

## WHAT IS THE UNITED NATIONS?

### How the UN Works:

The United Nations was established on 24 October 1945 by 51 countries committed to preserving peace through international cooperation and collective security. Today, nearly every nation in the world belongs to the UN: membership totals 191 countries\*.

When States become Members of the United Nations, they agree to accept the obligations of the UN Charter, an international treaty that sets out basic principles of international relations. According to the Charter, the UN has four purposes: to maintain international peace and security; to develop friendly relations among nations; to cooperate in solving international problems and in promoting respect for human rights; and to be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations.

The United Nations is not a world government and it does not make laws. It does, however, provide the means to help resolve international conflicts and formulate policies on matters affecting all of us. At the UN, all the Member States — large and small, rich and poor, with differing political views and social systems — have a voice and a vote in this process.

The United Nations has six main organs. Five of them — the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council and the Secretariat — are based at UN Headquarters in New York. The sixth, the International Court of Justice, is located at The Hague in the Netherlands.

### The General Assembly

All UN Member States are represented in the General Assembly — a "parliament of nations" which meets to consider the world's most pressing problems. Each Member State has one vote. Decisions on such key issues as international peace and security, admitting new members and the UN budget are decided by two-thirds majority. Other matters are decided by simple majority. In recent years, a special effort has been made to reach decisions through consensus, rather than by taking a formal vote.

At its 2001/2002 session, the Assembly is considering more than 180 different topics, including globalization, AIDS, conflict in Africa, protection of the environment and consolidation of new democracies. The Assembly cannot force action by any State, but its recommendations are an important indication of world opinion and represent the moral authority of the community of nations.

The Assembly holds its annual regular session from September to December. When necessary, it may resume its session or hold a special or emergency session on subjects of particular concern. When the Assembly is not meeting, its work is carried out by its six main committees, other subsidiary bodies and the UN Secretariat.

Each country has a single vote but none of the decisions taken by the Assembly are binding. Nevertheless, the Assembly's decisions become resolutions that carry the weight of world governmental opinion.

## **The Security Council**

The UN Charter gives the Security Council primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. The Council may convene at any time, whenever peace is threatened. Under the Charter, all Member States are obligated to carry out the Council's decisions.

There are 15 Council members. Five of these — China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States — are permanent members. The other 10 are elected by the General Assembly for two-year terms. Member States are discussing making changes in Council membership and working to reflect today's political and economic realities.

Decisions of the Council require nine yes votes. Except in votes on procedural questions, a decision cannot be taken if there is a no vote, or veto, by a permanent member.

When the Council considers a threat to international peace, it first explores ways to settle the dispute peacefully. It may suggest principles for a settlement or undertake mediation. In the event of fighting, the Council tries to secure a ceasefire. It may send a peacekeeping mission to help the parties maintain the truce and to keep opposing forces apart.

The Council can take measures to enforce its decisions. It can impose economic sanctions or order an arms embargo. On rare occasions, the Council has authorized Member States to use "all necessary means," including collective military action, to see that its decisions are carried out.

The Council also makes recommendations to the General Assembly on the appointment of a new Secretary-General and on the admission of new Members to the UN.

## **The Economic and Social Council**

The Economic and Social Council, under the overall authority of the General Assembly, coordinates the economic and social work of the United Nations and the UN family of organizations. As the central forum for discussing international economic and social issues and for formulating policy recommendations, the Council plays a key role in fostering international cooperation for development. It also consults with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), thereby maintaining a vital link between the United Nations and civil society.

The Council has 54 members, elected by the General Assembly for three-year terms. It meets throughout the year and holds a major session in July, during which a special meeting of Ministers discusses major economic, social and humanitarian issues.

The Council's subsidiary bodies meet regularly and report back to it. The Commission on Human Rights, for example, monitors the observance of human rights throughout the world. Other bodies focus on such issues as social development, the status of women, crime prevention, narcotic drugs and environmental protection. Five regional commissions promote economic development and cooperation in their respective regions.

## **The Trusteeship Council**

The Trusteeship Council was established to provide international supervision for 11 Trust Territories administered by seven Member States and ensure that adequate steps were taken to prepare the Territories for self-government or independence. By 1994, all Trust Territories had attained self-government or independence, either as separate States or by joining neighbouring independent countries. The last to do so was the Trust Territory of the

Pacific Islands — Palau — which was administered by the United States and became the 185th Member State.

Its work completed, the Trusteeship Council now consists of the five permanent members of the Security Council. It has amended its rules of procedure to allow it to meet as and when the occasion may require.

### **The International Court of Justice**

The International Court of Justice, also known as the World Court, is the main judicial organ of the UN. Consisting of 15 judges elected jointly by the General Assembly and the Security Council, the Court decides disputes between countries. Participation by States in a proceeding is voluntary, but if a State agrees to participate, it is obligated to comply with the Court's decision. The Court also provides advisory opinions to the General Assembly and the Security Council upon request.

### **The Secretariat**

The Secretariat carries out the substantive and administrative work of the United Nations as directed by the General Assembly, the Security Council and the other organs. At its head is the Secretary-General, who provides overall administrative guidance.

The Secretariat consists of departments and offices with a total staff of some 7,500 under the regular budget, and a nearly equal number under special funding. They are drawn from some 170 countries. Duty stations include UN Headquarters in New York, as well as UN offices in Geneva, Vienna, Nairobi and other locations.

### **The UN system**

The International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and 12 other independent organizations known as "specialized agencies" are linked to the UN through cooperative agreements. These agencies, among them the World Health Organization and the International Civil Aviation Organization, are autonomous bodies created by intergovernmental agreement. They have wide-ranging international responsibilities in the economic, social, cultural, educational, health and related fields. Some of them, like the International Labour Organization and the Universal Postal Union, are older than the UN itself.

In addition, a number of UN offices, programmes and funds — such as the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) — work to improve the economic and social condition of people around the world. They report to the General Assembly or the Economic and Social Council.

All these organizations have their own governing bodies, budgets and secretariats. Together with the United Nations, they are known as the UN family, or the UN system. Together, they provide technical assistance and other forms of practical help in virtually all economic and social areas.

