

Draft Articles on Most-Favoured-Nation Clauses 1978

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Draft Articles on Most-Favoured-Nation Clauses

Article 1

Scope of the present articles

The present articles apply to most-favoured-nation clauses contained in treaties between States.

Article 2

Use of terms

1. For the purposes of the present articles:

- (a) “treaty” means an international agreement concluded between States in written form and governed by international law, whether embodied in a single instrument or in two or more related instruments and whatever its particular designation;
- (b) “granting State” means a State which has undertaken to accord most-favoured-nation treatment;
- (c) “beneficiary State” means a State to which a granting State has undertaken to accord most-favoured-nation treatment;
- (d) “third State” means any State other than the granting State or the beneficiary State;
- (e) “condition of compensation” means a condition providing for compensation of any kind agreed between the granting State and the beneficiary State, in a treaty containing a most-favoured-nation clause or otherwise;
- (f) “condition of reciprocal treatment” means a condition of compensation providing for the same or, as the case may be, equivalent treatment by the beneficiary State of the granting State or of persons or things in a determined relationship with it as that extended by the granting State to a third State or to persons or things in the same relationship with that third State.

2. The provisions of paragraph 1 regarding the use of terms in the present articles are without prejudice to the use of those terms or to the meanings which may be given to them in the internal law of any State.

Article 3

Clauses not within the scope of the present articles

The fact that the present articles do not apply to a clause on most-favoured treatment other than a most-favoured-nation clause referred to in article 4 shall not affect:

- (a) the legal effect of such a clause;
- (b) the application to it of any of the rules set forth in the present articles to which it would be subject under international law independently of the present articles.

Article 4

Most-favoured-nation clause

A most-favoured-nation clause is a treaty provision whereby a State undertakes an obligation towards another State to accord most-favoured-nation treatment in an agreed sphere of relations.

Article 5
Most-favoured-nation treatment

Most-favoured-nation treatment is treatment accorded by the granting State to the beneficiary State, or to persons or things in a determined relationship with that State, not less favourable than treatment extended by the granting State to a third State or to persons or things in the same relationship with that third State.

Article 6
*Clauses in international agreements between States to which
other subjects of international law are also parties*

Notwithstanding the provisions of articles 1, 2, 4 and 5, the present articles shall apply to the relations of States as between themselves under an international agreement containing a clause on most-favoured-nation treatment to which other subjects of international law are also parties.

Article 7
Legal basis of most-favoured-nation treatment

Nothing in the present articles shall imply that a State is entitled to be accorded most-favoured-nation treatment by another State otherwise than on the basis of an international obligation undertaken by the latter State.

Article 8
The source and scope of most-favoured-nation treatment

1. The right of the beneficiary State to most-favoured-nation treatment arises only from the most-favoured-nation clause referred to in article 4, or from the clause on most-favoured-nation treatment referred to in article 6, in force between the granting State and the beneficiary State.

2. The most-favoured-nation treatment to which the beneficiary State, for itself or for the benefit of persons or things in a determined relationship with it, is entitled under a clause referred to in paragraph 1 is determined by the treatment extended by the granting State to a third State or to persons or things in the same relationship with that third State.

Article 9
Scope of rights under a most-favoured-nation clause

1. Under a most-favoured-nation clause the beneficiary State acquires, for itself or for the benefit of persons or things in a determined relationship with it, only those rights which fall within the limits of the subject matter of the clause.

2. The beneficiary State acquires the rights under paragraph 1 only in respect of persons or things which are specified in the clause or implied from its subject matter.

Article 10
Acquisition of rights under a most-favoured-nation clause

1. Under a most-favoured-nation clause the beneficiary State acquires the right to most-favoured-nation treatment only if the granting State extends to a third State treatment within the limits of the subject matter of the clause.

2. The beneficiary State acquires rights under paragraph 1 in respect of persons or things in a determined relationship with it only if they:

(a) belong to the same category of persons or things as those in a determined relationship with a third State which benefit from the treatment extended to them by the granting State and

(b) have the same relationship with the beneficiary State as the persons and things referred to in subparagraph (a) have with that third State.

Article 11

*Effect of a most-favoured-nation clause not made
subject to compensation*

If a most-favoured-nation clause is not made subject to a condition of compensation, the beneficiary State acquires the right to most-favoured-nation treatment without the obligation to accord any compensation to the granting State.

