# COOPERATIVE SECURITY AND INTRASTATE CONFLICT

By Senator the Hon Gareth Evans QC, Foreign Policy, No. 96, Fall 1994, pp1-8.

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The international community has conspicuously failed to maintain the peace since the end of the Cold War. Hopes that the United Nations might play a much more pervasive and effective security role--bolstered by the success of peace enforcement against Iraq and the large peacekeeping operations in Namibia and Cambodia--were brought rapidly back to earth by apparent U.N. impotence to intervene quickly or usefully in Bosnia, Somalia, or Rwanda. More can certainly be done by the international community to prevent and resolve interstate conflict , but the currently bigger problem of intrastate conflict has been scarcely tackled at all, either conceptually or practically.

The defeatist response to the agony of largescale continuing deadly conflict is simply to contain it at the margins--to focus on maintaining the integrity of existing borders and wait for the fires within them to burn out. But it could be a long wait: Armed conflicts have already claimed more than 20 million lives since the end of World War II, most of them are now occurring within state borders (29 out of 30 in 1992), and their incidence is not abating. To tackle the problem of intrastate conflict more constructively means rethinking the doctrinal foundations for international security responses; giving much greater emphasis than hitherto to preventive, as distinct from corrective, strategies; and giving much more serious and sustained attention to organizational reform, particularly within the U.N.

In mid-1994, the patterns of global conflict are different from those of the past. Traditional interstate war is now conspicuously rare, for a number of reasons. First, in sharp contrast to the values of the colonial era, there is now a strong global norm underpinning the international legal proscription against territorial aggression; bellicisme, the ideology that saw virtue, nobility, and glory in war, has virtually disappeared in the advanced industrialized countries. Second, economic power is an increasingly effective means of achieving national objectives in international relations. Third, there is a growing body of evidence that suggests military force is a decreasingly effective tool both of domestic governance and international statecraft; territorial aggression is no longer a cost-effective way to acquire wealth. Fourth, complex and interdependent societies require a considerable degree of voluntary cooperation on behalf of thier citizens if they are to function effectively; there is little point in invading a country if the conquerer cannot subsequently control it--as the Soviets discovered in Afghanistan, and the Istraelis in Lebanon. While the risk of interstate war, particularly among the industrial democracies, is steadily declining, the reverse is true of intrastate war. Throughout what has been called

the "zone of conflict ," which includes the former communist states, much of sub-Saharan Africa, and parts of Central and Latin America and South Asia, a downward spiral of economic decline, often exacerbated by official corruption and mismanagement, has created governments that are at or near the point of collapse and that are being challenged, often violently, by their own citizens. Economic decline has hastened the process of national disintegration, and vice versa. The combination has led in extreme cases to the "failed state" syndrome evident in Rwanda, Somalia, and elsewhere.

The collapse of the Soviet empire and the disintegration of its command economies have brought wrenching social, political, and economic change to all of the former communist states. The parallel transition from state repression to relative political license has facilitated the emergence of long-suppressed ethnic, religious, and political hatreds--and created new ones. In the former Soviet Union, more than 20 violent conflicts have already resulted in thousands of deaths and displaced more than 1 million people. The potential for still greater conflict is considerable, not least when a major Moscow strategic interest is protecting the Russian minorities of its "near abroad."

In Africa and other parts of the developing world, the mostly artificial boundaries of postcolonial states divided traditional political communities, making the term "nation-state" a confusing misnomer. Multination states and multistate nations are in fact far more prevalent worldwide than homogenous nation-states. Some 40 per cent of the world's states have five or more sizable ethnic populations; a mere 20 per cent are relatively ethnically homogenous. Minority ethnic populations are growing rapidly as a consequence of natural increase and migration, and refugee flows are expanding global ethnic diversity.