\*Includes Timor-Leste (East Timor) and Switzerland, which became Member States in September 2002.

<http://www.un.org/Overview/brief1.html>

**What does the Security Council do?**

The Security Council is the UN organ primarily responsible for maintaining international peace and security, dealing with crises as they arise. Under the Charter, the Council's decisions are legally binding; Member States are obligated to carry them out.

The Council is made up of 15 members: 10 non-permanent members, periodically elected by all Member States for two-year terms; and five permanent members. The system of voting gives added weight to the permanent members – China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States. Any of these countries can block a proposal by casting a negative vote, even if the other four permanent and all non-permanent members vote in favour. This is called the "veto power".

<http://www.un.org/geninfo/ir/ch1/ch1.htm>

## **IS THE UNITED NATIONS GOOD VALUE FOR THE MONEY?**

**“The UN is faced with a financial and constitutional crisis which must be solved if the Organization is to continue as an effective instrument. The Charter cannot be ignored. Faith cannot be broken. Commitments must be met. Bills must be paid.”**

**--Memorandum sent to the UN by US Representative to the UN Adlai E. Stevenson, 1964**

### **What is the UN doing to ensure its continuing effectiveness?**

In the past few years, the UN has enacted major reforms to enhance its efficiency and effectiveness. These have included appointing an Under-Secretary General for Internal Oversight Services, reducing operating expenses, cutting high-level posts and eliminating some 1,000 positions. The UN regular budget has had zero nominal growth for eight years, followed by a very slight increase for the current biennium – which nevertheless represents a reduction in real terms from the prior period.

The pace of reforms accelerated dramatically during the first term of Secretary-General Kofi Annan (1997-2001), who put in motion the most far-reaching set of reforms ever proposed to the General Assembly. These included:

- Reallocating resources from low priority areas and administrative services to higher priority areas identified by Member States.
- Reducing administrative costs and using the savings for development activities.
- Organizing the UN's work programme into four core areas – peace and security, development, economic and social affairs, and humanitarian affairs – with human rights as a cross-cutting issue.
- Appointing a Deputy Secretary-General to oversee the day-to-day work of the UN and coordinate its reform efforts.
- Creating an Office of Internal Oversight Services, whose work involves audits, evaluations, monitoring, inspections and investigations.
- Establishing a cabinet comprising the UN senior managers to speed decision-making and enhance coordination.
- Undertaking a major reform of personnel aimed at improving management of staff at all levels.

Reform efforts continued in 2002 with a review of all activities of UN departments, as well as such administrative issues as conference servicing and documentation and the process of resource allocation in preparing the UN budget. The aim is to ensure the optimum allocation of available resources by simplifying procedures, reducing redundancies, improving efficiency, modernizing Secretariat functions and discontinuing activities that have outlived their usefulness. The Secretary-General has taken action in all areas of reform under his authority. On other aspects of UN reform, the decisions must come directly from Member States, acting together.

### **How much does the UN cost?**

The regular budget of the UN is some \$1.3 billion per year. It pays for UN activities, staff and

basic infrastructure but not peacekeeping operations, which have a separate budget. All States of the UN are obligated by the Charter – an international treaty – to pay a portion of the budget. Each State's contribution is calculated on the basis of its share of the world economy.

### **How much does the entire UN system spend each year?**

The UN system spends some \$12 billion a year, taking into account the United Nations, UN peacekeeping operations, the programmes and funds, and the specialized agencies, but excluding the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). Just over half of this amount comes from voluntary contributions from the Member States; the rest is received from mandatory assessments on those States.

The United Nations and its agencies, funds and programmes – mainly the UN Development Programme, the World Food Programme, the UN Children's Fund and the UN Population Fund – spend nearly \$6.5 billion a year on operational activities for development, mostly for economic, social and humanitarian programmes to help the world's poorest countries. In addition, the World Bank, the IMF and IFAD provide billions more annually in loans that help to eradicate poverty, foster development and stabilize the world economy.

*World military expenditures – some \$800 billion a year – would pay for the entire UN system for more than 65 years.*

### **How does the UN budget compare with those of other organizations?**

To put in perspective the UN's expenditures – some \$1.3 billion per year for the UN alone and about \$12 billion for the entire UN system – compare them with expenditures by governments and by other bodies:

- The administrative budget of the 15-country European Community amounts to some \$4.5 billion.
- The two states in the U.S. with the smallest budgets – Wyoming and South Dakota – have a budget of more than \$2 billion each.
- The World Health Organization (WHO), which has reduced or eliminated the incidence of a number of diseases worldwide, including smallpox and polio, has an annual budget of \$421 million – about what it cost to build the new American Airlines Center, a basketball/hockey facility in Dallas, Texas.
- The annual budget for the city of Zurich is \$3.1 billion.
- Metropolitan Tokyo's Fire Department has a budget of \$1.8 billion.
- The University of Minnesota has a budget of \$1.9 billion.
- The budget of the New York City Board of Education for fiscal year 2001 was more than \$12.4 billion.

### **How is the UN budget decided?**

UN spending is determined through a rigorous process involving all Member States.

The budget is initially proposed to the General Assembly by the Secretary-General, after careful scrutiny of requests from individual UN departments. It is then analysed by the 16-member Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and by the 34-member

Committee for Programme and Coordination. The Committees' recommendations go to the General Assembly's Administrative and Budgetary Committee, made up of all Member States, which gives the budget further scrutiny. Finally, it is sent to the General Assembly for final review and approval.

Since 1988, the budget has been approved by consensus – a practice that gives countries the leverage to restrain increases.

### **Is the budget growing too fast?**

In real terms – that is, after allowing for inflation and currency fluctuations – the budget has declined significantly over the past decade, despite constant demands from Member States for new programmes and activities.

Since 1994, when the Assembly adopted a two-year budget of just over \$2.6 billion, the Secretariat has been working with the same or a lower level of resources, dropping as low as \$2.5 billion for 1998-1999. Even in actual terms, spending never exceeded 1994-1995 levels, and the budget for 2002-2003 has only now returned to \$2.6 billion – far lower, in real terms, than the 1994-1995 budget, which is estimated at \$3.1 billion at today's costs. The budget for the current biennium represents a 3 per cent reduction in real terms from the budget for 2000-2001.

