

'Alliances' and Regional Security Developments:

The Role of Regional Arrangements in the

UN's Promotion of Peace and Stability

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Introduction

Recognizing that almost all states conduct significant components of their economic, political, and security affairs within their regional, geographic contexts, the UN Charter holds that regional agencies or "regional arrangements" would and should play a major role in sustaining international peace and stability in the post-WWII world. Thus, in Chapters VI (Article 33, (1)) and VIII member states were advised, as a first resort, to attempt to settle disputes through regional agencies or arrangements, before approaching the Security Council. In turn, regional agencies or arrangements were to keep the Security Council fully informed of their activities, or planned activities, and were called upon not to undertake enforcement actions without the authorization of the Security Council, (VIII, 53, (1)).

However, while the post-1945 period did see the establishment of a wide variety of regional organizations, by and large these did not operate in parallel with the UN as the drafters of the Charter had intended. Instead, international relations came to be rigidly defined by a small number of regional arrangements, namely the set of collective defence arrangements (alliances) that underpinned the Cold War. Their ideological

confrontation and associated defence and security policies significantly inhibited the UN's ability to fulfill its potential mandate, as defined by the Charter, on a number of dimensions. UN peacekeeping efforts, for instance, succeeded, but only could be applied to those conflicts in which the contending superpowers either had no interests or perceived overriding mutual interests to forestall the spread or escalation of regional wars.

The end of the Cold War, the unraveling of the Soviet Union and the general movement towards a global, free market economy had dramatic impact on both the United Nations and regional security arrangements. First, for the latter, much if not all of their rationale simply disappeared, either resulting in their complete collapse, (as with the Warsaw Pact), or necessitating a process of redefinition in the emerging new world order (as with NATO). Second, the removal of the Cold War "overlay" on regional affairs, i.e., the lifting of the template of superpower ideology, intervention, and clientelism, transformed the dimensions of conflict within the system. On the one hand, internationalized civil wars such as in Angola and Afghanistan lost their momentum with the withdrawal of superpower involvement. Interstate tensions and overt conflicts dropped significantly. But, on the other hand, intrastate conflict increased dramatically, marked by internecine communal struggle and shocking levels of destruction and lethality, particularly targeted against civilian populations. For the United Nations, the result was a renaissance of sorts in the early 1990s. With the Security Council unlocked, an activist Secretary-General in office, and sense of relative equanimity among the major powers, the UN was called upon by its members to assume a dramatically expanded role in international peace-related activities. It did so, not only by launching a barrage of new

peacekeeping missions, but also by authorizing and helping to organize coalitions of member states to utilize force to implement its resolutions. Accordingly, a major war was undertaken in 1990-91 against Iraq because of its aggression against Kuwait; by July 1993, over 78,000 UN peacekeepers were deployed around the world.

Paradoxically, however, the end of the decade finds the UN in crisis, rather than triumph. Its peacekeeping momentum has been reversed. (By mid-1999, only 12,000 personnel served in UN missions.) Gaining approval for new missions with relevant mandates and adequate deployments is now extraordinarily difficult, and usually unsuccessful as far as mandates and deployments are concerned. Fiscal exigencies have grown so severe that calculations of cost forestall creation of missions or drastically limit their dimensions and their timetables. Member states have been burned by the experience of their forces in UN missions in the complex crisis situations of Bosnia, Somalia and Rwanda. Governments in key states, focused on the downside risks of engagement in countries in which they have no direct interests, refuse to summon up the necessary political will to mobilize and support UN action. The UN finds itself bogged down with missions such as Cyprus, Lebanon and Iraq (although not with UN troops in this case) on the one hand, while unable to take on fully the demands of major systemic humanitarian and security crises, such as in contemporary sub-Saharan Africa.

