

COOPERATING FOR PEACE

Address by Senator the Hon Gareth Evans QC, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia, at the 30th Otago Foreign Policy School, "The United Nations at Fifty Retrospect and Prospect", Dunedin, New Zealand, 30 June 1995.

It is particularly appropriate to be speaking on this topic here in New Zealand, a country which has demonstrated so clearly its commitment to improving cooperative security mechanisms and which has contributed so much to tangible progress in this field within the United Nations system. New Zealand expressed that commitment during its highly active term on the Security Council in 1993-94 with its initiative to establish a Convention on Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel. That was multilateral diplomacy at its most effective, not least because the Convention was proposed, drafted and adopted in little more than a year, an astounding feat in UN terms. The Convention is important both because of the added protection it will confer on personnel and because it will add to the confidence troop contributing nations can have in reaching decisions to participate in UN peace keeping operations.

And New Zealand has made another contribution with its work with Argentina in the UN Security Council to give troop contributing nations a greater say in the decision-making process for UN peace keeping operations. These efforts resulted in a Security Council Presidential Statement last November which introduced improved consultative arrangements between the Security Council, the UN Secretariat and troop contributing nations.

Such activity has become increasingly important. In the place of the new era of international peace and cooperation which many thought would follow the end of the Cold War, the last few years have brought new uncertainties and ambiguities to international relations, new and savage conflicts within states and new challenges to the UN's central, historical responsibility for ensuring peace. It can easily be asserted from the troubled history of its involvement in places such as Bosnia, Somalia and Rwanda, that the UN is failing to meet this responsibility - failing to live up to the promises implicit in its 1945 Charter. In this Fiftieth Anniversary year I believe the need has never been greater for the international community to devote all its intellectual resources and creativity to solving these

problems and to fitting the UN for the challenges of the next fifty years. I want to talk about some approaches to this issue which I believe hold out particular promise.

Cooperative security

There is a central sustaining concept for international efforts to maintain peace and security, both in the UN and outside it, which I believe is best expressed in the term *cooperative security*. This embraces three separate ideas - collective security, common security and comprehensive security - which have been current in thinking about international security cooperation for some time. The first of these, collective security, has a long tradition in the United Nations and other groups of states: it involves the notion of member states in a group agreeing to renounce the use of force among themselves and collectively coming to the aid of any member attacked by an outside state (or a renegade member). The idea of common security was first clearly articulated in the 1980s, and has become ever more prominent with the end of the Cold War: essentially it is the notion of states finding security by working with others, rather than against them.

Comprehensive security is simply the notion that security is multidimensional in character, encompassing a range of political, economic, social and other non-military considerations as well as military capability.

Cooperative security is a useful term. Not only does it bring these three familiar approaches together, but it does so in a way which emphasises prevention and encompasses the whole range of responses to security concerns, both before and after the threshold of armed conflict has been crossed: at one extreme this would involve long-term programs to improve economic and social conditions which are likely to give rise to future tensions, and at the other it includes the enforcement of peace by full scale military means.

The real world in which these approaches must be tested is changing quickly. Traditional warfare between states, with its relative simplicities and certitudes, is now conspicuously rare, and the new problems are overwhelmingly to do with intra-state conflict. According to SIPRI's *1994 Yearbook*, every one of the 34 major armed conflicts waged in 1993 were intra-state in character. They are a characteristic of a 'zone of conflict' including the former communist states, much of Africa, and parts of Central and Latin America and South Asia, where all too many states seem caught in a downward spiral of economic decline, often exacerbated by official corruption and mismanagement, creating governments

which are at or near collapse and which are being challenged, often violently, by their own citizens. Economic decline has hastened the process of national disintegration, and vice versa.

The collapse of the Soviet empire has brought extraordinary social, political and economic change to all of the former communist states. The transition from state repression to relative political licence has permitted the emergence of long-suppressed ethnic, religious and political hatreds and created new ones. In the former Soviet Union, the fighting in Chechnya - and the backlash of Chechen terrorist reprisals - is only the latest in a string of more than twenty violent conflicts which have resulted in thousands of deaths and over a million people displaced. The potential for still greater conflict is considerable. The vulnerabilities of the 25 million ethnic Russians who still live in non-Russian republics constitute a major potential security problem, as does the presence of 35 million non-ethnic Russians living in the Russian Federation. In the face of discrimination in the new non-Russian republics, some ethnic Russian minorities are demanding autonomy or even secession, while hundreds of thousands of others have voted with their feet and migrated back to Russia to swell the ranks of the unemployed and homeless. Protecting these Russian minorities has become a major strategic preoccupation for Moscow.