*The budget for the New York City Board of Education exceeds that of the entire UN system*

### **Who watches spending at the UN?**

Internal controls are in place to ensure that money is spent only for authorized purposes and as efficiently as possible.

- The UN Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts, headed by the UN Controller, is the main control mechanism. Each specialized agency and major programme of the UN system has its own control office.
- The UN Office of Internal Oversight Services, headed by the equivalent of an Inspector General in the United States, reviews UN activities throughout the world and looks into allegations of waste, fraud, abuse and mismanagement. Since its establishment in 1994, the Office has helped the UN save or recover some \$87 million. It reports directly to Member States at the General Assembly, and maintains a confidential hotline to receive information on alleged wrongdoings.
- The Board of External Auditors goes over the accounts. It consists of the Auditor-General of three Member States chosen by the Assembly. Each Auditor-General appoints a staff of auditors who inspect UN offices all over the world.
- The Joint Inspection Unit helps ensure that the activities of the various organizations of the UN system are carried out in the most economical manner and that optimum use is made of resources. The Unit consists of inspectors from 11 nations, appointed by the Assembly. They have broad powers of investigation in all matters bearing on efficiency and the proper use of funds and can make on-the-spot inquiries.

*The UN Internal Oversight Office has helped save or recover some \$87 million since 1994.*

### **How are membership dues calculated?**

The primary criterion applied by Member States, through the General Assembly, is a country's capacity to pay. This is based on estimates of their gross national product (GNP) and a number of adjustments, including for external debt and low per capita incomes. The percentage shares of each Member State in the budget are decided by the General Assembly based on this methodology and range from a minimum of 0.001 per cent to a maximum of 22 per cent, and a maximum of 0.01 per cent from least developed countries. For 2002, the 43 countries contributing at the minimum rate were assessed \$11,104 each. The largest contributor – the United States – was assessed \$283,076,321.

### **Are the dues unfairly distributed?**

Since the assessments are based on gross national product (GNP), richer countries generally pay more and poorer countries less, although there are some exceptions (e.g., Brazil pays more than Liechtenstein even though its per capita income is much lower, because its total GNP is much higher).

Beginning in 1974, the Assembly fixed a maximum rate of 25 per cent for any contributor – later reduced to 22 per cent from 2001. So far, this ceiling has benefited only the United States, whose share of total membership GNP is approximately 27 per cent. Without this ceiling, its share would be even higher since, like other countries with high per capita income, it would have been required to contribute to the cost of reductions for the countries with low per capita income. The rates of other Member States are raised to make up for the difference.

The country with the second-highest assessed contribution is Japan, which was assessed some 19.7 per cent for 2002, or \$218.4 million. The 15 members of the European Union together contribute some 35 per cent of the budget. The scale of contributions is completely reviewed every three years on the basis of the latest national income statistics to ensure that assessments are fair and accurate.

### **Are industrialized countries paying too much?**

When the States contributing to the UN regular budget are ranked by the amount of their contribution, it is clear that a small number of countries are assessed a large share of the costs – reflecting their larger share of world income. If other criteria are used, however, a different picture emerges. If we look at per capita contributions, for example, we see three smaller countries and four Nordic States among the top contributors.

A large share of the money that some major industrialized countries give to the UN system returns to them in terms of the money the UN spends in their countries on materials purchased, salaries and operating expenses. Of the \$3.7 billion in goods and services purchased by the entire UN system in 2000, 64 per cent came from industrialized countries, totalling nearly \$2.4 billion. U.S. companies received \$527 million of this – more than double that of the next largest provider of goods and services, and far more than most Member States.



### **What about unpaid dues?**

The UN has recently emerged from a financial crisis – what happens when Member States do not pay their share of costs for programmes they themselves have mandated. Some countries fail to pay their dues on time due to budgetary technicalities or simple poverty. Others have withheld payments as a way to exert pressure on the UN or to make a political point. No State or private company could function under such conditions, with Member States continuing to ask more and more of the UN, even as dues are withheld.

Efforts on the part of States to meet their arrears have significantly improved the UN's financial situation, but significant arrears remain and the organization's reserves are depleted. At the end of 2001, arrears to the regular budget totalled \$239.6 million – of which \$209.9 million was for the current year. Of the UN's 191 Member States, 54 (some 29 per cent) had not paid their regular budget dues in full, although only 22 were in arrears beyond the current year. Also at the end of 2001, \$43.8 million was owed in arrears relating to the International Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda.

However, when one adds in UN peacekeeping, the total of unpaid assessed contributions leaps to \$2.1 billion, with a staggering \$1.8 billion owed for peacekeeping. Some 38 per cent of this figure – \$690.9 million – represents outstanding contributions by the United States, with \$373 million relating to the current period and \$316.9 to prior periods. Nevertheless, even this situation represents an improvement, and during 2001 the UN was able to reduce its debt to countries – mainly for troops and equipment provided for peacekeeping operations – from some \$1.1 billion to \$800 million.

Clearly, more is needed from Member States in clearing their arrears and meeting their financial obligations in full and on time to restore the UN to financial stability – which alone can ensure its ability to fulfil its many roles with maximum impact and benefit to the people of our planet.

### **What can be done to make Member States fulfill their financial obligations?**

Under the UN Charter (Article 19), a Member State can be deprived of its vote in the General Assembly if its arrears equal or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the previous two years. Various Members have suffered this sanction over the years.

### **Has the UN made the world a better place?**

While some achievements of the UN family are well known, many of them, which benefit people everywhere, are often taken for granted:

- The UN and its agencies have improved the health of millions – immunizing the world's children, fighting malaria and parasitic disease, providing safe drinking water and protecting consumers' health. As a result, longevity and life expectancy have increased worldwide.
- More international law has been developed through the UN in the past five decades than in the entire previous history of humankind.
- UN relief agencies together provide aid and protection to some 25.7 million refugees and displaced persons worldwide.