While ethnic and religious differences are not in themselves causes of conflict , they may become so when historical grievances--sometimes as much imagined as real--are exploited by unscrupulous political leaders. That is especially so in periods of economic decline. In almost every case of major intrastate violence, from the former Soviet republics to Rwanda, ethnic and religious conflict has been associated with significant periods of declining per capita gross national product, the rise of demagogic politics, and the intensification of chauvinistic myth making. Contemporary ethnic violence stems as much from deliberate government policies as from traditional communal antagonisms. One positive lesson from postwar Yugoslavia, based on the high rate of intermarriage among ethnic groups, is just how mutable supposedly immutable ethnic hatred can be.

With some ethnic movements seeking to secede and create their own states, some seeking to overthrow existing regimes, and others seeking substantial degrees of autonomy, there is little evidence that violent intrastate conflict is likely to decrease of its own accord in the near or mid-term future. The decline in individual living standards and the erosion of good governance, with which civil strife is so closely linked, will not be quickly reversed anywhere in the "zone of conflict."

Established international security institutions--the U.N., regional bodies, and alliances--have all found that responding effectively to violent intrastate conflicts is extremely difficult. Critics of the U.N. have argued that responsibility for the recent failures can be sheeted home to its preference for rhetorical posturing over decisive action, and to the overbureaucratized, inefficient, inflexible manner in which its institutions operate. The U.N.'s peacekeeping system is makeshift, undertrained, ill-equipped, and slow-moving. Security Council mandates have too often lacked clear objectives and realistic rules of engagement, while communication between the Security Council, the U.N. Secretariat, the governments of troop-contributing countries, and U.N. troop commanders on the ground has frequently been inadequate. The U.N. Security Council has made frequent paper threats while lacking either the capability or will to carry them out, eroding its own credibility in the process. The former Yugoslavia has seen an unhappy combination: peacekeeping operations unsustainable because there has been mostly no peace to keep, and peace-enforcement operations unsustainable because they have rarely been backed by the necessary resources. Although many of the criticisms are justified, most responsibility rests not with the U.N. as an institution so much as with the failure of member states to provide the commitment and resources necessary to enact the needed reforms. It is hardly reasonable for states to deny the U.N. desperately needed funds, then blame it for the failures that lack of resources inevitably generate. Nor is it reasonable to blame the U.N. as an institution for the failures of member states in the Security Council to provide decisive leadership.

## Cooperative Security

The U.N.'s founders provided very clearly in the Charter for collective security: requiring member states to renounce the use of force among themselves and come collectively to the aid of any one of them attacked. Because of the Security Council's veto system, collective security never was, except in Korea, put properly to the test during the Cold War. In the post-Cold War period, collective security in practice has mostly involved the imposition of sanctions, including arms embargoes, with the use of force being far more selective--and problematic. Over the last decade or so a more generally preventive--rather than simply deterrent--approach to security has gained momentum from the development of the concept of common security: in short, achieving security with others, not against them. Finding favor more recently has been the idea of comprehensive security . That is the perfectly sensible, though not very precise, notion that security is multidimensional in character, demanding attention not only to political and diplomatic disputes but also to such factors as economic underdevelopment, trade disputes, and human rights abuses.

There is a single conceptual theme--cooperative security --that effectively captures the essence of all three of those concepts. In international relations, probably even more than elsewhere, language has its own substantive significance. The choice of particular words or phrases often carries with it particular mindsets, some more open or closed than others. The virtue, and utility, of the expression "cooperative security " is that the language itself encourages an open and constructive mindset, one less likely to be inhibited by familiar disciplinary boundaries and traditional state-centered security thinking. The term tends to connote consultation rather than confrontation, reassurance rather than deterrence, transparency rather than secrecy, prevention rather than correction, and interdependence rather than unilateralism.

Of course linguistic labels, and the mindsets that may or may not go with them, still only go part of the way. The central task is for the international community--and its principal organ, the United Nations--to develop a more sharply focused sense of international responsibility toward deadly conflict , and in particular toward intrastate conflict . To achieve that task, the community needs to pay closer attention to just what the U.N. Charter allows and inhibits.

