



JWAC'S World Affairs Forum 2025:

## **Unratified**

***The International Law of the Sea treaties, and their potential for protecting Arctic resources and cultures.***

### **October 10 & 11 @ KTOO Studio 1**

**Juneau, Alaska** - Two days, Ten presentations, Three panel discussions, One question: *How do Alaskans navigate these international laws applicable to territorial and high seas?*

## **Co-Sponsored by Chapter 100 Veterans for Peace**

The Juneau World Affairs Council (JWAC) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3), non-partisan organization. Its goal is to encourage dialogue and understanding of important international, economic, political and social issues through expert presentation, informed discussion, and other educational activities. Our 2025 season is generously sponsored by Chapter 100 Veterans for Peace, Coeur Alaska Kensington Mine, Ramada by Wyndham, and Wostmann & Associates.

## **Schedule**

### **Friday, October 10, 2025**

(1:00 pm - 5:30 pm & 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm)

#### **Welcome and Land Acknowledgement**

1:00 pm - 1:05 pm | KTOO Studio 1

**Opening remarks.**

#### **Session I:**

1:05 pm - 1:45 pm | KTOO Studio 1

**Capt. Steve White** of the Alaska Marine Exchange provides a lay of the land - a visual depiction of marine traffic through the Arctic Ocean and Bering Sea.

#### **Session II:**

1:50 pm - 2:40 pm | KTOO Studio 1

**Professor Jim Nafziger** outlines the history of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), significant issues, how UNCLOS is organized, and the status of UNCLOS ratification.

## **Friday, October 10, 2025 - continued**

### **Session III:**

2:50 pm - 3:45 pm | KTOO Studio 1

**Steven Groves** asks Does the US cede international authority by remaining a non-party to UNCLOS? Can the US imply the existence of international law to guide itself in its efforts to claim waters and submerged land not within the economic zones adjacent to US territory?

### **Session IV:**

3:55 pm - 4:50 pm | KTOO Studio 1

**Dr. Betsy Baker** speaks on Mapping the Extended Continental Shelf (ECS) underlying the Bering Sea and Arctic waters, and the history and process for claiming ECS territory. Is there a potential for cross claims to Arctic waters, specifically the ECS?

### **Session V:**

5:00 pm - 5:30 pm | KTOO Studio 1

A Conversation with **Senator Lisa Murkowski**, a leader in bipartisan efforts urging the US Senate to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

### ***Break***

5:30 pm - 7:00 p.m.

### **Session VI:**

7:00 pm - 7:55 pm | KTOO Studio 1

**Panel Discussion:** What are the national security implications of ratification/non-ratification of United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) for the United States? Featuring **Dr. Troy Bouffard**, **Paul Fuhs**, and **Captain Steve White**. Moderated by JWAC board member **Philip Lawlor**.

### **Session VII:**

8:05 pm - 9:00 pm | KTOO Studio 1

**Panel Discussion:** Chasing the Mirage: Does the US benefit from United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)? What is its relevance to the Arctic? Featuring **Dr. Betsy Baker**, **Dr. Troy Bouffard**, and **Paul Fuhs**. Moderated by **Mike LeVine**.

## **Saturday, October 11, 2025**

(9:00 am - Noon & 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm)

### **Session VIII:**

9:00 am - 10:00 am | KTOO Studio 1

**Liz Karan** and **Dr. Troy Bouffard** on the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) treaty. What is it? How will it work? Why is it necessary? Will the US be able to benefit under the terms of the BBNJ even if the US does not ratify the treaty?

### **Session IX:**

10:10 am - 11:00 am | KTOO Studio 1

**Dr. Dalee Sambo Dorrough** will discuss the advantages of direct participation of indigenous peoples of Alaska in the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction BBNJ treaty; the hurdles to direct indigenous participation in the BBNJ; the activities of the Arctic Council to promote the interests of Indigenous interested parties to achieve the goals of the BBNJ; and ask How does one make sure that Arctic voices are heard in this process?

## **Saturday, October 11, 2025 - continued**

### **Session X:**

11:10 am - Noon | KTOO Studio 1

**Barbara 'Wáahlaal Gidaak Blake** asks Is there another direction for Alaska's indigenous peoples in lieu of relying on international treaties?

### **Session XI:**

1:30 pm - 2:30 pm | KTOO Studio 1

**Full panel discussion:** *Where do we go from here?* Moderated by JWAC board member and past president **Jim Clark**.

## **Speakers**

**Dr. Betsy Baker** is an international lawyer based in Alaska. Her consulting work on ocean law and Arctic policy builds on 25+ years of experience as an author, consultant, law professor, and most recently as director of an Alaska-based marine science funding organization, the North Pacific Research Board. She served as a visiting scholar at the US Department of State Office of Polar Affairs, supporting the work of the US Extended Continental Shelf Task Force.

**Barbara 'Wáahlaal Gidaak Blake** is the Vice President for Ocean Conservancy, leading the Arctic & Northern Waters Program. A dedicated advocate for Indigenous rights and environmental stewardship, she has an extensive background in Alaska Native policy and governance, having served in key leadership roles at the state and tribal levels. With deep roots in Haida, Tlingit, and Ahtna Athabascan heritage, she is a passionate cultural practitioner and a committed leader.