- The UN in 1948 formulated the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – an historic proclamation of the rights and freedoms to which all men and women are entitled. More than 80 UN treaties protect and promote specific human rights.
- The UN and its agencies, including the World Bank and the UN Development Programme (UNDP), are the premier vehicles for furthering development in poorer countries, providing assistance worth more than \$30 billion a year.
- The UN has helped strengthen the democratic process by assisting elections in nearly 80 countries.
- UNDP is the UN system's principal provider of advice, advocacy and grant support for development. With an annual expenditure of about \$1 billion, UNDP supports many development projects worldwide.
- UN appeals raise over \$1 billion a year for emergency assistance to people affected by war and natural disaster. In 2001 alone, 19 inter-agency appeals raised more than \$1.4 billion to assist 44 million people in 19 countries and regions.
- The World Food Programme – the world's largest food-aid organization – provides about one third of the world's food aid each year.
- The UN was a promoter of the great movement of decolonization, which led to the independence of more than 80 nations.
- Smallpox was eradicated from the world through a campaign coordinated by the World Health Organization (WHO). Another WHO campaign, launched in 1988, aims to eliminate polio worldwide by 2005. In 1998, polio struck some 1,000 people per day in 125 countries. By 2001, there were only 537 cases for the entire year and the disease had been eliminated from all but 10 countries.
- Every year, up to 3 million children's lives are saved by immunization, but almost 3 million more die from preventable diseases. UNICEF, WHO, the World Bank group, private foundations, the pharmaceutical industry and governments have joined in a Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization that aims to reduce that figure to zero.

<http://www.un.org/geninfo/ir/ch5/ch5.htm>

## **Another Perspective on the UN and Money**

### **The U.S. government should**

- withhold all payments to the United Nations until the new secretary-general demonstrates a commitment to reform;
- demand that the United Nations undergo a comprehensive audit and eliminate all programs and agencies that do not meet stringent criteria in terms of mission, organization, and performance;
- withhold all payments to the United Nations until such a comprehensive audit has been completed;
- announce that the United States will unilaterally reduce its contribution to the United Nations by 50 percent once current arrearages are paid in full; and pass legislation that prohibits the participation of U.S. troops in UN military operations.

The United Nations is a miasma of corruption beset by inefficiency, Kafkaesque bureaucracy, and misconceived programs. Numerous diplomatic efforts to encourage UN reform have failed. It is now obvious that the United States must use its financial leverage to force the UN bureaucracy and the arrogant General Assembly to reexamine their practices. The bottom line is that the UN will either be fundamentally reorganized or, in a relatively short time, it will cease to exist.

### **The Unholy Trinity: Waste, Fraud, and Abuse**

After more than a half century, the verdict on the United Nations is in. The data on reform or lack thereof are available for all to see--and they are not a pretty picture. There is abundant evidence that waste, fraud, and abuse are rampant throughout the UN system.

The UN's astronomical personnel costs are one manifestation of the problem. Incredibly lucrative salaries are commonplace at the UN's New York headquarters. The average salary of a midlevel accountant at the UN is \$84,000, compared to \$41,964 for non-UN accountants. A UN computer analyst could expect to receive \$111,500 per year, compared to \$56,835 outside the UN bureaucracy. An assistant secretary-general receives \$140,256; the mayor of New York gets \$130,000.

Salary figures do not reflect the full disparity between UN and non-UN personnel costs, however. Salaries of UN diplomats are tax-free. Salaries of administrative staff include an "assessment" used to offset tax liability in most cases, so many of the staff salaries are tax-free as well. In addition, UN employees receive monthly rent subsidies of up to \$3,800 and annual education grants of up to \$12,675 per child. But such generous compensation does not translate into a productive workforce; former secretary-general Boutros-Ghali told the Washington Post that "perhaps half of the UN work force does nothing useful."

Widespread corruption is also a problem. Nearly \$4 million in cash was stolen from UN offices in Mogadishu, Somalia. Other funds are not stolen outright but are spent for highly questionable purposes. The New York Times, for example, reported that \$15,000 of \$457,000 earmarked for a two-week conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island States was spent flying representatives "of a national liberation movement recognized by the Organization of African

Unity" to the conference. "In fact," the Times disclosed, "the movement was the Polisario from the Western Sahara, a desert region conspicuously short of small islands."

### **The Accountability Problem and Failed Attempts to Restore Responsibility**

At the heart of the UN's problem is an almost total lack of accountability. Former U.S. attorney general Richard Thornburgh's 1993 report on UN mismanagement, along with subsequent investigations, charged that UN budgets, formed behind closed doors, are shrouded in secrecy. In addition, the actual performance of the myriad bureaucracies is rarely measured against criteria established at program inception. There is no way to tell whether the various, often overlapping agencies--for example, at least two dozen are involved in food and agriculture programs--are meeting their stated objectives.

Theoretically, the lack of accountability could in some ways be addressed by a comprehensive audit. Boutros-Ghali long resisted such an investigation, and, in fact, he reportedly had the Thornburgh report literally burned. Not until April 1994, when an impatient U.S. Congress demanded reform and threatened to withhold \$420 million of the U.S. assessment from the UN coffers, was an independent inspector general--German diplomat Karl Paschke--named.

Paschke was short on funds, staff, and time. His independence was compromised when Boutros-Ghali inserted a "service at the pleasure of the Secretary-General clause" in his contract, which meant that Boutros-Ghali could dismiss him for virtually any reason. Nonetheless, Paschke produced an interim report in seven months--the first attempt at cost accounting at the United Nations in 50 years--which revealed, not surprisingly, that UN finances were a mess.

The new inspector general's first swipe at the Augean stables revealed some \$16.8 million in outright fraud and waste. The report documented numerous examples, including the following:

- In Somalia, \$369,000 was paid for fuel distribution services the contractor never provided.
- A project director of the UN Relief and Works Agency, which helps Palestinian refugees, kept \$100,000 of agency money in his private bank account and failed to disclose a personal stake in the irrigation project under way.
- In Nairobi, a member of the UN Center for Human Settlements arranged loans worth \$98,000 for a company of which she had been a partner and with whose director she was "closely associated."