Traditional thinking sees security essentially in terms of protecting the physical and political integrity of states. The U.N.'s security role, in that view, is limited to the maintenance of "international peace and security", with "international" being taken to require a cross-border element--direct border transgression, external support for internally warring parties, refugee spill-over effects, or some other similarly explicit impact. As pressures grew after the Cold War for recognition of a right of humanitarian intervention in response to various crises, developing countries regularly expressed concerns that this might presage a new era of imperialism, with an American-led Security Council using humanitarian crises as a vehicle for heavyhandedly forcing its will on states whose forms of governance it dislikes.

But as time has gone on, those concerns have been expressed less substantively and more ritualistically. Less attention has been paid to formal jurisdictional limits on intervention, and more and more simply to its likely effectiveness. The U.N.'s reluctance to intervene decisively in Bosnia, Somalia, Haiti, and Rwanda has had much more to do with an absence of political will in the Security Council to provide the necessary resources than with any perceived constraints imposed by international law. As Sir Anthony Parsons, former British ambassador to the U.N., has recently noted, "Where there is a will to intervene, a way can always be found around the legalistic obstacles." As early as April 1991, then U.N. secretary-general Javier Perez de Cuellar stated that the traditional prerogatives of state sovereignty needed to be reassessed in the light of "the shift in public attitudes towards the belief that the defense of the oppressed in the name of morality should prevail over frontiers and legal documents". By 1992, current U.N. secretary-general Boutros Boutros-Ghali was arguing that "the time of absolute and exclusive sovereignty...has passed; its theory was never matched by reality".

All that said, it is still helpful to take a fresh look at possible doctrinal foundations, within the U.N. Charter itself, for a more wide-ranging security role for U.N. organs than traditional, state-centered doctrine would allow. It is not merely a matter of having theory catch up with practice. The more compelling consideration is that the international will to intervene decisively and helpfully in intrastate conflicts--even when on the conscience-shocking scale of Rwanda--has been flagging, and needs some reinjected momentum.

Two approaches seem particularly worthy of further exploration. The first is to develop the notion that "security", as it appears in the Charter, is as much about the protection of individuals as it is about the defense of the territorial integrity of states. "Human security", thus understood, is at least as much prejudiced by major intrastate conflict as it is by interstate conflict. The multiple references in the Charter to "international" peace and security could, in this reading, refer as much to threats to citizens as to threats to borders: an "international" security issue would simply be one that the international community, through the Security Council, is prepared to regard as significant enough to be so treated. Article 99 gives the secretary-general authority to bring to the Security Council "any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security " [emphasis added]; that description can and should be taken literally. Article 2.7 does on its face inhibit the U.N.'s doing anything to intervene in matters that are "essentially within the domestic jurisdiction" of any state, but that phrase begs the key question, and the article itself allows an exemption for the most extreme interventions of all, those under Chapter VII.

A second approach, which could either stand alone or be seen as reinforcing the "human security " reading just described, would pursue to its logical limits the international community's obligations, under the U.N. Charter, to protect basic human rights, bearing in mind that the most basic human right of all, that of life, is violated on a very large scale in intrastate conflicts. Faith in fundamental human rights is asserted in the Preamble; their promotion and observance are identified as general objectives of the U.N. in Article 13; their observance is identified as a specific obligation of the organization and its members in Articles 55 and 56; the General Assembly has an open-ended mandate to discuss and make recommendations on those, as on other Charter matters, in Article 10; and there is nothing in the express language of Chapters V, VI, and VII that excludes the Security Council from addressing them.

It is important to appreciate that in dealing with human rights issues, the U.N. system has not been inhibited by Article 2.7 to the extent that might have been expected. The development of the U.N.'s human rights institutions and agenda since 1945 has involved the gradual overriding of initially strict views about nonintervention in internal affairs. The initial condemnation of apartheid by the General Assembly in 1952 was an important milestone, as was the creation of the special rapporteur system in 1967 and the introduction of confidential scrutiny procedures by the Commission on Human Rights in

1970.

