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**The Commission On The Limits Of The Continental Shelf**

Introduction

Article 76 of the Law of the Sea Convention defines the Continental Shelf and also speaks to the doctrine of natural prolongation which allows a state to have an extended continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles.

The fact that a state is able to claim an extended continental shelf does not mean the claim is automatic. The state then has the responsibility to prepare a claim and make a submission to the commission on the limits of the continental shelf (CLCS). The CLCS will examine the submission and then make a recommendation to the United Nations Secretary General as to the legitimacy of this claim.

The CLCS is one of the three bodies established under the framework of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The other two being: the International Seabed Authority with its headquarters here in Kingston, Jamaica, and the Law of the Sea Tribunal with headquarters in Hamburg, Germany. The CLCS has its headquarters in New York.

The CLCS is made up of Twenty One (21) experts in the field of Geology, Geophysics or Hydrography. They are elected by State Parties to the convention with members drawn from the various Geographical regions. They serve in their personal capacities and not as representatives of their Government.

The CLCS also gives technical advice to states when requested to do so. During the first four (4) years of operation the CLCS developed its own internal documents to guide its operations. These included:

- Modus of Operandi
- Rules of Procedure

The CLCS also developed and published its Scientific and Technical Guidelines which could be considered as the most important document for a state with the intentions of making a submission.

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