By the time his report was out, however, Paschke had become part of the problem instead of part of the solution. His report contained the usual critique of poor management practices and abysmal personnel policy. But Paschke's overall conclusions proved more disturbing to the cause of real reform than any of his velvet-glove criticisms.

He said, "I have not found the UN to be a more corrupt organization, an organization that shows more fraud than any other comparable public organization." Members of Congress had hoped for an inspector general who would prove to be a junkyard dog, but U.S. ambassador to the United Nations Madeleine Albright--no UN basher--summed it up when she said that Paschke

had thus far proved to be a "junkyard puppy." In short, the inspector general's effort devolved into a typical UN exercise in deflecting criticism without addressing the problems.

### **The New Secretary-General**

Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the controversial secretary-general of the UN, was perhaps the foremost symbol of the problems associated with waste, fraud, and corruption at the UN, as well as one of the biggest obstacles to injecting accountability into the UN system. Instead of working to solve the UN's institutional problems, he thwarted U.S. efforts to do so.

At the same time, Boutros-Ghali was an aggressive proponent of expanding the mandate of the United Nations. In *Agenda for Peace*, his ambitious outline for the United Nations in the post-Cold War era, Boutros-Ghali called for the creation of a standing UN army. He was also one of the strongest advocates of the disastrous "nation-building" mission in Somalia.

There is some hope that with the election of Kofi Annan, the United Nations will no longer be run by a secretary-general who ignores or exacerbates the organization's deep-seated institutional problems while also trying to expand its mandate. Nevertheless, Congress should not casually assume that an era of reform has arrived. It should continue to withhold funds until Annan's promises of change result in meaningful deeds.

### **Power and the Purse**

Until the mid-1950s the United States enjoyed the support of a majority of the 51-member General Assembly. That margin vanished forever when a momentary thaw in U.S.-Soviet relations after Stalin's death allowed the admission of 20 new members. Five years later the General Assembly had 82 members, nearly all former colonies of the European powers. By 1970 the number had jumped to 108; by 1980 it was 136; and by 1995 the General Assembly had a total of 185 member-states, each with one vote.

The vastly expanded General Assembly was soon dominated by non-Western states whose elites seldom shared the political culture of the democratic West. Despite their diverse interests, logrolling among UN members has historically resulted in General Assembly votes having a distinctly anti-American cast.

The Third World-dominated General Assembly also approves numerous programs and projects for which the vast majority of member-states contribute only a minuscule portion of the funding. In 1992, for example, the United States was assessed 25 percent of the general UN operating budget, while 79 member-states each paid 0.01 percent of the budget--the minimum allowed. And another 9 each chipped in 0.02 percent. That means that a majority of the voting members of the General Assembly contribute less than 1 percent of the UN's general budget, while 14 members contribute 84 percent. A similar pattern is evident in the peacekeeping budget, to which the United States contributes 31 percent of the total.

That fundamental disconnect between power and purse is at the root of many of the UN's greatest problems. There is little hope of curtailing the proliferation of agencies and

bureaucracy or significantly reducing corruption until the UN's major contributors wield more influence over the budget.

### **UN Military Operations**

The United Nations is ill-equipped to conduct military operations. It has no general military staff--and therefore is incapable of integrating command-control-communications and intelligence with a planning function. There is no unified command. Personnel from different countries who serve in UN military missions do not reflect the same training and standards and judgment when it comes to putting people's lives in danger.

It should come as no surprise, then, that the UN's record in peacekeeping is a chronicle of failure. Operational ineptitude is only one problem. Perhaps the greater problem is the tendency of the United Nations to become a party to the conflict rather than to preserve its impartiality. In Somalia, the United Nations ended up on a manhunt for Mohammed Farah Aideed, the leader of one of the two main factions in the civil war. In Bosnia, the UN Protection Force was for all practical purposes at war with the Bosnian Serbs.

Under no circumstances should U.S. troops participate in UN military operations. In most cases, American participation in UN missions will not advance U.S. vital interests. Conversely, in the event that U.S. vital interests are at stake, allowing the United Nations to be involved in (much less lead) a military operation could have disastrous consequences.

### **Toward Constructive Internationalism**

The United Nations can serve a modestly useful purpose. It is a valuable forum for international diplomacy, crisis management, and mediation. The UN also performs some important work in the humanitarian and assistance areas--although private organizations perform the same work more cost-effectively, since personnel costs account for 70 percent of UN operating expenses.

Without drastic reform, however, the United Nations will probably not exist for long. Rep. Joe Scarborough (R-Fla.) introduced legislation in the 104th Congress that would rescind the UN Participation Act, leading to the withdrawal of the United States from the United Nations and the relocation of the UN outside the United States. Although the measure did not become law, there was a surprising level of support both in Congress and among the general public for the initiative.

History has proven time and again that the United Nations will not reform willingly. The only way the United Nations will engage in meaningful reform is if the United States uses its financial leverage. Congress needs to make clear to the United Nations that reforms must be forthcoming, and that it is prepared to put the United Nations into bankruptcy, if necessary, to force reform.

The use of such leverage, if joined with a Herculean effort to clean the Augean stables, would provide the foundation for a return to productive internationalism. The alternative is the end of the United Nations.

**Suggested Readings**

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*--Prepared by Stefan Halper*

<http://www.cato.org/pubs/handbook/hb105-51.html>

### **Why do we need a United Nations?**

- It is often said that if we did not have the United Nations, it would have to be invented.
- In a world plagued by conflict, the UN permits instant consultations among Governments and provides the forum for dealing with long-term problems.
- The UN is a catalyst for action on major global issues, such as the environment and drugs, and provides the best mechanism available to mobilize and sustain international cooperation to tackle these issues.
- The UN and its agencies help build economies and stabilize financial markets. They help eradicate disease, expand food production and increase longevity.
- They protect refugees, deliver food aid and respond quickly to natural disasters. The UN and its agencies protect vulnerable groups, like children, refugees, displaced persons, minorities, indigenous people and the disabled.
- The UN and its agencies provide the machinery for setting the technical and legal standards in vital areas of global interaction from air safety standards to human rights.
- No organization in the world is better suited to pursue these goals, because no other possesses the UN's universality and legitimacy.

