

Keeping Tabs on a Troubled World

UN Information-Gathering to Preserve Peace

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'As Secretary-General of the United Nations ... I have often encountered two insuperable obstacles:

- (a) The claim of Governments that the Secretary-General has no right to interfere in their internal affairs or in matters pertaining to their national sovereignty;
- (b) The lack of authoritative information, without which the Secretary-General cannot speak ...'

Secretary-General U Thant in a letter to Ambassador Samar Sen of India,
30 March 1971.¹

1. THE LIMITATIONS

THE UNITED NATIONS needs accurate, detailed and up-to-date information to fulfil its mandate of preserving peace and preventing conflict. Nevertheless, there are severe limitations on the UN's ability to obtain such information. The UN is curtailed from investigating matters that are essentially domestic in nature, even if they may later have serious international repercussions.² It cannot send on-site observers to the territory of a state without the consent of that state. The UN must not engage in techniques that employ secrecy, stealth, or that might be classified as spying. Nor does the UN have ready access to the high-resolution imagery available to the USA and Russia from their reconnaissance satellites, which operate above national airspace and thus beyond the claims of national sovereignty. Furthermore, the UN currently lacks sufficient technical, human and financial resources to do the on-going information gathering and analysis that is required for its ambitious mandate.

The existing political, legal and practical limitations can be traced back to one source: national sovereignty as jealously guarded by governments. Politically, governments are reluctant to allow the UN 'in', for fear of introducing new actors and factors they cannot control. Legally, they assert that the UN has no right to investigate or even to discuss 'domestic' matters. They justify their positions on the basis of international law, which gives nation-states sovereignty, a principle determined more by custom than by treaty.³ On the practical level, UN member-states are disinclined to equip the organization with a permanent and independent fact-finding capability for fear that they would be conferring on the organization powers and capabilities which have heretofore belonged only to nation-states.

Early identification and early warning are the first steps toward conflict prevention. Early warning requires a great deal of courage, skill and, not least, current information. It is mainly because of the lack of the latter that the UN Secretaries-General have on only three occasions formally invoked the early-warning privilege provided to them under Article 99 of the UN Charter.⁴ The Secretary-General must have concrete evidence of a threat to the peace before he⁵ can issue a warning to the Security Council; otherwise, he risks being accused of 'crying wolf'. In addition, in order to head off a threat, he may need to intrude into what is regarded by the state as its internal affairs, or against the will of one or more parties to a conflict. It is usually much more difficult to justify such intrusion before conflict breaks out than afterwards. At an early stage in the life-cycle of a conflict, the UN is faced with the strongest opposition on the basis of national sovereignty. Yet, it is at this stage that the UN can prove most useful. The adage 'an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure' is indeed highly applicable in international relations. It can be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for the UN to stop or contain a conflict once war has broken out. The only hope in many cases is to nip conflicts in the bud.

Admittedly, even with a perfect information system there is no guarantee that the UN will be able to act successfully to maintain peace: success depends on political will and practical resources, not to mention good luck. In any case, however, sound information, generated from objective sources and shared among the international community, is an essential prerequisite for early international action. It is fundamental to the development of international political will and the practical means for effective action.

On the other hand, it would also be undesirable to go to the opposite extreme and provide the United Nations with unlimited powers of intrusion and investigation in the affairs of sovereign states. The UN should not, and could not, be the 'big brother' that carries out continuous surveillance over the actions of individuals and states. The UN must continue to impose definite limits on itself in regard to its powers of intrusion and investigation. Individual privacy must be protected, and there are activities of an entirely domestic nature that the UN has no business investigating.

In the current state of our world, however, the balance between sovereign rights and rights of the international community falls too far on the side of national sovereignty. If we are to establish a firm base for international peace and security, then UN fact-finding at an earlier stage and in a more intrusive manner should be permitted.

Before proposing new means for enhanced information-gathering, let us review UN experience and summarize the UN's current information sources and capabilities. Fortunately, we can draw here on a rich history of UN fact-finding spanning 50 years. Both successful and unsuccessful fact-finding missions can provide insights and valuable lessons for the future.

