

## **Uncertain Steps into a Post-Cold War World: The Role and Functioning of the UN Security Council after a Decade of Measures against Iraq.**

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The 'case of Iraq' is the most important single issue the UN Security Council dealt with in the 1990s. It has strongly influenced the role and functioning of the Council in the international legal order. The case, which began with Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and continued with a prolonged effort to induce Iraq's compliance with the post-conflict regime imposed by the Council, has brought together and exemplified the manifold problems, opportunities and pitfalls encountered by the Council on its way to establishing itself as the principal executive organ of the international community. The history of how the Council proceeded in the Iraq case since 1991 is one of the Council taking uncertain steps into a post-Cold War world. The Council was able to revitalize the collective security scheme devised in the UN Charter of 1945, thereby claiming and maintaining its validity after the ruptures in the international system brought about first by the East-West antagonism and then by its sudden conclusion. Further, the Council embarked on a programme of work with profound normative consequences in international law. In a sort of tour d'horizon, this article tries to single out and discuss the most important aspects of the Council's role and functioning as influenced or altered by its handling of the Iraq case, in particular the problem of sanctions and the comprehensive post-conflict regime of Resolution 687 (1991), the extent of the Council's powers, the constitutional reform and procedure of the Council, and the enduring problem of 'legitimacy'.