**Dr. Troy Bouffard** is an Assistant Professor of Arctic Security in the College of Business and Security Management (CBSM) at the University of Alaska Fairbanks and faculty since 2014. He is the designer and instructor for the Arctic Security graduate concentration and graduate certificate in the Masters of Security and Disaster Management program. He also serves as the chair of the graduate curriculum committee for CBSM as well as various positions on several PhD committees. Dr. Bouffard was the co-principal investigator and program manager of the USNORTHCOM / ALCOM Arctic Defense and Security Orientation (ADSO) program from 2013-2021, responsible for baselining DOD knowledge of the Arctic region through an operational framework.

**Paul Fuhs** is the former Mayor of Dutch Harbor, Alaska, the number #1 fishing port in the US. He is currently President Emeritus of the Board of Directors of the Marine Exchange of Alaska which provides vessel tracking and Arctic emergency response services for the Coast of Alaska. He now works as a maritime consultant specializing in Arctic port development, emergency response, and Northern Sea Route development. Mr Fuhs currently serves on the Arctic Council Arctic Shipping Experts Group and the Arctic Economic Council Arctic Marine Transportation Working Group.

**Steven Groves** works as the Director for Policy Campaigns and Margaret Thatcher Fellow at the Heritage Foundation. He is the Co-Editor of *Mandate for Leadership: The Conservative Promise*, the flagship policy book for the 2025 Presidential Transition Project. From 2017-2020, Groves served in the Trump Administration in several roles, first as Ambassador Nikki Haley's Chief of Staff at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations. Groves subsequently joined the White House where he was commissioned as Special Assistant to the President and Assistant Special Counsel.

**Liz Karan** leads The Pew Charitable Trusts' campaign to address gaps in ocean governance through meaningful international cooperation. Karan focuses on developing policy mechanisms to protect the ocean's natural assets and address negative human impacts on marine ecosystems at the United Nations, International Seabed Authority, Convention on Biological Diversity, and World Trade Organization. Karan previously led Pew's effort to secure a new legally binding agreement to protect high seas biodiversity.

**Dr. Dalee Sambo Dorough** (Inuit-Alaska) is the former International Chair of the Inuit Circumpolar Council, a non-governmental organization that represents Inuit from the Russian Far East, Alaska, Canada, and Greenland. She is the former Chairperson (2014) and Expert Member of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (2010 to 2016); and Co-Chair of the International Law Association (ILA) Committee on Implementation of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

**Senator Lisa Murkowski**, Alaska's senior U.S. Senator, is a third generation Alaskan proudly serving as the first Alaskan born senator. She has long-advocated for the Arctic as a national priority and continues to push the United States to invest in the infrastructure and assets critical to supporting an Arctic strategy. She is leading the charge to recapitalize and expand America's fleet of icebreakers and has introduced legislation to raise the nation's presence in the Arctic through two bills that support responsible research and development as well as giving those who live in the region a greater voice on policy and research.

**Professor James Nafziger** was Administrative Director of the American Society of International Law. At Willamette University in Salem, Oregon, Nafziger has focused his teaching and scholarship in the fields of international law and dispute resolution, conflict of laws, international business transactions, cultural heritage law, sports law, immigration and refugee law, comparative law, arbitration, and international litigation. Nafziger, a vice-chair of the International Law Association (ILA) and member of its Executive Council and Management Committee, is the former president and chair of the executive committee of the ILA's American Branch and serves on its Board. He also serves as secretary of the American Society of International Law and as a member of its Executive Council and Executive Committee. His other professional leadership includes membership on the U.S. State Department's Advisory Committee on International Law.

**Captain Steve White** joined the Marine Exchange of Alaska as the Executive Director in September of 2021 after serving 31 years in the Coast Guard. His last assignment was Sector Commander and Captain of the Port for Southeast Alaska. He served 7 tours throughout Alaska including assignments to 4 ships, 2 of which he served as the Commanding Officer. He has patrolled the Gulf of Alaska, Bering Seas, Arctic, Pacific, and Atlantic Oceans. He sat on the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council as the Coast Guard representative, served as the Enforcement Chair for the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission and was the Incident Commander for the Coast Guard's Arctic Operations.

## Upcoming Programs

Visit [JWAC.org](http://JWAC.org) for details as they develop regarding our monthly Tuesday Night Travelogues (stories of travels presented at the Gold Town Theater by your friends and Neighbors) as well as our regular speaker series (experts coming to Juneau to present throughout the season).



### **Tuesday Travelogue: Larry Valero**

Tuesday, November 18 ? | 5:15 - 6:15 | [Gold Town Theater](#)



### **'Navigating the Middle East' with Ambassador Alina Romanowski**

Tuesday, December 16 | 5:15 | [KTOO Studio 1](#)

Presented in partnership with the Alaska World Affairs Council.



### **'Rethinking U.S. Policy towards Africa' with Chidima Blyden**

Tuesday, February 3 | 5:15 | [KTOO Studio 1](#)

Chidi Blyden was the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for African Affairs from 2013 to 2017. Presented in partnership with the Alaska World Affairs Council.

## January 31, 2026 | 6:00 Centennial Hall



people's favorite annual community event.

**WorldQuest** is JWAC's annual trivia night fundraiser -Juneau's premiere trivia event; the biggest and best! (according to the guy who writes it). The whole room plays together, in teams of around eight, while eating dinner, answering amusing and thoughtfully-crafted multiple-choice questions expertly presented with plenty of visuals. It is as low key or high stakes as you want it to be, and the theme each year is "high production value." Includes international buffet, silent and dessert auctions, and just shy of four hours of solid, distracting entertainment when we need it most. Read more at [jwac.org](http://jwac.org). This is some

Be sure to put it on your calendar!

## Join our email list



Visit [jwac.org](http://jwac.org) to join our email list and receive JWAC event announcements.

-see you there!