2. EXAMPLES FROM UN HISTORY: FAILURES AND SUCCESSES

UN history abounds with cases where the organization was denied the access it was seeking in its fact-finding endeavours. A classic case is the failed early warning (but a successful 'late' warning) of the outbreak of the Korean War. In 1948, the UN General Assembly mandated the United Nations Commission on Korea (UNCOK) to report on 'developments which might lead to military conflict' on the peninsula. In the months prior to the attack in 1950, the Commission heard many allegations by senior South Korean officials of an imminent invasion by the North, based on information supplied by defectors, captives and secret operatives. But UNCOK failed to issue any urgent warnings back to UN headquarters, relying instead on US information and analysis. Furthermore, the South Korean sources were not considered objective. On 30 May 1950, General William Roberts, head of the US Korean Military Advisory Group, reported: 'There is no build-up of North Korean military forces along the thirty-eighth parallel at the present' and that it was 'as safe in Korea as in the United States'.⁶ Thus, the UN joined the USA in being caught totally off-guard in Korea only a few weeks later.

Shortly before the attack, UNCOK had sent two military observers in a jeep to survey troop deployments along the south side of the 38th parallel that divided the two Koreas. The observers returned to Seoul on 23 June and reported that the South Korean army, the only one they could observe, 'was in no condition to carry out a large-scale attack against the forces in the North'. They might have added that it was in no condition to defend against attack either. Furthermore, the UN observers, who relied on the US and South Korean military officials they met, failed to seek any indicators of an imminent attack. Two days after their return, on 25 June, some 90,000 North Korean troops poured into the South along the entire front, taking Seoul within three days and occupying 80 % of the South within a matter of weeks. Only the entry of UN troops (mainly from the USA) prevented Kim Il Sung from unifying the country by force under Communist rule.

The Korean case became a case of 'late warning'. It was not until seven hours after the attack began that Secretary-General Trygve Lie first learned of the attack, through a midnight phone call from a US Assistant Secretary of State. The Secretary-General then requested and obtained confirmation of the attack from UNCOK before relating the news to the Security Council later that day. He pronounced North Korea in violation of the UN Charter and called for Security Council action. This intervention of the Secretary-General, using information corroborated by an objective source (UNCOK), caused some otherwise sceptical delegates to vote for the Council resolutions to restrain, and later to repel, the North Korean forces.⁷

It is alarming is that the attack took both the US and the UN totally by surprise. In today's world, with sophisticated intelligence satellites, achieving this element of surprise for a massive invasion would, however, be much more difficult. At the time, the high-flying U-2 aircraft were not yet in operation, flights along the border with side-viewing photography had not been introduced, and the allegations of defectors and spies were discounted.

Other cases of unsuccessful early warning and preventive diplomacy can easily be identified. In Hungary in 1956-57, the UN tried unsuccessfully to dispatch an investigatory group during the Soviet invasion.⁸ The puppet government being installed in Hungary immediately claimed full sovereignty; in the face of the Soviet military grip on the state, the UN could do little. In 1968, Secretary-General U Thant first learned of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia on his car radio. His efforts to get a 'foot in the door' with a fact-finding team also ran aground.

Even when it has peace-keepers inside a country, the UN can be so narrowly confined in its information-gathering as to prove ineffective in averting catastrophe. During the months prior to the 1994 Rwandan holocaust, the commander of the UN peace-keeping force in Rwanda (UNAMIR), Canadian Gen. Romeo Dallaire, received secret communications from moderates in the Rwandan army alleging that macabre plots were being made by members of President Habyarimana's entourage. Although UNAMIR was supposed to monitor the security situation, the peace-keepers lacked the capabilities to investigate or corroborate secret plans, even for mass genocide. 'The UN does not have an intelligence-gathering structure', Dallaire stated later. 'I mean, that is not within our philosophy nor in our mandate'.⁹ Shortly after the President's plane crashed (probably part of the plot), Gen. Dallaire rushed to Rwandan military headquarters. There he tried to convince Col. Theonest Bagosuro to help calm the situation, unaware that the Colonel was one of the main instigators. In such situations, it would have been wise for the UN Commander to have had some inkling of the potential involvement of Col. Theonest in the plots. This intelligence may have required some discreet probing on the basis of the allegations and even posing some questions directly to the army commander about his connection with Network Zero, the genocide plotters. In

retrospect, such an early investigation would have been wise, though it would have faced severe criticism from the military leaders. They would have accused the UN of interfering in personal, as well as internal affairs. It could have resulted in the expulsion of the UN force. On the other hand, there may well have been discreet ways for the UN to follow up on the leads provided to them regarding the genocide plots. Even after the killing had started, some time passed before the UN (and the international media) could determine that the vast majority of the organized slayings were being perpetrated by Hutus against Tutsis. Dallaire complained about being 'deaf and blind' in the field. Had UNAMIR provided sound evidence to the UN Secretary-General for presentation to the Security Council at a much earlier date, it is possible that international action could have been taken at several points to avert the massive extent of the tragedy.