In this context, (admittedly one that has been painted rather darkly), it is especially appropriate to reexamine the role of regional arrangements in advancing peace and stability, in terms of their transformation in post-Cold War security context and in terms of their capacity to interrelate effectively with the UN, as envisaged under Chapter VIII. As the Secretary-General has stated, while the UN Security Council must retain

primary responsibility for peace maintenance and activities, regional action as a matter of decentralization, delegation and cooperation with the United Nations efforts could not only lighten the burden of the Council but also contribute to a deeper sense of participation, consensus and democratization in international affairs.<sup>1</sup>

This paper undertakes this consideration in the following manner. First, it surveys the nature of multilateral regional arrangements, reviewing the rationale for the different forms and functions of arrangements states undertake and then looking at the shifts in the patterns of regional security arrangements and activities in the post-Cold War decade.

The second section of the paper looks at where and how regional security mechanisms have been effective in advancing regional peace, stability and conflict management. Particular attention is drawn to recent experience in two regions, Europe and Asia-Pacific. In both instances, prevention through confidence-building, good offices, monitoring, inclusive dialogue and consultation appears to be the key. "Nesting" of institutions with overlapping memberships is a particularly desirable feature as well, as demonstrated in the European context. It appears, however, that if and when serious interstate or intrastate conflict does break out, regional arrangements are unlikely to be able to cope by themselves, necessitating recourse to the global level, i.e., UN, conflict management. The successful articulation of the regional and global dynamics thus hinges on two factors, first the effectiveness of regional mechanisms in preventing conflict from breaking out in the first place, and second, the extent to which the UN has anticipated the need for its engagement and is capable of mobilizing on both political and logistical fronts an adequate response.

Finally, a third and more basic set of issues needs to be raised. These concern the extent to which conflict of the type that is likely to predominate into the coming decades, namely intrastate, communal warfare in weak or failing or predatory state environments, can be managed by arrangements (both regional and global) that are basically designed to preserve and protect the prerogatives of states. Already we see increasing tensions arising over issues that derive from this fundamental dilemma. The recent Kosovo crisis, for instance, pitted those who argued for humanitarian intervention by a regional actor (NATO) acting without the authorization of the Security Council, against those who argued for principles of sovereignty and non-interference and for their right to exercise their vote/veto for these principles within the United Nations. Phrased in another way, are our existing regional and global security arrangements, however well they might function, essentially unable to adequately protect and advance human security in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? To what extent must we seriously consider developing new institutional forms for security and peace management, that provide for inclusion of non-state actors such as NGOs, and directly facilitate alternate strategies of preventive diplomacy and peace building.

## MULTILATERAL REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

### Forms of Multilateral Security Management

The form and function of the security arrangements that states undertake reflect their understanding of their individual security situations and the extent to which these are

shared or threatened by other actors. Both "objective" and subjective factors are involved; perceived threats are "real" in that they determine state behavior. Within a given regional or global distribution of power, a variety of security arrangements are possible, depending upon the security perceptions and resulting policies of key state actors.

In principle, one can envisage a spectrum of security conditions ranging from a state of anarchy at one extreme, i.e., a Hobbesian state of nature pitting all against all, to a state of cooperation and mutual understanding at the other. In practice, one finds that security arrangements cluster in three categories between these extremes, each category reflecting a different form of mutually perceived security dilemma and accordingly resulting in different forms of security practices and institutional arrangements. Figure 1 provides a brief overview.

*Collective defence:* The traditional remedy to the classic security dilemma has been the formation of alliances. In order to advance their interests, states undertake commitments to come to the defence of each other, should one be threatened or attacked by a defined perceived adversary. Alliance arrangements, both formal and informal, are by definition exclusionary, i.e., their membership is purposely limited to those states who share perceived opponents and are willing to undertake similar mutual obligations. Military preparation for collective defence and maintenance of deterrence postures, therefore, are the key avenues for alleviating threats and conflict. In these circumstances, as typified during the Cold War, peace between the central opponents may be sustained, but with concomitant increases in tension, arms races, strained communication and brinkmanship diplomacy.