### **Has the UN made the world a better place?**

While some of the achievements of the UN family are well known, many of them, benefiting people everywhere, are often taken for granted:

The UN and its agencies have improved the health of millions – immunizing the world's children, fighting malaria and parasitic disease, providing safe drinking water, protecting consumers' health. As a result, longevity and life expectancy have increased all over the world.

More international law has been developed through the UN in the past five decades than in the entire previous history of humankind.

UN relief agencies help to aid and protect more than 25 million refugees and displaced persons throughout the world.

The UN formulated in 1948 the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – an historic proclamation of the rights and freedoms to which all men and women are entitled. Over 80 UN human rights treaties protect and promote specific rights.

The UN and its agencies, including the World Bank and the UN Development Programme (UNDP), are the premier vehicles for furthering development in poorer countries, providing assistance worth over \$25 billion a year.

The UN has helped strengthen the democratic process by assisting elections in over 70 countries.

UNDP is the world's largest international provider of grants for development: with an annual budget of about \$1 billion, it supports thousands of development projects throughout the world, generating additional private and public investment worth some \$9 billion.



UN appeals raise over \$1 billion a year for emergency assistance to people affected by war and natural disaster.

The World Food Programme – the world's largest food-aid organization – provides about one third of the world's food aid each year.

The UN was a promoter of the great movement of decolonization, which led to the independence of more than 80 nations.

Smallpox was eradicated from the world through a campaign coordinated by the World Health Organization (WHO). Another WHO campaign has eliminated poliomyelitis from the Americas – a major step towards eradicating the disease worldwide by the end of 2000.

<http://www.weblearn.ca/teachersite/UNPeacekeeping/Readings/histformation.htm>

### **WHAT THE UN DOES FOR PEACE**

Preserving world peace is a central purpose of the United Nations. Under the Charter, Member States agree to settle disputes by peaceful means and refrain from threatening or using force against other States.

Over the years, the UN has played a major role in helping defuse international crises and in resolving protracted conflicts. It has undertaken complex operations involving peacemaking, peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance. It has worked to prevent conflicts from breaking out. And after a conflict, it has increasingly undertaken action to address the root causes of war and lay the foundation for durable peace.

UN efforts have produced dramatic results. The UN helped defuse the Cuban missile crisis in 1962 and the Middle East crisis in 1973. In 1988, a UN-sponsored peace settlement ended the Iran-Iraq war, and the following year UN-sponsored negotiations led to the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. In the 1990s, the UN was instrumental in restoring sovereignty to Kuwait and played a major role in ending civil wars in Cambodia, El Salvador, Guatemala and Mozambique, restoring the democratically elected government in Haiti, and resolving or containing conflict in various other countries.

When, in September 1999, a campaign of violence forced some 200,000 East Timorese to flee their homes following a vote on self-determination, the UN authorized the dispatch of an international security force, which helped restore order. In October, the Council established a UN Transitional Administration which, with the protection of the multinational force, began overseeing the territory's transition to independence. And when terrorists attacked the United States on 11 September 2001, the Security Council acted quickly – adopting a wide-ranging resolution which obligates States to ensure that any person who participates in financing, planning, preparing, perpetrating or supporting terrorist acts is brought to justice, as well as to establish such acts as serious criminal offences under domestic law.

**Disarmament**

Halting the spread of arms and reducing and eventually eliminating all weapons of mass destruction are major goals of the United Nations. The UN has been an ongoing forum for disarmament negotiations, making recommendations and initiating studies. It supports multilateral negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament and in other international bodies. These negotiations have produced such agreements as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (1968), the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (1996) and treaties establishing nuclear-free zones.

Other treaties prohibit the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons (1992) and bacteriological weapons (1972); ban nuclear weapons from the seabed and ocean floor (1971) and outer space (1967); and ban or restrict other types of weapons. By 2001, more than 120 countries had become parties to the 1997 Ottawa Convention outlawing landmines. The UN encourages all nations to adhere to this and other treaties banning destructive weapons of war. The UN is also supporting efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons — the weapons of choice in 46 of 49 major conflicts since 1990. The UN Register of Conventional Arms and the system for standardized reporting of military expenditures help promote greater transparency in military matters.

The Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency, through a system of safeguards agreements, ensures that nuclear materials and equipment intended for peaceful uses are not diverted for military purposes. And in The Hague, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons collects information on chemical facilities worldwide and conducts routine inspections to ensure adherence to the chemical weapons convention.

**Peacemaking**

UN peacemaking brings hostile parties to agreement through diplomatic means. The Security Council, in its efforts to maintain international peace and security, may recommend ways to avoid conflict or restore or secure peace — through negotiation, for example, or recourse to the International Court of Justice.

The Secretary-General plays an important role in peacemaking. The Secretary-General may bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter that appears to threaten international peace and security, use good offices to carry out mediation or exercise quiet diplomacy behind the scenes — either personally or through special envoys. The Secretary-General also undertakes preventive diplomacy aimed at resolving disputes before they escalate.

**Peace-building**

The UN is increasingly undertaking activities that address the underlying causes of conflict.

Development assistance is a key element of peace-building. In cooperation with UN agencies, donor countries, host governments and NGOs, the United Nations works to support good governance, civil law and order, elections and human rights in countries struggling to deal with

the aftermath of conflict. At the same time, it helps these countries rebuild administrative, health, educational and other services disrupted by war.

Some of these activities, such as the UN's supervision of the 1989 elections in Namibia, mine-clearance programmes in Mozambique and police training in Haiti, take place within the framework of a UN peacekeeping operation and may continue when the operation withdraws. Others are requested by governments — as in Cambodia, where the UN maintains a human rights office, or in Guatemala, where the UN is helping to implement peace agreements which affect virtually all aspects of national life.

### **Peacekeeping**

The Security Council sets up UN peacekeeping operations and defines their scope and mandate in its efforts to maintain peace and international security. Most operations involve military duties, such as observing a ceasefire or establishing a buffer zone while negotiators seek a long-term solution. Others may require civilian police or other civilian personnel to help organize elections or monitor human rights. Operations have also been deployed to monitor peace agreements in cooperation with the peacekeeping forces of regional organizations.