On the other hand, UN history also provides cases of successful early warning. Armed with the right to conduct inspections in signatories to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the UN's nuclear arm, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), was able to probe into the affairs of North Korea (DPRK) in a fashion undreamed of in 1950. Through sophisticated technological means (isotopic, chemical and particle analysis) the agency discovered that the DPRK was falsifying its declarations regarding nuclear materials at its nuclear complex at Nyongbyon. Furthermore, when the USA showed the IAEA Board of Governors high-resolution satellite pictures, most doubts about the extent of DPRK non-compliance vanished. This then allowed the international community to negotiate with the DPRK before the state had acquired nuclear weapons, and eventually to convince North Korea to stop its weapons programme.

There have also been cases where sovereign states have specifically requested that the UN carry out investigations on their territory. States sometimes do this when they feel wrongly accused or seek objective international verification of their claims. Such was the case in 1958, when both Laos and Lebanon called on Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld to send teams to investigate alleged large-scale infiltration across their borders from Vietnam and Syria, respectively. In both these cases, the UN observers were unable to verify the claims, and it soon became apparent that the claims primarily arose from domestic politics. By showing that the fears were false, the UN played an important confidence-building role. Other allegations have been proven correct. For instance, Iran successfully prevailed upon the Secretary-General to send inspection teams that verified Iraqi use of chemical weapons against Iranian troops.

UN presence can also be used to verify positive events. The UN monitored elections in Nicaragua in 1990, the first time that it did so in a sovereign member-state. This was followed by even more extensive election monitoring missions in Haiti in 1990, in Cambodia in 1993 and in South Africa in 1994. In all

these cases the UN presence promoted both national and international confidence in the elections, and made cheating more difficult. Election monitoring is an excellent example of how UN fact-finding can play a constructive role in assisting a sovereign state.

3. THE INFORMATION SOURCES

Despite its many limitations, the UN does have a variety of means to gather information. Seven principal sources of information can be identified: governments, UN offices abroad, on-site UN missions, regional organizations, NGOs and direct observation using remote-sensing technologies (e.g., satellite).

Governments provide the UN with its information base. They bring to the attention of the Security Council disputes or situations threatening peace. The Secretary-General also has the statutory authority to do so.¹⁰ There have been plenty of dramatic Security Council meetings where new information has been provided by governments, especially during peak moments of the East/West confrontation. In October 1962 US ambassador Adlai Stevenson unveiled high-resolution aerial photographs of Soviet missile in Cuba taken by U-2 reconnaissance aircraft overflying Cuban territory. As mentioned, Secretary-General Trygve Lie learned of the attack on South Korea in 1950 from a US official and confirmed the essentials by communicating with UNCOK observers located in Korea. But even UNCOK relied largely, though not solely, on US information sources, having sent one of their members to the US military headquarters immediately after learning of the attack.

Governments have resources that the UN cannot hope to match. They have embassies abroad, desk officers in capitals, military establishments and intelligence agencies, all trying to keep on top of current situations. In addition, it has become common practice for nations to eavesdrop on the telecommunications of others. The UN is not prohibited from accepting information gained by governmental intelligence methods, although it must be careful not to encourage specific unlawful activities. In general, the provision of information from governments to the UN is essential and should be encouraged.

The second information source, UN agencies and centres abroad, are established with specific mandates, which usually do not include monitoring the affairs of the state in which they are located. UN Information Centres and UNDP resident representatives are stationed in over 120 states primarily to provide information and assistance to those states. They have, however, in recent years been instructed to provide information to headquarters on matters relating to potential threats to the peace. After the Cold War, the UN has been exploring the idea of integrated UN offices, such as those established in the former Soviet Union. These allow the UN to centralize its activities, including information-gathering.