*Collective security:* A collective security arrangement entails an "all for one" commitment by members to respond collectively and automatically to assist a threatened or attacked member. The states in the group perceive the possibility of threat, but not from an immediately identifiable source, (otherwise they presumably would constitute a collective defence arrangement). They seek, therefore, a wide, inclusive membership, seeking to forestall conflict by engagement and consultation (community building), and by creating the prospect of an overwhelming response to aggression should it occur. The historical experience of attempts at global or broad regional collective security arrangements has not been particularly satisfactory, in large part because of the failure of members to summon sufficient political will to confront, early on, the behaviour of a violator.

A *concert*, on the other hand, is an exclusive arrangement, in essence, a "committee of great powers" based upon their perceived mutual interests in sustaining the status quo and channeling their competition to the periphery of the (regional) system. In this limited context, it functions as a collective security mechanism among the great powers. Analysts and practitioners, however, have come to link the notions of concert and collective security in another fashion, namely in arguing that a broadly-based (inclusive) collective security arrangement requires embedded within it a (exclusive) concert of powers if it is to function effectively. This was, of course, the central logic of the drafters of the UN Charter.

*Cooperative security* is premised on a radically different appreciation of the security dilemma. Security is conceived as being a mutually determined phenomena, i.e., no single actor can achieve security through unilateral means. In order to enhance

security, therefore, communication, transparency and dialogue need to be fostered. Advancement of cooperative security necessitates inclusion of non-likeminded actors to promote reassurance, confidence building and mutual trust. Thus, to the extent possible, potential adversaries are to be engaged, rather than excluded.

In order for a cooperative security arrangement to germinate there must be (a) a common appreciation of the notion of mutual security, (b) acceptance of certain shared norms about the value and process of dialogue and (c) the absence of ideological schisms or perceived danger of imminent threat or aggression. In practical terms, cooperative security arrangements are dialogue mechanisms, oriented to inclusion, consultation and confidence building. Their emphasis is as much on process as on specific results; they are engineered for mediation rather than arbitration and do not organize for peacekeeping or peace enforcement vis-à-vis each other. The term "dialogue organization" well describes a cooperative security arrangement, which can be either established to function at official levels involving only state representatives, that is, on a Track 1 basis, or to function at unofficial levels involving civilians (usually academics, security experts, and officials attending "in their private capacities"). The pace of security dialogue organizations is often very slow and incremental, a characteristic that has led to their being labeled as "talk shops" by realist skeptics.

If the norms of cooperative security are accepted by an interacting group of states, to the point where they no longer regard force as a viable instrument of interaction among each other, and additionally do not perceive the need to defend against each other, they are said to constitute a *security community* -- a so-called *pluralistic security community* if they engage in tightly-knit interactions that lead to common policy stances, an *integrated*

*security community* should they create institutional mechanisms that formulate policies on behalf of the membership.

Note that a pluralistic security community can be fostered within an alliance, i.e., among its members themselves through the promotion of common values, rationalization of policies beyond narrowly defined matters of military cooperation (e.g., technological development and industrial policy), establishment of permanent institutional infrastructures, etc.

### Regional Security Arrangements in the Post-Cold War

The Cold War was sustained by the confrontation of regional collective defence arrangements, most notably of course NATO and the Warsaw Pact, but also the various bilateral alliances (e.g. the US' alliances with its Asian partners, the Soviet Union's "friendship agreements" with client states) and informal defence arrangements (for example, the many regime support agreements involving the superpowers and client regimes in Asia, Africa and the Americas.) Other regional arrangements were formed, many on a regional basis among newly-independent states seeking to reinforce their nation-building agendas and to advance, to the extent possible, a non-aligned presence within the international system. However, these organizations, such as the OAU, the OAS (of longer vintage), and the ASEAN were not equipped or able to undertake regional conflict management actions during the Cold War years. Ignored or overruled by the superpowers, preoccupied with internal affairs and lacking collective agreement on norms of regional conduct, they were relegated to the sidelines.

