



United Nations Reform: Heading North or South? (Routledge Advances in International Relations and Global Politics)

Spencer Zifcak

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This book examines recent attempts at reform within the United Nations in the wake of the institutional crisis provoked by the invasion of Iraq. It contends that efforts at reform have foundered owing to fundamental and bitter political disagreements between the nations of the global North and South.

Following profound discord in the Security Council in the lead up to the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, this book considers the ambitious programme of reform instigated by then serving UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. The author of this highly topical work, Spencer Zifcak, subjects six of Annan's principal proposals for reform to scrutiny: the reform of the Security Council, the General Assembly, and the Human Rights Council, and suggested alterations to international law with respect to the use of force in international affairs, the 'responsibility to protect', and UN strategies to counter global terrorism. On the basis of these detailed case-studies, the book demonstrates why so few proposals for reform were eventually adopted. It argues that the principal reason for this failure was that nations of the North and South could not agree as to the merits of the reforms proposed, exposing the sharply differing visions held by member states for a future and improved United Nations.

Founded upon extensive interviews with diplomats at the United Nations, the book provides a rare 'insider' account of UN politics and practice. It will be of vital interest to students, scholars and practitioners of International Relations, International Law, and International Institutions.

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