In states where economically and politically bankrupt governments can no longer provide vital social and economic services, citizens have increasingly been turning to other religious, ethnic and private economic organisations. Ethnic and religious differences are not in themselves usually the causes of conflict, but they are easily capable of being exploited by unscrupulous political leaders. This is particularly so in periods of economic decline, which provides fertile ground for the rise of demagogic politics and the intensification of chauvinistic myth-making.

Emerging ethnic and religious movements in the 'zone of conflict' offer an increasingly serious challenge to sovereign states which fail to meet the basic need of their citizens. Some movements seek to secede and create their own states; some seek to overthrow existing regimes; and others seek some form of autonomy. The desire to achieve ethnic 'purity' out of the ethnically intermingled populations of most states leads in many cases to intra-communal atrocities.

The available evidence strongly suggests, in fact, that violent intra-state conflict is unlikely 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, although the states of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union are at least able to build on already established infrastructures and systems of education and administration which are lacking in, for example, most African states.

These new forms of conflict have thrown up fresh complications for effective United Nations action. There are new tasks to be undertaken in what has come to be known as 'expanded' peace keeping, in which UN operations have moved beyond a more or less passive observation and monitoring role to full-scale election organisation, refugee resettlement, human rights development and civil administration. There are new questions of political acceptance to be faced, including developing world sensitivities about the perceived readiness of the West to ignore the principle of sovereignty. Ironically, these have taken the place of the major political constraint that used to circumscribe UN action during the Cold War - the use of the Security Council's veto power - which has for most purposes now disappeared.

If we are to meet these challenges we will clearly need to devote more resources to prevention. In a world where commitment and resources are always likely to fall short of aspirations, 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 non-violent disputes, and failed states are extremely difficult to put back together again. That is not such an attractive approach in strict political terms, of course, because if it works nobody notices. It's an iron law of politics - national or international - that everyone likes to be seen to be doing something: the notion of taking action behind the scenes that might be inherently worth doing, or worth doing as an insurance premium to avoid a larger payout later, tends to be foreign to the political psyche. But we must get more people to see the point of that splendid observation attributed to Jean-Marie Lehn, who won the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1987: 'Only those who can see the invisible can do the impossible'.

Building peace

Peace building is the most important preventive strategy because it goes to the fundamental underlying causes of disputes and conflicts - to ensure that they

don't occur in the first place, or if they do arise, that they won't recur. I have always thought it a waste of a good phrase to confine the idea of peace building to situations of post-conflict reconstruction, as the Secretary-General has been inclined to: the idea has much wider potential reach, it's intuitively easy to understand, and in fact it's central to my earlier reintegration theme.

At the international level, peace building strategies centre on building or strengthening a range of international structures or regimes aimed at minimising threats to security, building confidence and trust and operating as forums for dialogue and cooperation. Multilateral arms control and disarmament regimes; treaties governing issues like the Law of the Sea; forums like the International Court of Justice and other international bodies for resolving disputes; and multilateral dialogue and cooperation forums are all examples of these structures. The ASEAN Regional Forum is a prime example in our own region.

Peace building within states, by contrast, seeks to encourage equitable economic development in order to enhance human rights, broadly defined, and to facilitate good governance. These are goals we should pursue for their own sakes, but also because advancing them contributes directly to national and international security. Policies which 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 recognised as such, and receive a share of current security budgets and future peace dividends.

Economic development, human rights, good governance and peace are, in fact, inextricably connected and mutually reinforcing. Peace is a necessary precondition for development; and equitable development eradicates many of the socio-political conditions which threaten peace. It comes as no surprise to find that those countries whose economies are declining, whose political institutions are failing and where human rights are abused, should also be the ones experiencing the greatest amounts of violence and turmoil.

There are some reasons for long term optimism about the future of peace building. 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 world is slowly becoming more democratic, with more than half its population now living under relatively pluralistic governments.