On-site UN observers may be stationed in conflict zones if permission is obtained from the state and preferably also, though not necessarily, from all the parties to the conflict.¹¹ Such on-the-spot observers can be invaluable in following conflicts. The UN Secretary-General learned of the outbreak of the two wars involving Israel and Egypt in 1967 and 1973 through immediate cables from UN peacekeepers situated between the countries.

The UN has, in the past, had very weak information links with regional organizations, mostly because such organizations had little information to share or little desire to share. But the situation is changing for the better. NATO conveyed a great deal of information to the UN, including information from satellite and aerial reconnaissance, during the course of the war in the former Yugoslavia. The Western European Union (WEU) relayed information about sanction-busting in the region. The results of OSCE human rights missions in the Baltic states are provided to the UN. As the regional organizations develop their information infrastructures, there will be increased opportunities to share information with the UN.

The news media provide the backdrop for most UN debates. Despite inaccuracies and biases, it is a fact of life that the media, especially the US media, have a tremendous impact. *The New York Times* is considered required reading for delegations in New York. As a newspaper producing stories 'for the record', it has been cited in UN speeches. The Soviets, for example, cited *The New York Times* in their speeches much more often than did the Americans, especially in instances when the *Times* took positions contrary to those of the US government. CNN is watched by UN staff on television monitors which are set up in various locations around the UN building.

The UN is not inhibited from receiving information from NGOs and individuals, but formal arrangements are usually not made. Informal briefings with humanitarian aid organizations, such as Medicins Sans Frontiers (MSF) and the International Committee of the Red Cross, are common at UN Headquarters, but the minutes and summaries of these meetings are not published. Again, the UN is ruled by member-states, and there is a reluctance in the Secretariat and in UN organs to introduce other actors, even in an information-providing role, into the process. Similarly, some aid organizations are cautious about approving the free flow of information to the UN, lest their host countries protest, thereby jeopardizing their primary purpose (e.g. aid delivery).

In the human rights field, on the other hand, there is more openness to information received from individuals and NGOs. In fact, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has established a 24-hour fax 'Hot Line' for reporting violations of human rights. Amnesty International reports are taken very seriously by UN human rights investigators, as well as by the UN Commission on Human Rights and the accused state itself.

Finally, observation technologies can provide the UN with important information. The UN has used aerial reconnaissance as part of several peace-

keeping missions (first in the Congo operation), though never to its fullest extent. UN peace-keepers in the Middle East recognized that aerial reconnaissance could provide tremendous benefits in both efficiency and scope of surveillance, but the host nations were concerned about possible overflights, even over buffer zones, lest they lose further control over what areas and activities the UN is able to see and not to see. Thus, binoculars remain the most common technology commonly used by peace-keepers in the Middle East.¹²

Satellite reconnaissance can offer the UN some important advantages, not least of which is that the consent of the state being observed is not required under international law. But politically, the latter point is a major concern of member-states, developed and developing. As the costs decrease and new image services become widespread,¹³ however, there is every likelihood that the UN will begin to purchase satellite imagery from commercial sources and will request it from governments.

4. RECENT STEPS FORWARD

In this world of sovereign states, progress – however slow and halting – is being made in developing international law and order, including in the field of UN fact-finding. When sovereign states willingly surrender part of their freedom, it is usually on an incremental scale and in a well-codified manner, usually by treaty. For instance, as peace-keeping forces are put in place, the UN usually signs agreements with the host state, called Status of Forces agreements. Certain arms control treaties authorize UN bodies to conduct specific types of inspections on the territory of state parties. For instance, under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the IAEA may send inspection teams to visit nuclear sites. Under the Chemical Weapons Convention, states must accept on-site inspectors from a new international organization, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. Under the provisions for ‘challenge inspections’, any site can be inspected at any time, at minimal notice (12 hours).¹⁴

Politically, the greatest area of improvement has been in the field of human rights. The manner in which states treat their citizens was once thought to be entirely within the bastion of national sovereignty, with the international community having no right to carry out investigations. Today, international human rights bodies routinely carry out investigations using on-site visits where there is a possibility that basic human rights are threatened. In the arms control field, as well, there have been breakthroughs. Recent arms control agreements, like the Chemical Weapons Convention, will provide international organizations with unprecedented powers of observation and inspection on a global scale. Ad hoc investigations are also breaking new ground. In 1994–95, the UN Centre for Disarmament, at the request of some West African nations, sent teams to investigate the traffic of illegal arms across their borders.