By and large, the cooperative relationship between regional arrangements and the United Nations envisaged in the Charter was moribund during the Cold War. The striking exception to this statement (both concerning itself and its interaction with the UN, the European Community, and other regional organizations), was the Conference on (now Organization for) Security and Cooperation in Europe. Established in the mid-1970s, the CSCE, functioning as a security dialogue organization to promote implementation of the Helsinki Accords, arguably became the single most important bridging mechanism in overcoming the divisions of Europe.

The end of the Cold War was a remarkable turning point in the international relations of regions and the role of regional security arrangements. In retrospect, one can point to five key developments.

First, the prominent regional security institutions of the Cold War, i.e. the collective defence arrangements, having lost their rationale, faced either dissolution (as happened to the Warsaw Pact) or the prospect of "reinventing" themselves in the context of their post-Cold War regional contexts. Thus, NATO struggled to redefine its Strategic Concept, undertook to engage all members of the former Soviet Union in security dialogue (in the Partnership for Peace), enlarged its regional footprint by admitting new members, and acting both unilaterally (as in Kosovo) and through the UN deployed its substantial military capabilities in peace enforcement operations. Within the Asia Pacific, the most prominent formal security relationship of the Cold War – the US-Japan defence agreement, has been recast to emphasize its role as a foundation of regional security (albeit that China, among others, regards the US-Japan relationship as less benign).

A minor but interesting counterpoint to this redefinition of alliances by the US and its Euro-Atlantic and Asian partners has been the tact taken by China. It has formulated a series of bilateral arrangements with other states that it calls "strategic partnerships." These involve cooperation on security matters, including regularized consultation, sales of arms and technology transfer. Chinese analysts and officials maintain that these are not alliances, in that they are not targeted against any country. But neither do they reflect collective security or cooperative security principles.

Second, the ending of ideological confrontation and the abandonment of state-controlled economies gave impetus to movements of democratization and opening of political systems and to adoption of free-market principles around the globe. Regional institutions have become the primary promulgators of these new norms in the post-Cold War order. Thus, the OAS, for instance, has revitalized itself around the priorities of democratization and human rights. In Europe, the efforts of the OSCE are enjoined by the Council of Europe, the West European Union and the European Union – all with agendas to advance the establishment of open markets, open societies, and human rights. In the Asia Pacific, the APEC forum and parallel Track 2 organizations, such as PBEC, riding the tide of economic growth in the region throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s, championed the cause of free trade within Asia and across the Pacific.

Third, finding themselves largely abandoned and ignored in the post-Cold War order, the states of Africa have struggled to reinvigorate and create viable regional institutions. In the immediate aftermath of the withdrawal of major power intervention in key conflicts in the Horn of Africa and in Angola, there were hopeful signs of achievement of peaceful settlements. These proved to be short-lived, as these locales

along with much of sub-Saharan Africa became caught up in the turmoil of communal conflict, economic decline, and natural disasters in weak, failed and predatory state environments. In an attempt to redress and reverse these trends, African states have looked to the Organization of African Unity to assume broader and more proactive roles in preventive diplomacy, conflict resolution and peacekeeping. Whether or not affected states will be willing to cooperate with OAU missions, to provide the necessary financial and human resources, to countenance interventionary actions in member states, and to cooperate more effectively with UN efforts at peacekeeping and peacebuilding remains to be seen. Of note also is an interesting feature of developments in Africa; that is the undertaking by what are nominally "economic organizations" such as ECOWAS, the Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) of peacekeeping and peacemaking missions.

Fourth, the ending of the Cold War was brought about through a coincidence of structural and ideational shifts, the latter essentially being the replacement of traditional, polarized security views by the principles of cooperative security. Security dialogue mechanisms, such as the CSCE, were key instruments in effecting this transformation in Europe. Accordingly, their role within the European context has been cemented in within the region's security architecture. Institutions such as the Council of Europe, European Union and Western European Union have moved to assume more proactive roles in promoting democratization, civilian-military relations, monitoring and negotiating on human rights matters and confidence building in zones of tension.