But unfortunately - perhaps almost inevitably - the areas which suffer the greatest levels of intra-state violence are also those in which economic conditions are declining and governments are failing. National governments in the 'zone of conflict' must bear much of the blame for the deteriorating economic and political conditions which exacerbate internal conflicts. Persuading such governments to change security-eroding policies will always be difficult, but the international community does have some levers of influence. International financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have long applied economic management conditionality to their aid programs, with loans contingent on recipients' willingness to adopt far-reaching structural adjustment measures. They are now considering applying conditionality more widely to embrace other aspects of good governance. Similarly, individual donor countries have begun linking their assistance programs to human rights observance in recipient countries. These developments, although in an embryonic stage so far, raise the possibility that more systematic approaches may be developed to apply conditionality specifically to the problems of intra-state conflict.

The relationship between democracy and security is a very direct one, and it is a striking fact that democracies - at least mature ones - seem never to go to war with each other. There is also a strong relationship between democracy and violence within states. From the beginning of this century to 1987, according to one estimate, some 150 million persons have been killed by governments over and above the death toll from war and civil war (which accounted for an additional 39 million). The overwhelming majority of these deaths were perpetrated by governments against their own citizens. Totalitarian states were responsible for 84 per cent of the deaths, authoritarian states for most of the rest. Democracies were responsible for a tiny proportion of the deaths, although the absolute numbers were large. Democratic states are thus not only less warlike, they are also less prone to violence against their own citizens.

One of the principal underpinnings of a strong democracy is an effective system of law and order and a viable legal system. So-called "justice packages" could be developed to assist nations in institution building in both pre and post conflict situations. Some examples of this type of assistance would be creating a body of criminal law and procedure; establishing police forces; training judges, prosecutors and defenders; and developing adequate correctional facilities.

The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)

recently established in Sweden, of which Australia is a founding member, aims to bring coordination to existing forms of electoral cooperation, institution building and development of democratic norms. The coordination and research role of the new Institute provides examples of practical peace building activities which can be undertaken by the international community, largely drawing on existing bilateral and regional linkages.

Maintaining Peace

Preventive strategies must also address actual disputes which may deteriorate into armed conflict if they are not resolved. Hence, peace building must be accompanied by strategies of peace maintenance, the major strand of which is preventive diplomacy. One perhaps normally thinks of this as something done to resolve or contain disputes occurring between states. But it has equal application to many situations of internal ethno-nationalist and religious squabbling: the Organisation on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) already has shown, both through its own direct missions, and through the role of the High Commissioner on National Minorities, how this might work in countries like Albania, Estonia, Latvia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Hungary and Slovakia. Creative political solutions, involving power sharing strategies and the like, can be found and negotiated to many problems involving disaffected national minorities.

Like peace building, preventive diplomacy tends by its nature to be a low profile activity, lacking the obvious media impact of blue helmet peace-keeping and peace enforcement operations. Preventive diplomacy succeeds when things do not happen. It is most successful when it is applied early, well before armed conflict is likely, but it has unfortunately been the case too often in the UN system, that preventive diplomacy efforts have been attempted too late, when the dynamics of escalation are so advanced that a slide into hostilities is almost inevitable.

Despite the importance of this activity, the UN devotes relatively few resources to it, even though it is now universally acknowledged to be the most cost-effective means of dealing with potential conflict. There are only some forty UN officials assigned to tasks immediately relevant to preventive diplomacy. This compares with nearly 65,000 UN peace keepers in place at the end of May and approximately 30 million armed service personnel world-wide. Some reforms to UN practice have been implemented but far more needs to be done.

If the UN 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. In my book *Cooperating for Peace*, I proposed that regionally focused UN 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 UN headquarters, but also in the field, in regional centres. They would require adequate resources and infrastructure, with appropriate back-up personnel and equipment, and close consultative links with regional organisations, specialist scholars, peace research and other academic institutes. Because preventive diplomacy is so cost-effective, a large increase in the UN's capability could be achieved at minimal cost. The creation of, say, six regional preventive diplomacy centres, of the kind I have described, with a total staff of one hundred and the necessary support funding, would cost little more than US\$20 million a year. By comparison, the UN's peace keeping budget for 1994 was US \$3.5 billion (with the cost of its operation in Mozambique) alone being over US\$1 million each day). And the cost to the UN coalition of fighting The Gulf war against Saddam Hussein was fully \$70 billion!