In the context of the U.N. Charter, and even more clearly with the Universal Declaration, human rights are as much about economic, social, and cultural rights as they are about traditional civil and political rights, and as much about minority and group rights as they are about individual rights. The beginning of contemporary wisdom about a great many claims for self-determination by ethnic, national, or religious groups is to characterize them as claims for the recognition or protection of group rights within states, rather than necessarily as a challenge to state sovereignty. It is one thing to construct a rationale to justify international interest and ultimately intervention in intrastate as well as interstate disputes or conflicts; it is quite another thing to determine when and how it would be appropriate for that interest to be expressed, or the intervention mounted, in particular cases. It is something else again to mobilize the international commitment and resources necessary to give practical effect to such involvement. What is absolutely clear, in a world where commitment and resources are always likely to fall short of aspirations, is that it makes far more sense to concentrate efforts on peace-building and other preventive strategies than on after-the-event peace restoration. That holds as much for intra- as for interstate conflicts: Violent conflicts are always far more difficult and costly to manage and resolve than nonviolent disputes, and failed states are extremely difficult to put back together again.

## Building Peace

In-country peace-building is a long-term preventive strategy that focuses on potential causes of insecurity; it also appropriately describes post- conflict reconstruction efforts designed to prevent the recurrence of hostilities. It seeks to encourage equitable economic development, to enhance human rights broadly defined, and to facilitate good governance. Those goals should be pursued not only for their own sakes, but also because making progress toward them contributes powerfully to national and international security . Policies that enhance economic development and distributive justice, encourage the rule of law, protect fundamental human rights, and foster the growth of democratic institutions are also security policies. They should be recognized as such and receive a share of current security budgets and future "peace dividends." Economic development, human rights, good governance, and peace are intertwined and mutually reinforcing. Peace is a necessary condition for development; equitable development eradicates many of the socio-political conditions that threaten peace. It is no accident that those countries whose economies are declining, whose political institutions are failing, and where human rights are not respected should also be the ones experiencing the greatest amounts of violence and turmoil. Economic pluralism does not cause democracy, as some of the cruder protagonists of laissez-faire economics assert, but it tends to strengthen civil society by creating centers of economic power independent of the state. Equally, long-term economic

decline can turn democracies into non-democracies: Uruguay's transformation in the 1960s is an unhappy example. Whatever qualifications there may be about the relationship between capitalism and democracy, there are none about the relationship between democracy and security . As political scientist Jack Levy has said, accurately, the fact that democracies almost never go to war against each other "comes as close as anything we have to an empirical law in international relations." Somewhat less well known is the relationship between democracy and violence within states. From the beginning of the twentieth century to 1987, according to an estimate by Rudolph Rummel in the Journal of Peace Research, some 151 million persons have been killed by governments in addition to the death toll from war and civil war (almost 39 million). The overwhelming majority of those deaths were perpetrated by governments against their own citizens. Totalitarian states were responsible for at least 84 per cent of the deaths, authoritarian states for most of the rest. Democracies were responsible for a relatively tiny percentage of deaths (though the absolute numbers were large).

Some grounds exist for long-term optimism on the peace-building front. The proportion of the world's population living in abject poverty fell from 70 per cent in 1960 to 32 per cent in 1992. The global system is slowly becoming more democratic, with more than half the world's population now living under relatively pluralistic governments. Unfortunately, the areas that suffer the greatest levels of intrastate violence are also those in which economic conditions are deteriorating and governments are failing. The aid policies of the developed world bear some responsibility for those failures. Two-thirds of the world's 1.3 billion poor people live in countries that receive less than one-third of official development assistance. Long-term strategies for building global security will need to redress such imbalances. Conditioning aid on recipient governments' behavior is sometimes counterproductive and always controversial, but it may be that donors could develop conditionality strategies that are targeted more directly to the problems of intrastate communal conflict . In the particular context of the Western embrace of new Eastern states, for example, political scientist Stephen Van Evera has proposed that economic relations be conditioned on conformity with a "code of peaceful conduct" designed to defuse (through institutional reform, acceptance of borders, self-discipline in propaganda, and the like) the various known factors contributing to nationalist-driven conflicts.