The trend of more proactive security dialogue organizations, however, was by no means limited to the European context; indeed, it is perhaps the single most notable

development in regional arrangements across all regions. In the Asia Pacific, for instance, the existing ASEAN assumed regional leadership in establishing the bases for a regional, multilateral security framework. Over the course of the 1990s, it expanded its own agenda of activities, enlarged its membership to encompass all of Southeast Asia and engineered the establishment of regional Track 1 and Track 2 security dialogue organizations, the ASEAN Regional Forum and the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific, respectively. Regional and sub-regional dialogue activities outside the ASEAN rubric multiplied rapidly throughout the region as well, sponsored by individual states including as Canada, Australia, Japan, the US, and South Korea; universities and think-tanks, foundations, and NGOs.

#### Maintaining Peace and Security in the Post-Cold War Decade

Before proceeding, we should recall several distinctive features of the record of conflicts over the last decade. Overt interstate conflict, while never more frequent than intrastate conflict during the post-WWII era, has essentially been reduced to one or two outbreaks per year--these generally in traditional regional crisis points such as in South Asia. The overwhelming form of conflict, in terms of numbers of wars and lethality, now occurs within states. Since 1989 the number of "major" ongoing conflicts has declined, particularly since 1993; although 1998 showed a slight increase to a total of 27 in 26 locations. This latest increase is due to the shift from Asia to Africa as the most troubled region in the world; of the 13 conflicts registering over 1,000 deaths in 1998, 9 were within African states.<sup>2</sup>

This record is relevant to the assessment of peacekeeping, peace enforcement and post-conflict peacebuilding efforts, that is, activities that were implemented after conflict broke out. Additionally, it provides information concerning the record of attempts, if any, at preventive diplomacy in these instances. What it does not shed light upon are all those activities undertaken in cases where conflict has been averted, i.e., "the dogs that have not barked" cases. Surprisingly, there appears to be no single repository of this information, i.e., a consolidated record of peace-related activities by regional organizations.

Figure 2, assembled largely from a 1999 UN report, provides a cursory overview, organized by region and organization. While it must be viewed as a sample, rather than a comprehensive, treatment of regional security organization activities, (and does not include bilateral arrangements such as the US-Japan defence agreement), several features appear to merit notice. First, one must be struck by the range and variety of organizations and their broad repertoire of peace-related activities that they initiate. Second, the preponderance of regional institutions operate within the European context. Third, but not surprising, is the dearth of regional institutionalization in the Middle East, although several trans-regional organizations include these areas within their mandate. Fourth, there are no regional or subregional "security organizations" within the Asia Pacific. Indeed, the end of the Cold War found this region without any equivalent to the OAU, the OAS, or OSCE, i.e., any region-wide institutional building blocks for promoting multilateral security regionalism.

#### Peace-Related Activities at the Regional Level

A review of recent academic literature, official and unofficial reports, and UN and other international organization documents, suggests that there are four important dimensions to achieving effective prevention, management, and resolution of conflict on a regional basis. These are”

- an emphasis upon preventive diplomacy
- inclusive engagement
- ‘nesting’ of institutions, and
- matching resources to mandates

It is a truism to state that preventing conflicts from breaking out is the most effective strategy of peacekeeping. Yet, one is struck by the generally low levels of support and resource allocation for preventive diplomacy across all regions. While this is less true of Europe (and perhaps also of the Americas) and appears to be moving forward, albeit slowly, in Africa, surprisingly little progress appears to be being made in this direction in Asia. In part, this may be a result of a general aversion to formal institutionalism shared by Asian states. Secretariats, for instance, either do not exist at all, or they are staffed at the bare minimum levels necessary to circulate information and schedule meetings. Certainly, this has been true of ASEAN, and even more so for the ARF. Neither has the capacity to engage in monitoring and early warning; neither has been given general mandates by their respective memberships to their Chairs or Secretariats to engage in proactive diplomatic initiatives to decrease tensions and to facilitate dispute resolution.