Peacekeeping operations may last for a few months or continue for many years. The UN's operation at the ceasefire line between India and Pakistan in the State of Jammu and Kashmir, for example, was established in 1949, and UN peacekeepers have been in Cyprus since 1964. In contrast, the UN was able to complete its 1994 mission in the Aouzou Strip between Libya and Chad in a little over a month.

Since the UN first deployed peacekeepers in 1948, some 123 countries have voluntarily provided more than 750,000 military and civilian police personnel. They have served, along with thousands of civilians, in 54 peacekeeping operations.

<http://www.un.org/Overview/brief2.html>

## United Nations Millennium Declaration The Goals

*Adopted by 147 Heads of State and government and other world leaders meeting at UN Headquarters in September 2000, the Millennium Declaration sets the agenda for a new era.*

Based on the Millennium Declaration, the Member States of the United Nations have joined to set goals in the areas of peace, security and disarmament; development; protecting the environment; human rights, democracy and good government; protecting the vulnerable; meeting the special needs of Africa; and strengthening the UN.

Following are some of the agreed goals relating to the Millennium Declaration:

### **Peace, security and disarmament**

- **International rule of law** — Strengthen compliance with International Court of Justice and UN Charter; take concerted action against terrorism; redouble efforts to counter world drug problem, transnational crime;
- **UN and armed conflict** — Give UN the resources needed for conflict-prevention, dispute-resolution, peacekeeping, peace-building and reconstruction; strengthen cooperation with regional bodies;
- **Disarmament** — Strive to eliminate weapons of mass destruction; call on States to consider acceding to Landmines Convention; end illicit traffic in small arms, light weapons

### **Protecting our common environment**

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions; intensify efforts for sustainable development of forests; press for full implementation of conventions on biological diversity and desertification; stop unsustainable exploitation of water resources, ensuring equitable access and adequate supply; intensify collective efforts to reduce the number and effects of natural and man-made disasters; ensure free access to information on the human genome

### **Human rights, democracy, good governance**

- Uphold the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; strive for protection of civil, political, economic, social, cultural rights for all; strengthen States' capacity to implement principles and practices of democracy and human rights; combat violence against women, and implement the UN Convention on eliminating discrimination against women.
- Take measures to protect migrants, migrant workers and their families, to eliminate acts of racism and xenophobia, and to promote greater harmony and tolerance; work collectively for more inclusive political processes; ensure freedom of the media and the public's right of access to information

### **Protecting the vulnerable**

- Expand protection of civilians in complex emergencies and strengthen burden-sharing in assistance to refugee host countries; help all refugees and displaced persons return voluntarily in safety; encourage full implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its protocols on armed conflict, child prostitution and pornography

### **Meeting the special needs of Africa**

- Full support for political and institutional structures of emerging democracies and for regional and subregional mechanisms to prevent conflict and promote stability; ensure reliable flow of resources for peacekeeping
- Take special measures for poverty eradication, sustainable development, including debt cancellation, improved market access, enhanced official development assistance, increased foreign direct investment and technology transfers; help build up Africa's capacity to tackle HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases

### **Strengthening the United Nations**

- Reaffirm the role of the General Assembly as the UN's chief deliberative, policy-making organ; intensify efforts for Security Council reform; further strengthen the Economic and Social Council, strengthen the International Court of Justice
- Encourage regular consultations and coordination among the principal UN organs; ensure that the UN is provided, on a timely, predictable basis, with the resources it needs to carry out its mandate; urge the Secretariat to make best use of resources by adopting the best management practices and technologies available; promote adherence to the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel
- Ensure greater policy coherence and cooperation between the UN, its agencies, the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and other multilateral bodies; further strengthen cooperation with the Inter-Parliamentary Union; give greater opportunities to the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society in general to contribute to UN goals and programmes

<http://www.un.org/geninfo/ir/index.html>

## CANADA AND THE UNITED NATIONS

### Importance of the UN

The United Nations is the only multilateral organization whose membership approaches universality and whose agenda encompasses all areas of human activity, in every region of the world. It is also the forum in which grievances are aired and, with member state consensus, resolved. The UN's ability to live up to its founders' ideals, and to its potential, is almost exclusively determined by the 188 countries that collectively constitute the United Nations. Our successes are its successes; our failures, its failures. This organization can only accomplish what its member states allow it to. That is why it is so important to Canada.

The UN's basic purposes and its other underlying principles have guided Canadian foreign and defence policy from the outset. Over the past half-century, Canada has made a significant, constructive and sustained contribution in all areas of UN activity: peace and security, development assistance, human rights, and social, economic and environmental affairs.

As the cornerstone of a rules-based international system, the UN is a vital forum through which we have sought to influence world affairs, to defend our security and sovereignty within a stable global framework, to promote our trade and economic interests, and to protect and project Canadian values such as fairness, equal opportunity and respect for human rights.

The promotion of human rights and justice, the prevention and abatement of environmental degradation, the alleviation of poverty, and the promotion of development and human security on a global basis - these can be achieved only through multilateral discussion and negotiation. The sole global forum available is the UN. It is therefore no surprise that support for the UN is deeply entrenched throughout Canadian society.

The UN remains as relevant to Canada today as it was in 1945, if not more so. The 1995 Foreign Policy White Paper, *Canada and the World*, put it unambiguously:

*The UN continues to be the key vehicle for pursuing Canada's global security objectives. Canada can best move toward its global security priorities by working with other member states. The success of the UN is fundamental, therefore, to Canada's future security.*

### Individual Contributions--Lester B. Pearson

Individual Canadians have taken major roles within the UN, and many of its great accomplishments have had a Canadian dimension. Perhaps no Canadian played a greater role in the UN than did Lester B. Pearson. Pearson believed that Canada had a responsibility and indeed, a vital national interest, in active participation in any international activity that would lessen the chances of another world war. As such, Pearson was a strong advocate of the UN's role in peacekeeping and in strong Canadian involvement in UN peacekeeping operations. Through his involvement in early UN conflict solving, both he and Canada emerged with distinction. Canada's initial contribution dates back to 1944 under the influence of Pearson, Canada's then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

From August 21 - October 7, 1944 the four great powers (USA, UK, USSR, China) met at

Dumbarton Oaks in Washington D.C. to draw up concrete plans to establish a formal United Nations Organization, including outlining the aims, structure and functioning of the organization.