It is not only the UN which has a preventive diplomacy role to play. Many successes in this area have been achieved by individual states, regional organisations and NGOs. The Vatican successfully mediated in the Beagle Channel dispute between Chile and Argentina. The Carter Centre operated to help defuse the nuclear impasse with North Korea and the removal of the military government in Haiti. And "second track" diplomacy has been an important aspect of dialogue on security issues in East Asia such as the Indonesian sponsored workshops on the South China Sea problem.

Regional organisations, too, have a special role in preventive diplomacy. Being close to the conflicts and with obvious interests in their resolution, they are often (although not always) better placed to act than the UN. The role of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, which I have mentioned, is one example, and the ASEAN Regional Forum is another. Regional mechanisms for conflict prevention have begun to emerge in Africa and the Middle East. For example, the Association of Southern African States (ASAS) has recently been

formed as a part of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) with a strong conflict prevention objective. As part of the Middle East Peace Process, the proposed Regional Security Centre in Jordan and two related centres in Qatar and Tunis to be established through the Arms Control and Regional Security (ACRS) working group should also contribute to enhancing preventive diplomacy. There is, as well, discussion in the ASEAN Regional Forum context of a possible centre in East Asia.

Restoring Peace

While prevention is always better than cure, it remains important that there be some credible international capacity to deal collectively, and if necessary forcefully, with deadly conflicts, including humanitarian crises, that cannot be prevented or resolved by other means.

While political constraints on decision-making by the Security Council have lessened significantly with the passing of the Cold War, the experience of more UN peace operations, and of more ambitious operations, has exposed important constraints on the effectiveness of military responses under the UN flag. In the last few years, we have tested the limits of how far the UN's secretariat resources can stretch, and of how much Member States are willing to contribute, in troops and finance. We have discovered that, even with generous arrangements for seconding military staff into UN headquarters - the Australian Defence Force, for example, has seven staff seconded into the Department of Peace Keeping - there are serious limits to the capacity of the UN Secretariat to act as a strategic headquarters handling, as is now the case, seventeen operations around the world. Our Ministers for Defence have come to focus with greater preoccupation on the limited headquarters capacity for planning and administration.

It appears to be the case that, at least for the moment, there is a ceiling of around 70-80,000 troops which Member States will collectively make available to the Secretary-General at any one time, and that there is often a considerable lag before these forces can be deployed to the field. The budget for peace operations has risen ten-fold in three years, and we are now seeing that the largest contributor has decided unilaterally to cut its share of that budget, and that many developing countries fear that the expansion in payments for such operations will be at the expense of funding for their priority concern of economic and social development.

We have also observed the limitations on Security Council mandates for many operations. The last few years have given us all too many examples - especially in the former Yugoslavia - of politically-influenced mandates which have not been achievable in the field or which have lacked the clarity about goals and time frames which commanders could reasonably expect. There is a need to better integrate the Security Council's process of formulating mandates for operations with the Secretariat's planning processes. One suggestion for achieving this could be to begin institutionalisation of the two sets of parallel processes. This need not impinge on traditional Security Council prerogatives but rather ensure the Council has more direct access to high quality military advice and militarily viable concepts of operations.

Similarly, we have seen missions undertaken without provision for the necessary resources, and the UN assuming a role in complex situations without sufficient thought given to how Blue Helmeted forces should interact with other international actors, whether these be non-governmental aid bodies or major UN organs or agencies such as the UNHCR.

There has been a flurry of recent proposals and studies to consider how the UN could do better to deploy forces to crises more rapidly. Several Foreign Ministers, including me, have commented that the UN's tardiness in mounting an effective operation in Rwanda in time to halt the genocidal killings there twelve months ago has confronted us squarely with the need to reconsider the options, including the idea of a standing volunteer force. The proposals range from Dutch Foreign Minister Mierlo's idea of a "UN fire brigade" - a variation on a theme long advanced by Brian Urquhart - to suggestions for enhanced stand-by arrangements put forward by the Secretary-General and the Danish Government. Canada is conducting an intensive study on how the UN's rapid deployment capacity could be improved which will cover early warning, integrated planning, logistics, command and control systems, doctrine and interoperability.