Norms of nonintervention remain so strong that virtually any form of preventive diplomacy is seen as being intrusive and a threat to principles of state sovereignty.

The development of regional peace and stability can only proceed on the basis of inclusion and engagement. This, of course, was the primary lesson of the process of ending the Cold War. Adversaries have to be engaged; there has to be set in motion a process leading towards mutual understanding of each side's perspective. To a substantial extent, all regions in the post-Cold War period have moved towards inclusive regional arrangements. Certainly Europe has, the Americas have too, with the exception of the US-Cuban standoff. The Middle East remains a fractured and exclusionary context; its peaceful settlement processes will continue to founder until all accept the legitimacy of each other's existence and join in security dialogue. In Asia, inclusion of the non-likeminded has been a recent and difficult process. ASEAN has sought successfully to incorporate all the states of Southeast Asian within its membership and is experiencing substantial (hopefully short-term) growing pains as a result. In Northeast Asia, inclusion and engagement has been most difficult; on a grand scale regarding China, in more immediate and critical ways concerning North Korea. While the latter, for instance, is a participant in regional, Track 2 dialogues sponsored by CSCAP, it is not a member of the ARF. It refuses to join any Track 1 subregional institution for Northeast Asia. Resolution of the impasse on the Korean Peninsula can be facilitated through multilateral, regional arrangements, but its solution will remain dependent upon the North and the South taking decisive steps that neither, especially the DPRK, appears prepared to do in the near future.

Preventive diplomacy is most effectively practiced in Europe. The successful mediation efforts led by the OSCE in diffusing the minority issues in the Baltic states are a prime example. Three features of the European context stand out in comparison with other regions. Regional organizations have been long-established in Europe; the OSCE for example has a 25-year track record. The political security culture of Europe supports the building and growth of formal institutions at the regional level, allowing them to accumulate experienced staff and to operate (in relative terms) with adequate resources. In the aftermath of the Cold War, there has developed a network of overlapping institutions which can call upon each and count upon each other to take up different aspects of the peace maintenance challenge in any given conflict situation. From the perspective of the individual state, especially one in the "at risk" peripheries of Europe, it finds itself "nested" within an institutional context, by virtue of its membership in, or existence within the area of responsibility, of at least several different regional institutions. Figure 3 provides a vivid, schematic illustration of this point.

Matching resources to mandates is a perennial and pervasive problem of international governance at all levels. Certainly, this is a systemic and general condition of virtually all collective security and cooperative security oriented arrangements in today's world. (Collective defence arrangements, on the other hand, appear to exist much more comfortably in this regard--the sustaining of a perceived threat being the key to the sustaining resources.) In some regions, however, the situation is much less satisfactory than others. Connie Peck, in her recent book, presents the following data that drives this point home.<sup>3</sup>

Figure 4

1997 Budget Estimates of Organizations and Their Peace-Related Programs

(in millions of US \$)

ASEAN	5.0
OAS	91.2
OAU (but unpaid)	30.0
COE	161.0
OSCE	49.4

The comparison is stark. One European organization has more resources at its disposal than those of the combined OAS and OAU *and* those of the Asia Pacific, (since one can assume that the total of the ARF budget and regional Track 2 institutional budgets will be even smaller than those of ASEAN.) While member states in these other regions can and do bear costs of seconding bureaucrats, supporting missions, etc., for their respective regional institutions, the indisputable conclusion is that regional security arrangements are woefully under-funded. The relative success of European institutions is demonstrated from yet another perspective.

Regional Arrangements and the UN

As stated at the beginning of this paper, while the Charter provides for regional security arrangements, the authority and ultimate responsibility for peacekeeping and peace-related activities remains with the United Nations.

