies provided to the station are transported by and often provided by the military. Their plan to militarize the Antarctic in a similar way to the Arctic has not yet seen facilitation and details have not been disclosed.

The US holds both political and economic and political interests in the Antarctic. The economy currently is mainly in the form of tourism and fishing. Americans account for the highest number of tourists travelling to the Antarctic, seconded by China. It also has future plans for more economic gain and has strategically stationed bases around Antarctica.

Australia

Australia was also an original consultative party to the treaty and is an active participant in Antarctic research and development, including scientific research and tourism. It also has a historical presence in the region. The Australian goals for the Antarctic include “fostering economic opportunities arising from Antarctica and the Southern Ocean, consistent with our Antarctic Treaty System obligations, including the ban on mining and oil drilling”.

The Australian Antarctic Division is a division of the Department of the Environment, founded in 1948. The Division undertakes science programs and research projects to contribute to an

understanding of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean. It regulates Australian actions regarding scientific research, stations (bases), expeditioners, wildlife, ships, the environment and jobs.

Britain

Britain was the first country to ever make a territorial claim in the Antarctic. It is also one of the original contractors of the Antarctic Treaty back in 1959. The British Antarctic Territory (BAT) has no indigenous population and presence in the Territory is provided by the British Antarctic Survey (BAS), which operates three scientific stations and the United Kingdom Antarctic Heritage Trust (UKAHT), who manage the historical base at Port Lockroy. The Royal Navy maintains an ice patrol vessel in the area during the austral summer. The Territory has its own legal system and legal and postal administrations.

The aims of BAS include promoting Britain's sovereignty over its claimed territory, to manage the finances of the territory, and "to ensure the long-term security of the Territory by supporting the UK's high profile within the Antarctic Treaty System".

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of Event
1820	Bellinghausen sighted Antarctica
1821	First continental landing by American John Davis
1898-1900	Carsten Borchgrevink led the British Antarctic Expedition
1901-1904	Captain Robert Falcon Scott led the National Antarctic Expedition
1910-1912 as Norway's	Roald Amundsen becomes the first man to reach the South Pole and claims it
1939	Norway claims Dronning Maud Land, southern border unclear
1957-1958	International Geophysical Year
1959	The Antarctic Treaty is signed
1965	International Antarctic Glaciological Project
1978	CCAS comes into effect
1998	Madrid Protocol enters into force, establishing Antarctica as a place for scientific cooperation and environmental protective measures

Relevant Documents and Events

The following is a list of relevant treaties/protocols that have contributed to the establishment of the current Antarctic Treaty System (ATS):

- Agreed Measures for the Conservation of Antarctic Fauna and Flora (1964) (entered into force in 1982)

- Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Seals (1972)
- Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Life (1980)
- Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty(1991)
- Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings (ATCM) (occurs annually between the 52 concerned parties of the treaty)
- The Convention on the Regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resource Activities (1988) (signed in 1988, not in force)

Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

Currently, the only attempt to address conflict between countries in Antarctica has been the Antarctic Treaty which has successfully attracted many signatories in addition to the first 12 countries that created it (now 54 parties). Before the Treaty, there have been several territorial claims with respect to sealing and whaling rights, but the matter was not pressing or intent. Although its main purpose in 1959 was to denuclearize Antarctica, it now provides guidelines as to what concerned parties can or cannot do for economic gain.

The Treaty has been standing for about sixty years, and it has been successful in preventing military conflict in the Antarctic and encompasses key issues such as military, economic, scientific interests the nations might have and has formed a system of regulation. Other treaties and protocols have been enacted in its wake and further support the environmental protection of Antarctic wildlife and icecaps.

By putting all territorial claims in abeyance, the Antarctic Treaty has effectively put an end to the territorial claims in the Antarctic without placing any country above another. However, the lack of effective measures to make sure that the treaty is being followed suit continues to persist as a growing problem as nations' interests deepen.

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