My own instinct on all this, after devoting many hours of discussion to the subject around Europe and in New York and Washington in recent months, is that it would make most sense in the immediate future for us all to concentrate our efforts on building the UN's headquarters capacity - to enable it to better conceptualise operations, construct their mandates, plan and organise them, and rapidly set them in train on the ground. More professional oversight and support is necessary at both the strategic and operational level. Although a great deal has been done to improve that capacity in recent times there are still major

inadequacies, both quantitative and qualitative. I believe that if member states had more confidence in the role and competence of the headquarters military general staff, then the 'stand by' option would be likely to be much more effectively utilised in practice, and there would be less need to pursue what increasingly seems like the will-o'-the-wisp of a standing volunteer force. The UN's standby arrangements, to which New Zealand has signed up and Australia has also recently agreed, is a useful tool to assist the UN's planning of peace keeping operations without ceding Member State's autonomy of decision-making or affecting the way they structure their defence forces.

Enforcing peace

We have seen the problems caused when peace keeping operations, which are premised upon the consent of the parties to the UN's presence and should be inherently peaceful, are mixed with peace enforcement missions which presume resistance by one or more of the parties and are mandated to apply whatever force is needed to meet the operation's objectives.

The use of force in peace operations was the subject of a recent workshop in Stockholm held jointly by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. It was attended by a group of former and current UN Force Commanders, academics and policy makers, and Lt. General Sanderson and I represented Australia. The meeting's key conclusions were that there should be a sharp distinction, in mandates, force levels and command and control arrangements, between Chapter VI and Chapter VII operations; that 'mixed' mandates should be avoided; and that, in certain situations, the UN Security Council should consider authorising operations under Chapter VII which fall short of unrestrained use of force but give Force Commanders scope for resort to force beyond the confines of self-defence and defence of the mission.

Most participants argued that there is no continuum between peace keeping operations (ie those that have evolved under Chapter VI of the Charter - to do with the 'peaceful settlement of disputes') and enforcement operations under Chapter VII - certain provisions of which authorise use of force. As Lt. General Sanderson has said, peace keepers, as opposed to peace enforcers, are 'instruments of diplomacy, not war'. In peace keeping operations there is a need to maintain consent and acceptance of the process. The UN Secretary-General commented in his supplement to *An Agenda for Peace* of January this year that

the experiences of the last few years have confirmed the importance of some basic principles of peace keeping: consent of the parties, impartiality of the peace keepers and the non-use of force except in self-defence. Use of force other than in self-defence - or in some instances, perhaps, defence of the operation's mandate - runs the risk of forfeiting the consent of the parties and compromising the neutrality of the peace keepers.

There is also the need for an unambiguous legal basis for peace operations, including any authority to use force. Consent should be made concrete wherever possible through specific host agreements and, in the case of intra-state conflicts, by the express commitment of all sides - to the maximum extent possible - to the UN's presence. Consent of the parties to the conflict to the UN's role is a precondition to the success of a peace keeping operation: 'operational consent' is the dividing line between operating under Chapter VI and Chapter VII. Peace keeping personnel should not be converted to peace enforcers. At the very least, any attempt to change the mandate of a peace keeping operation to enforcement requires a significant period of transition, in which forces could be retrained or substituted.

The experiences of the UN in Somalia and Bosnia have raised the question of whether traditional ideas of peace keeping are appropriate. It has been argued that the notion that there are no options between consent-based peace keeping and waging war puts the UN and the international community in the untenable position of having no viable response in such situations. According to this line of argument, there should be an option short of peace enforcement whereby a multinational force could operate without operational consent and with the option of resort to force, (albeit wherever possible using non-forceful means) authorised by the Security Council acting under relevant provisions of Chapter VII.

The purpose of such operations would be to shape an environment in which consent-based operations would be possible. I would argue, however, that it is preferable to establish a Chapter VII mandate from the outset, or in response to loss of 'operational consent', rather than tack elements of Chapter VII enforcement authority onto a Chapter VI operation. I fully recognise the organisational and other limitations on the UN acting as the strategic headquarters for Chapter VII operations, but it is better to be clear from the start about what the international community proposes to undertake - so if it lacks the will and resources, it will not take on tasks the UN is not capable of carrying out.

I am realistic enough to accept that many of the problems the UN faces in ensuring peace cannot be solved in the short term. The international community has probably still not fully grasped the magnitude of these difficulties, and is not ready for the hard decisions it will need to make. This is in part due to the increasingly isolationist mood of the US Congress since the elections last November, when quite clearly swung away from support for UN reform. But we cannot allow the difficulty of achieving everything - prevent us from trying to do anything. The first step is simply to achieve recognition of the problem, and to get consensus on what is to be done. That in itself will be a huge advance.

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