Article 12

*Effect of a most-favoured-nation clause made
subject to compensation*

If a most-favoured-nation clause is made subject to a condition of compensation, the beneficiary State acquires the right to most-favoured-nation treatment only upon according the agreed compensation to the granting State.

Article 13

*Effect of a most-favoured-nation clause made
subject to reciprocal treatment*

If a most-favoured-nation clause is made subject to a condition of reciprocal treatment, the beneficiary State acquires the right to most-favoured-nation treatment only upon according the agreed reciprocal treatment to the granting State.

Article 14

Compliance with agreed terms and conditions

The exercise of rights arising under a most-favoured-nation clause for the beneficiary State or for persons or things in a determined relationship with that State is subject to compliance with the relevant terms and conditions laid down in the treaty containing the clause or otherwise agreed between the granting State and the beneficiary State.

Article 15

*Irrelevance of the fact that treatment is extended
to a third State against compensation*

The acquisition without compensation of rights by the beneficiary State, for itself or for the benefit of persons or things in a determined relationship with it, under a most-favoured-nation clause not made subject to a condition of compensation is not affected by the mere fact that the treatment by the granting State of a third State or of persons or things in the same relationship with that third State has been extended against compensation.

Article 16
Irrelevance of limitations agreed between the granting State
and a third State

The acquisition of rights by the beneficiary State, for itself or for the benefit of persons or things in a determined relationship with it, under a most-favoured-nation clause is not affected by the mere fact that the treatment by the granting State of a third State or of persons or things in the same relationship with that third State has been extended under an international agreement between the granting State and the third State limiting the application of that treatment to relations between them.

Article 17
Irrelevance of the fact that treatment is extended to a third
State under a bilateral or a multilateral agreement

The acquisition of rights by the beneficiary State, for itself or for the benefit of persons or things in a determined relationship with it, under a most-favoured-nation clause is not affected by the mere fact that the treatment by the granting State of a third State or of persons or things in the same relationship with that third State has been extended under an international agreement, whether bilateral or multilateral.

Article 18
Irrelevance of the fact that treatment is extended to a
third State as national treatment

The acquisition of rights by the beneficiary State, for itself or for the benefit of persons or things in a determined relationship with it, under a most-favoured-nation clause is not affected by the mere fact that the treatment by the granting State of a third State or of persons or things in the same relationship with that third State has been extended as national treatment.

Article 19
Most-favoured-nation treatment and national or other
treatment with respect to the same subject matter

1. The right of the beneficiary State, for itself or for the benefit of persons or things in a determined relationship with it, to most-favoured-nation treatment under a most-favoured-nation clause is not affected by the mere fact that the granting State has agreed to accord as well to that beneficiary State national treatment or other treatment with respect to the same subject matter as that of the most-favoured-nation clause.

2. The right of the beneficiary State, for itself or for the benefit of persons or things in a determined relationship with it, to most-favoured-nation treatment under a most-favoured-nation clause is without prejudice to national treatment or other treatment which the granting State has accorded to that beneficiary State with respect to the same subject matter as that of the most-favoured-nation clause.

Article 20
Arising of rights under a most-favoured-nation clause

1. The right of the beneficiary State, for itself or for the benefit of persons or things in a determined relationship with it, to most-favoured-nation treatment under a most-favoured-nation clause not made subject to a condition of compensation arises at the moment when the relevant treatment is extended by the granting State to a third State or to persons or things in the same relationship with that third State.

2. The right of the beneficiary State, for itself or for the benefit of persons or things in a determined relationship with it, to most-favoured-nation treatment under a most-favoured-nation clause made subject to a condition of compensation arises at the moment when the relevant treatment is extended by the granting State to a third State or to persons or things in the same relationship with that third State and the agreed compensation is accorded by the beneficiary State to the granting State.

3. The right of the beneficiary State, for itself or for the benefit of persons or things in a determined relationship with it, to most-favoured-nation treatment under a most-favoured-nation clause made subject to a condition of reciprocal treatment arises at the moment when the relevant treatment is extended by the granting State to a third State or to persons or things in the same relationship with that third State and the agreed reciprocal treatment is accorded by the beneficiary State to the granting State.

