

**IN THE COURT OF THE LSE
IN THE SCHOOL OF LAW**

People v the United Nations

Prosecution Statement

The United Nations has failed to either realise the ideals expressed in its own Charter or to secure the broader aspirations of a decent, peaceable global world. In some cases, it has inhibited the realisation of these ideals and aspirations. It has had its seventy years as the primary political body on the international system. It is time to move on and establish new, more promising frameworks, projects and institutions.

Count One

The UN has become a sclerotic, demoralised bureaucracy where political idealism and visionary thinking go to die in a sea of committees. Once the repository of avant-garde political ideas, it has now become both a retirement village for a superannuated political class and a place where the moral capital of thousands of bright, young interns is absorbed, digested and discarded.

Count Two

The UN has clothed war with a legitimacy that has made extreme violence more palatable and more acceptable to voters in large, powerful, war-like democratic states.

Count Three

The UN Security Council is partly responsible for the rise of a post-rights state in which anti-terrorist surveillance and legislation has chipped away at the very humanitarian ideals the UN was supposed to instantiate. The Security Council has passed resolutions demanding that states enact such legislation. The Council itself, not content with this, has placed individuals on anti-terrorist lists (depriving them of freedom of movement and property) without offering these individuals any right to natural justice.

Count Four

The UN has established a network of war crimes tribunals in which a small group of individuals are selected on an *ad hoc* and arbitrary basis to stand trial for activities that have their causes in deep structural problems in the global political economy, and which have been a feature of war-making since

Thucydides. This has led to resentment, hubris and a systemic and transparent inequality of punishment. *Not a single* Western leader or soldier has stood trial for crimes against humanity in an international court since the UN was founded. The UN's International Criminal Court is the judicial wing of NATO.

Count Five

The UN has presided over a world in which poverty, premature and often violent death, and unacceptable levels of preventable child mortality co-exist with fantastic accumulations of hyperwealth. For the past thirty years at least, the UN has served to offer an impression that something is being done about this. The road to hell is paved with the good intentions of UN bureaucrats.

It is time to say goodbye to the United Nations. It was a great inspiration in 1945. In 2016, its ideas and institutions have become either shop-worn and malign.