There needs to be a higher profile within the U.N. system for peace-building, and better coordination of the different U.N., regional, and national efforts that address different parts of the peace-building agenda. Mobilizing as it does non- security programs for security purposes, peace-building lies at the intersection of the U.N. system's political and security agenda, and its economic, social, and cultural agenda. That gives it the opportunity to get momentum from both, but also to fall between two stools. It is unrealistic, here as elsewhere, to expect the secretary-general and his personal cabinet to play the necessary oversight and coordination role. Flat management structures are administratively fashionable, but the present U.N. system, whereby some 40 separate departments, offices, agencies, instrumentalities, and commissions report directly to the

secretary-general, carries that to absurdity.

High-level attention to, and coordination of, peace-building programs in selected states would best be accomplished by creating a deputy secretary-general with responsibility for both peace-building and humanitarian affairs (the latter including relief operations, basic rehabilitation, and disaster preparedness). That initiative ideally would be part of a larger administrative reorganization of the U.N. Secretariat, in which three other deputy secretaries-general (responsible, respectively, for peace and security affairs, economic and social affairs, and administration and management) would report directly to the secretary-general, constituting a working collegiate executive and dividing the executive direction of the whole U.N. system between them.

## Maintaining Peace

Preventive strategies have to address not only the underlying causes of insecurity, but actual disputes that may, if not resolved, deteriorate into armed conflict. Peace-building, then, has to be supplemented by active preventive diplomacy. That term embraces a variety of strategies to resolve, or at least contain, disputes by relying on nonmilitary methods--essentially the "peaceful means" (including negotiation, inquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, and judicial settlement) described in Article 33 of the U.N. Charter. (The term "peacemaking" is best reserved to describe those same methods when applied after a dispute has crossed the threshold into armed hostilities; while "preventive deployment" is most appropriately used to describe a military, not a diplomatic, deployment aimed at deterring the escalation of a dispute into armed conflict.)

Like peace-building, preventive diplomacy tends by its very nature to have a low profile, lacking the obvious media impact of blue-helmet peacekeeping and peace-enforcement operations. Preventive diplomacy succeeds when things do not happen; it is thus not surprising that its many quiet successes should have gone both unnoticed and unheralded. It is most successful when used early, well before eruption into armed conflict appears likely. Too often in the U.N. system, the secretary-general's special representatives have been assigned too late, when escalation is so advanced that halting a slide into hostilities is enormously difficult.

The U.N. devotes relatively few resources to preventive diplomacy, even though that approach is now universally acknowledged to be the most cost-effective means of dealing with potential conflict . There are currently only about 40 U.N. officials assigned to tasks immediately relevant to preventive diplomacy. That compares with more than 70,000 U.N. peacekeepers in the field in 1994 (down from 82,000 in 1993) and approximately 30 million armed service personnel worldwide. Some reforms to U.N. practice have been

implemented, but far more needs to be done. U.N. staff are only just beginning to be trained in dispute resolution techniques; U.N. information-gathering procedures are cumbersome; there is little research assistance; there are inadequate computing and communication capabilities; and there is insufficient funding for travel to the hot spots where preventive diplomacy is most needed.

If the U.N. is to play its rightful role as the preeminent cooperative security institution in the post-Cold War era, it must upgrade its capacity to the point where it can offer an effective dispute resolution service to its members, providing low-profile, skilled, third-party assistance through good offices, mediation, and the like. Regionally focused U.N. preventive diplomacy units should be established. Staffed by senior professionals expert in dispute resolution, closely familiar with the areas and issues on which they work, and with the experience and stature to be able to negotiate at the highest levels, preventive diplomacy units could operate not only at U.N. headquarters but also in regional field centers. Because preventive diplomacy is so cost-effective, a large increase in the U.N.'s capability could be achieved at minimal cost. The creation of perhaps six regional preventive diplomacy centers with a total staff of 100, effectively resourced (including with necessary travel funds), would cost little more than $20 million a year. By comparison, the U.N.'s peacekeeping budget for 1993 was $3.3 billion, and the Persian Gulf war's military cost to the U.N. coalition was more than $70 billion.