The Security Council, reinvigorated after the end of the Cold War, has created new bodies with unprecedented investigatory mandates. As mentioned, the UN Special Commission (UNSCOM), for example, may under resolution 687(1991) conduct inspections in Iraq anytime, anywhere, without right of refusal, for the purposes of verifying the destruction of weapons of mass destruction. The costs of these inspections are borne by Iraq, both financially and in terms of its sovereignty. While such inspection regimes could be imposed only in the most exceptional circumstances, the UNSCOM example reflects the new resolve of the Security Council to impinge upon the sovereignty of a state through stronger or forced fact-finding.

The new generation of peace-keeping operations has also expanded the realm of fact-finding. In the Cambodia settlement, outlined in the Paris Peace Accords, the UN was given the right to conduct document searches in the files of national political parties. This right was vigorously exercised by the UNTAC Special Investigations Unit. For instance, documents in the regional headquarters of the State of Cambodia party were searched for any evidence of illegal activities and plans. This enabled the unit, for instance, to detect thinly-veiled references to political assassinations.

International law has been evolving slowly both by treaty and custom towards a more productive balance between the right of the UN to investigate actual or potential threats to the peace and the state's right to deny the UN access. Since the end of the Cold War, the pace of change has quickened considerably. The adoption by the General Assembly of the 1991 Declaration on UN Fact-Finding¹⁵ is one recent advance. Though such declarations are not binding on states, they do carry weight in the establishment of customary international law and in the development of international norms of behaviour. The Declaration adopts a broad definition for fact-finding (Article 2):

...fact-finding means any activity designed to obtain detailed knowledge of the relevant facts of any dispute or situation which the competent United Nations organs need in order to exercise effectively their functions in relation to the maintenance of international peace and security.

For the most part, the Declaration codifies existing practice and strikes the familiar balance between national sovereignty and international security, while encouraging the maximum use of fact-finding. The dispatch of a UN fact-finding mission to a state 'requires the prior consent from that State, subject to the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations' (Article 6). States should give 'timely consideration' to requests to receive a mission (Article 19) and, if they refuse, should 'indicate the reasons' for their refusal (Article 20). States should 'follow a policy' of admitting and cooperating with such missions (Article 21 and 22). The weak nature of the Declaration is apparent in that the word 'should' is used in almost all cases, except in relation to the required consent of the host state. One would hope that international law will evolve so that the 'shoulds' become 'shalls' and that the possibilities for the UN become rights of entry.

Perhaps the most important provisions of the 1991 Declaration is the expanded role it suggests for the Secretary-General. He 'should monitor the state of international peace and security regularly and systematically in order to provide early warning of disputes or situations which might threaten international peace and security'.

This is a significant extension of the Secretary-General's mandate for fact-finding, as established under Article 99 of the UN Charter:

The Secretary-General may bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security.

Though Article 99 has seldom been invoked in a formal fashion, it has been used as a legislative basis for most of the independent activities initiated by the Secretary-General, including but also going beyond fact-finding. For instance, briefings are now given daily by the Secretary-General or his representative to Security Council members.¹⁶

On the practical side of UN information-gathering, there have also been significant advances: the UN is developing more extensive information-gathering systems and is making greater use of advanced technologies. The UN's Situation Centre, established in 1993, gathers information from peace-keeping missions around the clock. A direct computer link with the US mission and thus the Pentagon has also been established. UNSCOM employs sophisticated observation technologies, including reconnaissance using American U-2 aircraft, and has an advanced Information Assessment Unit for data collection, fusion and analysis. Computer networks, now ubiquitous in the UN Secretariat, allow previously unimaginable access to a pool of UN information, including the UN library of documents. Most professionals in the UN system now have access to electronic mail and the Internet. The UN announced on Charter Day 1995 the establishment of its own World Wide Web site.¹⁷

The New York Times was in the past the foremost source of media information for UN officials but the computer and CNN may be changing this. Electronic clipping and newswire services (e.g., NewsEdge) are used to keep abreast of the recent developments described in the world's media (including wire services, journals and magazines). During the Gulf War, TV monitors were set up in many UN corridors and tuned into CNN to allow staff to monitor events on a real-time basis.