The experience of the last decade clearly supports arguments for the engagement of regional security mechanisms, preferably as a matter of first resort, in attempting to prevent and manage conflict. Regional institutions presumably have the advantages of familiarity and proximity. They are likely to have direct interests in seeing tensions reduced and conflicts ended, given the likelihood of the spillover effects of economic uncertainty, voluntary and involuntary flows of refugees, cross-border incursions, etc. They are sensitive to the nuances of regional and local political and security cultures; they have first hand knowledge of the issues at hand. They are likely to be more functionally capable in terms of language and logistical matters. They have an incentive to stay the course and see post-conflict peacebuilding efforts satisfactorily concluded because they will reap the benefits of a stable environment and suffer the consequences of further regional instability.

But there are disadvantages and drawbacks to intraregional efforts at conflict management. Regional institutions may well be dominated by the interests of one or more regional powers. Member states, directly or indirectly, may be party to the disputes in question, thus compromising their willingness to become engaged and/or their impartiality once engaged. Member states may find that engagement in the conflict situation of one of their neighbors could bring with it the risks of domestic destabilization. Regional institutions themselves, as discussed above, lack adequate

resources to plan and support major peacekeeping missions. (NATO would be the singular exception.)

The track record of regional security institutions in dealing with regional conflict looks decidedly mixed (although again this is an issue that does not appear to have systematically scrutinized by scholars or policy makers.) Their efforts are almost certainly better focused on activities oriented towards conflict prevention, i.e., all forms of preventive diplomacy--diplomatic initiatives, providing good offices, monitoring and observation, fact finding, etc. Such activities are less expensive, less logistically complicated and very dependent upon abilities to understand local issues and to gain trust from all sides. Once serious conflict breaks out, the potential for successful action by regional security arrangements is small. (Even in Europe, once war broke out in the former Yugoslavia, European institutions were stymied, either unable or unwilling to mobilize to respond with sufficient political and military clout.)

The United Nations, on the other hand, holds the mandate for action in such circumstances, has an extended history and experience in peacekeeping, and has substantial institutional capabilities to deal with the spectrum of problems involved in response to a complex, humanitarian and conflict crisis. As a global institution, it can call upon members from outside a region in order to assemble forces that are as neutral as possible. Through the Security Council, the entire UN membership can be called upon to act with regard to the participants in a particular conflict. These are all positive and important factors, ones that have contributed to the UN's record of mounting a total of 49 peacekeeping missions.

However, the UN too is in crisis. It too lacks the infrastructure and financial resources to meet adequately its peacekeeping responsibilities. Mired in debt, arising from unpaid dues and assessments, it essentially has to pick and chose its missions and determine their strength and longevity on the basis of cost criteria. In moments calling for action, it finds itself paralyzed either because of a general lack of political will to mobilize on behalf of a country or countries that hold little intrinsic geopolitical relevance to the powerful members of the UN, or because these same members perceive other interests are at stake and refuse to authorize the UN to act. One sees at this moment little to suggest that the momentum for UN peacekeeping is going to reverse its downward course. The number of missions undertaken has declined from the highs of early to mid-1990s; the number of troops deployed under UN blue helmets is shrinking. Furthermore, recent reports critical of UN conduct or failure to act in past missions creates a pall over the prospect of future UN actions in unfriendly Third World environments.

Indeed the UN finds itself not only in a position of dependence upon the support of a small number of nations but also upon the force capabilities of the US and its NATO allies. It is inconceivable, at present, that the UN could mount a major peace enforcement mission without the assistance, if the not the direct involvement, of the United States. On the other hand, as the Kosovo crisis of 1999 brought home, there is yet an additional vulnerability for the UN, namely that it will not be able to sustain its authorizing control over peace enforcement behaviour by regional institutions, should they chose, as the US did, to act on their own. While this precedent has been loudly decried by other major powers, one would be sanguine to assume that should an

appropriate cause arise, they too would not undertake unsanctioned action to resolve a regional humanitarian crisis in their own interests.