Many of the quiet successes of preventive diplomacy have come from individual states, regional organizations, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). The Vatican successfully mediated the Beagle Channel dispute between Chile and Argentina, while the Quakers have a long history of quiet mediation successes in trouble spots around the world. The Carter Center has played a helpful role in the resolution of the Ethiopia/Eritrea conflict and, most recently, in easing the North Korean nuclear impasse. In East Asia and elsewhere, "second track" diplomacy dialogues--for example the Indonesian-sponsored workshops on the South China Sea problem--have opened new channels of communication, floated creative options for resolving old problems, and created the basis for subsequent official-level talks.

Regional organizations have a special role to play in preventive diplomacy. Being close to the conflicts in question and with obvious interests in their resolution, they are often (but not always) better placed to act than the U.N. The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), for example, has pursued preventive diplomacy missions in Estonia, Georgia, Latvia, Moldova, Tajikistan, and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The missions are small, not highly publicized, and only take place with the consent of the relevant governments. The CSCE high commissioner on national minorities--with strategies developed in close consultation with the Harvard Negotiation Project--has also been involved, with some early successes, in seeking to help resolve minority conflicts in Albania, Estonia, Latvia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Hungary, and Slovakia. Preventive diplomacy is now an agenda item for the

Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Forum, newly established to discuss Asia-Pacific security issues.

Current thinking on early preventive diplomacy, drawing on the huge body of learning about dispute resolution in other contexts, places a strong emphasis on process; there is a broad consensus that preventive diplomacy missions should in general be informal, lowkey, non-binding, non-judgmental, non-coercive, and confidential. But while early warning and the emphasis on avoiding the destabilizing dynamics of conflict escalation are critically important, it is equally important to think creatively about the outcomes, in particular the kinds of political arrangements that might contain and reverse the spread of intrastate conflicts over the long term. That will require, above all, concerted efforts to find creative political solutions to the problem of disaffected national minorities. Such solutions must uphold the right of minorities to their own culture and to freedom of religion and language, but do not have to involve the creation of countless new mini-states--not least because of the violence that is so often associated with making a new state. As Charles William Maynes pointed out in these pages last year, there are several institutional arrangements that can help manage conflicts and protect minorities in multiethnic societies. They include power sharing through strategies such as proportional division of key offices, mutual vetoes, "purposive depoliticization," and representational concessions by stronger parties.

## Restoring Peace

While prevention is always better than cure, it remains important that there be some credible international capacity to deal collectively and forcefully with deadly conflicts that cannot be prevented or resolved by other means. Conceptually, as we have seen, there has never been a problem in defining such a responsibility for the international community in relation to interstate conflict ; for intrastate conflict , although the question has traditionally been much more problematic, there may well be credible theoretical bases for intervention in appropriate cases. The difficulty in practice is to define what are appropriate cases (the problem of criteria) and to deliver what will be effective responses (the problem of capacity).

There are a number of threshold criteria that might be considered appropriate in determining whether intervention in an intrastate conflict is warranted: that there is a consensus that not just any human right but the most basic, the right to life, is under direct and widespread threat; that there is no prospect of alleviation of the situation by the government--if there is one--of the state in question; that all nonmilitary options have been considered, tried where appropriate, and have failed; that there is a report from an impartial and neutral source, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, that

the humanitarian crisis can no longer be satisfactorily managed; that there has been consultation reflecting not only a wide spectrum of expert advice but, so far as possible, the views of external and internal parties involved; that there is a high degree of consensus on the issue between developed and developing countries; and that hard-headed assessments have been made about the international community's capacity, in terms of human resources, finance, and organizational skills, to follow through from addressing the immediate crisis to helping the affected state regain its viability as a functioning sovereign state able to take care of its own citizens.

Being a suitable case for treatment is never itself going to be enough, given resource constraints, to guarantee it. That said, "the impossibility of intervening everywhere should not bar the U.N. from acting anywhere," as Maynes wrote. "The international community must accept the inevitability of what might be called opportunistic idealism." It is becoming apparent, however, that this brand of idealism is in increasingly short supply: As the initial response to the horrors in Rwanda starkly demonstrated, it is becoming more and more difficult to get the U.N.'s member states to intervene forcibly anywhere, at least when vital national interests are not seen to be immediately involved.