5. PROPOSALS AND PROSPECTS

The longer the time horizon, the more political, legal and practical ways can be envisioned to increase the UN's ability to gather information. Politically, it is most important to de-stigmatize the presence of UN fact-finding missions. In 1962, Premier Castro crystallized the sentiments of many national leaders, past and present, when he expressed the view that UN inspection meant humilia-

tion. As we enter the 21st century, it is time to replace that notion, born of a past age, with the more wholesome notion that permitting international fact-finding missions can be routine, if not generous, acts of a good host, done to build international confidence and to promote a climate of openness. More nations should agree to on-site investigators for positive events and even for relatively trivial ones, as a means of creating precedents for the conduct of inspections. UN missions to monitor elections in Nicaragua, Haiti and South Africa created very positive precedents for the future.

In the legal sphere, new treaties can be envisioned in the long-term to confer new fact-finding rights on the UN. The nations of NATO and the former Warsaw Pact have signed an Open Skies Treaty for mutual overflights of each other's territory. It is worthwhile considering the possibility of a future Open Skies system operated under the United Nations – a proposal originally made by US President Eisenhower in 1960.¹⁸ Overflights could be carried out by the United Nations and the information shared with all parties to the treaty. Preparations for surprise attack would be made much more difficult. Particularly in hot spots such as Kashmir, it would be highly desirable to establish local UN open skies regimes as a confidence- and security-building measure.

To permit UN observers to be stationed at short notice, it should be possible to create a special UN pass which would allow designated UN personnel to cross borders with greater (though perhaps not absolute) freedom. Such passes, obtained in advance and perhaps mandated by a general treaty, could give UN inspectors the right to investigate certain sites and to conduct interviews within a nation-state at short notice. One mandate of such observers might be to spot disturbing trends and indicators of conflict. Observers might also be dispatched in connection with violations of the UN Charter, both potential and actual, as well as threats to the peace. Unlike most recent treaties, the UN Charter contains no verification provisions for periodic review and reporting on the compliance of all member-states. The Secretary-General could be mandated to gather facts on such violations before the Security Council, the International Court of Justice or a new body created for this purpose pass judgement.

On the practical side, it is hoped that the UN will become better equipped with new resources, financial and technical, as well as with structures for meeting the needs of international security. Why not establish mobile UN fact-finding teams with the ability to use and benefit from advanced technologies? As a start, the UN Secretariat could create a unit which could form the nucleus for future missions. In this way, the UN could gather information earlier and better. Previous efforts to establish standing UN fact-finding bodies failed because there was no attempt to equip the Secretariat with a strong and central role. Rapid UN responses, now the subject of great international interest, would be more forthcoming if based on the reports of mobile inspection teams.

Early warning networks have been growing in many other areas, especially in the fields of the environment and disaster relief. There is a Global Informa-

tion and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture, administered by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), to warn of food shortages and famines. The World Health Organization (WHO) administers an Epidemiological Early Warning System for alerts on outbreaks of disease worldwide. There is a UN System-wide Earthwatch, administered by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), to act as a focal point for information on changing environmental conditions. There are humanitarian and refugee early-warning systems operated by the UN. Yet there is no structured early-warning system for the UN's primary function: the maintenance of peace and security. Why not develop an extensive network to warn of impending conflicts? The UN could rely more on NGOs and the worldwide Internet to increase its early-warning capability and provide information for conflict management and resolution. In addition, the UN could study the political, military and socio-economic indicators of potential conflict to help identify upcoming 'hot spots' and to trigger diplomatic visits and fact-finding missions.

At present, there is little chance for potent institution-building at the United Nations. Major contributors, suffering from large deficits at home and increased UN dues after the Cold War, especially for peace-keeping operations, are exhibiting a phenomenon of 'donor fatigue' or, more critically, 'deadbeat disease'. The international community today lacks leaders who champion the cause of the UN and seek to develop a much strengthened world order. All of the energy of UN delegates is spent on handling the latest crisis. This is not new. Former Canadian Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson, in his Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech in 1957, lamented that 'we prepare for war like precocious giants and for peace like retarded pygmies.'¹⁹ Surely the end of the Cold War has given us the opportunity and the good sense to reverse this undesirable situation.