Article 21

Termination or suspension of rights under a most-favoured-nation clause

1. The right of the beneficiary State, for itself or for the benefit of persons or things in a determined relationship with it, to most-favoured-nation treatment under a most-favoured-nation clause is terminated or suspended at the moment when the extension of the relevant treatment by the granting State to a third State or to persons or things in the same relationship with that third State is terminated or suspended.

2. The right of the beneficiary State, for itself or for the benefit of persons or things in a determined relationship with it, to most-favoured-nation treatment under a most-favoured-nation clause made subject to a condition of compensation is equally terminated or suspended at the moment of termination or suspension by the beneficiary State of the agreed compensation.

3. The right of the beneficiary State for itself or for the benefit of persons or things in a determined relationship with it, to most-favoured-nation treatment under a most-favoured-nation clause made subject to a condition of reciprocal treatment is equally terminated or suspended at the moment of termination or suspension by the beneficiary State of the agreed reciprocal treatment.

Article 22

Compliance with the laws and regulations of the granting State

The exercise of rights arising under a most-favoured-nation clause for the beneficiary State or for persons or things in a determined relationship with that State is subject to compliance with the relevant laws and regulations of the granting State. Those laws and regulations, however, shall not be applied in such a manner that the treatment of the beneficiary State or of persons or things in a determined relationship with that State is less favourable than that of the third State or of persons or things in the same relationship with that third State.

Article 23

The most-favoured-nation clause in relation to treatment under a generalized system of preferences

A beneficiary State is not entitled, under a most-favoured-nation clause, to treatment extended by a developed granting State to a developing third State on a non-reciprocal basis within a scheme of generalized preferences, established by that granting State, which conforms with a generalized system of preferences recognized by the international community of States as a whole or, for the States members of a competent international organization, adopted in accordance with its relevant rules and procedures.

Article 24

*The most-favoured-nation clause in relation to
arrangements between developing States*

A developed beneficiary State is not entitled under a most-favoured-nation clause to any preferential treatment in the field of trade extended by a developing granting State to a developing third State in conformity with the relevant rules and procedures of a competent international organization of which the States concerned are members.

Article 25

*The most-favoured-nation clause in relation to treatment
extended to facilitate frontier traffic*

1. A beneficiary State other than a contiguous State is not entitled under a most-favoured-nation clause to the treatment extended by the granting State to a contiguous third State in order to facilitate frontier traffic.

2. A contiguous beneficiary State is entitled under a most-favoured-nation clause to treatment not less favourable than the treatment extended by the granting State to a contiguous third State in order to facilitate frontier traffic only if the subject-matter of the clause is the facilitation of frontier traffic.

Article 26

*The most-favoured-nation clause in relation to rights
and facilities extended to a landlocked third State*

1. A beneficiary State other than a landlocked State is not entitled under a most-favoured-nation clause to rights and facilities extended by the granting State to a landlocked third State in order to facilitate its access to and from the sea.

2. A landlocked beneficiary State is entitled under a most-favoured-nation clause to the rights and facilities extended by the granting State to a landlocked third State in order to facilitate its access to and from the sea only if the subject matter of the clause is the facilitation of access to and from the sea.

Article 27

*Cases of State succession, State responsibility
and outbreak of hostilities*

The provisions of the present articles shall not prejudice any question that may arise in regard to a most-favoured-nation clause from a succession of States or from the international responsibility of a State or from the outbreak of hostilities between States.

Article 28

Non-retroactivity of the present articles

1. Without prejudice to the application of any rule set forth in the present articles to which most-favoured-nation clauses would be subject under international law independently of these articles, they apply only to a most-favoured-nation clause in a treaty which is concluded by States after the entry into force of the present articles with regard to such States.

2. Without prejudice to the application of any rule set forth in the present articles to which clauses on most-favoured-nation treatment would be subject under international law independently of these articles, they apply to the relations of States as between themselves only under a clause on most-favoured-nation treatment contained in an international agreement which is concluded by States and

other subjects of international law after the entry into force of the present articles with regard to such States.

Article 29
Provisions otherwise agreed

The present articles are without prejudice to any provision on which the granting State and the beneficiary State may otherwise agree.

Article 30
New rules of international law in favour of
developing countries

The present articles are without prejudice to the establishment of new rules of international law in favour of developing countries.