The unhappy reality is that, in the absence of threats to vital perceived interests, it is extraordinarily difficult for democratic states to sustain domestic support for distant and risky military operations overseas--even when governments may wish to do so. It is difficult to believe that international public education programs will make much difference. Can the problem of member state resistance to involvement in dangerous U.N. operations be resolved by creating a professional volunteer U.N. standing force? Sir Brian Urquhart has been a persistent advocate of that approach, not only to solve the commitment problem, but also to have a rapid deployment capacity able to get to the sites of conflicts and defuse them much faster than is possible when each new U.N. operation has to be laboriously assembled from scratch.

Although the idea of the U.N. standing force has in the past been ruled out as unrealistic (including by me), the U.N.'s recent impotence in the face of genocide gives cause for reconsideration. Clearly, however, the force of 5,000 troops proposed by Urquhart would be too small, even if its purpose was simply to mount initial operations that would subsequently be taken over by U.N. forces constituted on a more orthodox basis. General Lewis McKenzie has made the point that a small rapid reaction force could not have been sent to Kigali because it would already have been preoccupied in Gorazde. And it might have had difficulty in getting to Gorazde because of prior commitments in Mozambique, Somalia, Liberia, and Angola.

Cost will be the key reason, though not the only one, for member states' resisting the creation of a rapid reaction force of any size. But, again, if there really is a will to tackle the issue, there are plenty of avenues available. One route would be through reallocating a small proportion of existing defense expenditure. If member states contributed just 5 per

cent of their current defense spending to the U.N., the world body would have a security budget of some $40 billion a year--more than 10 times the current peacekeeping budget. Relative military balances would be retained, and no state would be significantly worse off economically, since existing national defense outlays would remain the same--the only difference being that the U.N. would spend 5 per cent of them. If that rationale does not appeal, a simpler one can be constructed on the basis of diversion of defense savings: On current trends, some $460 billion will be saved by the reductions in global arms expenditure between 1994 and 2000--a "peace dividend" of more than $70 billion a year.

Quite apart from member states' paying their assessed contributions on time and in full, which would be a helpful start, there are plenty of other ways to augment the U.N.'s funding. Some of the more intriguing proposals are those that have a rational nexus with international peace and security , for example, a levy on international airline travel (a flat rate charged at just $10 per international passenger-sector, which would hardly seem enough to force people back to steamships, would yield $3 billion) or a turnover tax on foreign-exchange transactions of perhaps .01 per cent (a proposal given recent respectability by The Economist's description of it as "a nice idea"). Finding relatively painless ways of meeting the resource costs of a genuine commitment to peace is not the whole answer, but it would be a very good beginning. Even if the world can never be made absolutely safe for all its peoples, we are beginning to learn how to make it much safer than it has been. Technology, trade, and telecommunications are bringing us closer together. Across national borders, institutions, practices, and outlooks are becoming more alike. As a result, countries, cultures, and peoples are becoming less alien to one another than has been the case in the past. The ideal of nations and communities living and working together in peace and security --enjoying, in words of the U.N Charter, "better standards of life in larger freedom" --should be closer now to realization than at any previous time in modern world history. Expectations have been both raised and dashed by the swirl of events since the end of the Cold War. But there are signs--certainly in Europe, the Americas, the Asia-Pacific, and maybe at last in the Middle East--of a culture of cooperation beginning to emerge to replace the culture of conflict that has prevailed so long.

That mood must now be systematically tapped and translated into effective institutional structures and processes, above all through the U.N., the only fully empowered cooperative security body with global membership that we have. Change needs a measure of intellectual consensus among decision makers about applicable principles, and a clearly defined set of practical proposals for reform. But it also needs commitment, and stamina, from the governments and individuals who, at the end of the day, have to make it happen. Member states of the U.N., when they accede to its Charter, commit to its whole agenda. That means cooperating to achieve peace, security, stability, and well-being both among and within states. There could be no better time than now for renewal of that commitment, and no better target date for making it all happen than next year's 50th anniversary of the coming into force of the United Nations Charter.

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