Even without a grand vision, however, the international community can bring about gradual improvements. The UN, though sorely short of cash and resources, can create links for information sharing with the regional organizations responsible for security, perhaps through the creation of a global PeaceWatch network. Strong ties should be developed with the satellite imagery interpretation centre of the WEU, the Central Organ of the OAU's new Conflict Prevention Mechanism and the Conflict Prevention Centre of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Recently, Canada proposed the establishment of a small permanent UN multinational headquarters unit of 30 to 50 military officers and civilian experts who would analyse intelligence and constantly update contingency plans for future peace-keeping operations.²⁰

It is only by strengthening the UN's 'informational infrastructure' that the organization will be able to discover earlier and better the threats to the world's peace. As we approach the end of the 20th century, a century which has seen exorbitant human suffering in internal and external wars, the UN member-states have a responsibility and an opportunity to strengthen the world organization to help preserve peace during the coming century.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

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1 UN Archives, New York, File DAG-1/S.2.2.2.1-1.

2 Article 2(7) of the UN Charter states: 'Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter; but this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII'. Member-states often consider UN investigations, even without on-site visits, as a form of intervention. It is important to recognize, however, that Article 2(7) is not an absolute prohibition. First, it only asserts that the Charter does not *authorize* intervention in domestic affairs; it does not prohibit such intervention if other sources of authorization can be found. Second, it does permit intervention for the application of Chapter VII enforcement measures. Third, there are different interpretations of what is meant by the word 'intervention'.

3 Sovereignty is mentioned only two times in the Charter: in Article 2(1) and 78, both dealing with the sovereign equality of states. Article 2(7) is the chief provision of the UN Charter relating to non-intervention in domestic or 'sovereign' affairs.

4 Article 99 states: 'The Secretary-General may bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security'.

5 The male pronoun is used subsequently for convenience, and does not suggest in any way that the Secretary-General need be a male.

6 Glenn D. Paige, *The Korea Decision: June 24-30, 1950*, (New York: The Free Press, 1968) p. 73.

7 Trygve Lie, *In the Cause of Peace: Seven Years with the United Nations* (New York: MacMillan Co., 1954).

8 An 'Investigatory Group on the Problem of Hungary' was created by General Assembly resolution 1004 (ES-II) to examine the situation after the invasion, but it was denied entry into the territory.

9 Interview with General Romeo Dallaire, 'Rwanda: Autopsy of a Genocide', CBC News - Our Magazine, Thursday, 29 November 1994, CBC transcript, p. 12.

10 Article 34 of the UN Charter gives any member the right to bring any situation which threatens peace to the attention of the Security Council. Article 99 gives the Secretary-General the same right. The Security Council's Provisional Rules of Procedure (Rule 3) state that the Council shall meet if such disputes or situations are brought to its attention. Article 99, however, has seldom been invoked explicitly but implied invocations are more common. For a tabulation, see A. Walter Dorn, 'Keeping Watch for Peace: Fact-finding by the UN Secretary-General', in Eric Fawcett & Hanna Newcombe, eds, *UN Reform: Looking Ahead After 50 Years* (Toronto: Science for Peace/Dundurn Press, 1995).

11 The UN has stationed observers in countries against the wishes of rebel forces in several instances, for instance in Greece in 1946 and in the Congo in 1960.

12 Night-vision devices are also used in some peace-keeping missions.

13 Russia began selling images from its reconnaissance satellites of 5-6 metre resolution in 1987 and since 1992 has been selling images of 2-metre resolution. (See William Broad, 'Russia Is Now Selling Spy Photos From Space', *New York Times*, 4 October

- 1992.) The USA has declassified CIA reconnaissance satellite pictures from the period 1960 to 1972, but is not offering pictures made more recently.
- 14 At least 12 hours must be given to the inspected State Party before inspectors arrive at the point of entry in the state. See Article IX in *The Chemical Weapons Convention with Selective Index* (New York: United Nations, 1994), Sales No. E.95.IX.2.
- 15 Officially called the 'Declaration on Fact-finding by the United Nations in the Field of the Maintenance of International Peace and Security'. It was adopted on 9 December 1991 without a vote in General Assembly resolution 46/59 and is annexed to the resolution.
- 16 Currently, Mr. Chinmaya Gharekhan, an Under-Secretary-General in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, has the responsibility of giving daily briefings to Security Council members.
- 17 The Internet address of the UN's Home Page is <http://www.un.org>.
- 18 President Dwight Eisenhower, 'Radio and Television Address by President Eisenhower on the Collapse of the Paris Summit Conference, May 25, 1960,' *Documents on Disarmament 1960* (Washington, DC: US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, 1961), p. 88.
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