What is to be done? The larger remedies are obvious and have been amply rehearsed in the media aimed at the appropriate attentive publics. On the basis of the issues explored in this paper, specifically the role of regional security arrangements and their articulation with the United Nations, several avenues should be pursued.

First, the greatest marginal pay-off for investment of resources in peace-related activities would appear to be in the enhancement of preventive diplomacy capacities, particularly those of regional security institutions.

Second, more attention should be given to the articulation of regional and UN mechanisms. There is undoubtedly duplication of effort in certain areas and mutual neglect in others.

Third, more attention should be given to facilitating the articulation of regional Track 1 and Track 2 security programs *and* to the inclusion of non-state actors (i.e., representatives of civil society) and NGOs.

Fourth, once a conflict goes beyond its "tipping point" to explode into deadly violence, the United Nations remains the best last resort. Its peacekeeping capabilities, despite their flaws, bring to bear the best combination of political legitimacy and functional expertise.

Human Security in a System of States: A Fundamental Challenge

Some final brief thoughts on a challenge for the United Nations of the new millennium: To many observers there is emerging a fundamental distinction between the nature of the problem to be addressed, namely deadly conflict, and the institutional forms that are available and responsible for action. This can be succinctly expressed in the question: Is the system of states capable of providing for and protecting human security?

The preponderance of conflict and human destruction we see today, and are likely to see well into coming decades is characterized by three features. (a) It is intrastate and transnational, i.e., it occurs within the boundaries of states but has no respect for them. It is affected by and affects forces that communicate and transmit influence beyond the control of states. (b) It is exacerbated, rather than controlled or ameliorated, by the states in which it occurs. That is, the forces of the state are unable or unwilling to mobilize to restore order and provide for the security of its citizens. In popular terminology, the problem is of weak states, collapsed states or predatory states. (c) Its effects upon society are far reaching to the point that the minimal conditions of civilian life are no longer attainable, the social fabric of societies is destroyed, the environment is despoiled. The label "complex humanitarian emergencies" is now used to refer to such conflicts. Their resolution and redress involves the mobilization of vast amounts of human and fiscal resources over decades.

In its present incarnation, the contemporary state-centric order, including its regional and international institutions, appears increasingly ill-suited for remedying the human security dilemma presented by contemporary conflict. The UN system, at its core, remains devoted to the preservation of the prerogatives of its state members. Similar institutional logic and behaviours prevail at the regional institutional level. States,

concerned to protect their sovereignty, continue to opt for non-interference, rather than action on the part of civilian populations. While there have been movements away from this Westphalian notion of sovereignty throughout the last decade, the emerging alternative strategies and logics do not necessarily appear particularly palatable nor more likely to advance the condition of human security. Thus, in the recent Kosovo conflict, one sees the arguments of humanitarian intervention triumph over the calls for respect of state sovereignty and non-intervention. The result, however, is the employment of a conflict strategy that has even greater destructive consequences for relevant civilian populations (i.e., human security is further degraded) in order to avoid putting at risk the citizens of those states who prosecute the conflict.

The answer to this challenge must lie in altering the representative character of global and regional security institutions. States almost certainly can no longer be regarded as the sole, responsible actors. However, difficult and awkward, elements of civil society will have to be incorporated directly into the security architectures of the future. This is the security dilemma of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the new millennium.

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<sup>1</sup> As quoted in *Cooperation Between the United Nations and Regional Organizations/Arrangements in a Peacekeeping Environment: Suggested Principles and Mechanisms*, March 1999, p. 4/18. Source: <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/lessons/regcoop.htm>

<sup>2</sup> These data are taken from Peter Wallensteen and M. Sollenberg, "After the Cold War: Emerging Patterns of Armed Conflict, 1989-1994," *Journal of Peace Research*, 32, 3, pp. 345-60; and the *SIPRI Yearbook 1999*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, Chapter 1.

<sup>3</sup> Connie Peck, *Sustainable Peace: The Role of the UN and Regional Organizations in Preventing Conflicts*, Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, Lanham MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998, p. 221.