Canada's involvement in the process really began once the concrete planning process started at Dumbarton Oaks. While Canada was not an official participant at Dumbarton Oaks, Pearson was extremely active in making Canada's views known informally to both the British and American representatives in Washington. "Our duty at the Legation was to maintain close touch with these talks in order to make the Canadian position known on points of concern..., in the hope that this would avoid, or at least reduce, public differences and disputes later at (San Francisco)..."

Both at Dumbarton Oaks and subsequently in San Francisco, Canada and Pearson fought strongly against the veto and for "narrowing the gap between the rights and obligations of the great and lesser powers... so as to make it a more effective instrument for the maintenance of peace and for peaceful change." More specifically, Canada was concerned that "nothing should be done to make, or appear to make, three or four powers controllers of the world's destiny, with all the others, without distinction, grouped together as 'other members of the UN'." Canada advocated strongly that, while each of the five great powers (USA, UK, USSR, China, France) should have a special position of permanent membership in the UN with special power and responsibility, it should not be an exclusive position. Other members needed to be recognized too.

Pearson, personally, was "most concerned over the proposals that dealt with the organization of security and with measures to prevent and defeat aggression", those items which became the core of the UN Charter.

"Of the international issues with which I was involved during my war years in Washington, ... the most important of all was the question of how to make a just and lasting peace and create a United Nations organization to maintain and strengthen it." "I was certain that if we made no progress in drawing up the blue-prints for a new world order when the agony of war and the unity of purpose in a common struggle were drawing us together, we would find it far more difficult to do this later when nationalist prides and prejudices would become strong again and narrow concepts of national interest prevail."

Other Canadians have made significant contributions to the UN. For example, John Peters Humphrey was the principal author of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, proclaimed on December 10, 1948. Maurice Strong chaired both the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, in Stockholm, and the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, in Rio de Janeiro, serving as well as founding Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme.

Canadians have occupied key positions within the United Nations system, including the presidency of the General Assembly (Lester B. Pearson, 1952 - 53); and in January 1998 a Canadian, Louise Fréchette, was appointed the first-ever UN Deputy Secretary-General.

## Canada's Contribution

Canada has participated in virtually every major UN peacekeeping operation. The UN remains a vital instrument through which Canadians and others are working to bolster human security by ridding the world of anti-personnel mines, halting the traffic in military small arms or putting an end to the conscription of children as soldiers. Most recently, Canada chaired the negotiations leading Court, thereby helping to end impunity for war criminals.

Canada has six times been elected to the powerful UN Security Council, serving terms in 1948-49, 1958-59, 1967-68, 1977-78, 1989-90 and again in 1999-2000. During its most recent tenure on the Council, Canada's priorities revolved around issues of human security, such as the protection of civilians in armed conflict, war-affected children, conflict prevention, peacebuilding, mass refugee flows, illicit small arms trafficking, gross human rights abuses, and failures of governance and the rule of law.

Canada is a member of many of the UN specialized agencies, including the International Civil Aviation Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Health Organization and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. It also supports and is active in the work of the International Monetary Fund, the UN Development Programme, the World Food Programme, the UN Environment Programme and other bodies.

Canada has seven diplomatic missions accredited to the UN. The New York mission is responsible for overall relations with the United Nations and member countries, including the Security Council and the Peacekeeping Operations Unit. The Geneva mission is responsible for relations with the UN offices in Geneva, including the High Commissioner for Refugees, the Human Rights Commission and the Conference on Disarmament. The Montréal mission is responsible for relations with the International Civil Aviation Organization. The Nairobi mission is responsible for relations with the Centre for Human Settlements and the UN Environment Programme. The Paris mission is responsible for relations with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The Rome mission is responsible for relations with the Food and Agriculture Organization. Last, the Vienna mission is responsible for relations with the UN offices in Vienna, including the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Public opinion surveys consistently show that Canadians have a high regard for the UN. In fact, 90 percent of Canadians in a recent poll said that Canada should continue to put a high priority on its role in the UN. The United Nations has demonstrated the ability to adapt, institutionally and operationally, as new issues have emerged and as relations between countries continue to evolve. The United Nations remains crucial to Canada and, we believe, essential to the conduct of diplomacy in an ever more inter-dependent world. It is a precious resource that we are committed to preserving.

In 1999, Canada was the seventh-largest contributor to the UN budget, after the United States, Japan, Germany, France, the United Kingdom and Italy. Our share amounted to US\$28.6 million, or 2.754 percent of the UN's budget for that year. We always pay our annual assessed contributions in full, on time and without condition.



## Peacekeeping

Since its beginnings in 1956, peacekeeping has become an integral and high profile component of UN operations. Since 1957, when Lester B. Pearson was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his leadership in developing the concept of peacekeeping, Canadians have felt a commitment to peacekeeping and have accepted frequent requests to join the Blue Berets in operations around the world. Canada's commitment to peacekeeping is recognized throughout the world. Our commitment to peacekeeping is unusual in that Canadians have served in almost every UN-sponsored peacekeeping initiative.

Over 120,000 men and women have served in close to 50 different operations ranging from truce observance to the supervision of elections. One hundred and thirteen Canadians have given their lives while serving on UN peacekeeping missions. Canadian personnel have traveled to the far-flung corners of the globe -- from Afghanistan to Zaire -- and have helped to resolve many complex disputes.

Although in its early years the United Nations did deploy some observer missions, the term "peacekeeping" did not enter the popular lexicon until 1956. The eruption of conflict in the Middle East, specifically between Egypt and Israel, prompted Lester B. Pearson to propose the deployment of an international force under the UN flag.

Since that time there have been over 50 United Nations peacekeeping missions. Each time the challenge has been different and, over time and as a result of these different experiences, the concept of peacekeeping has evolved.

In his 1992 report to the Security Council entitled *An Agenda for Peace*, former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali defined peacekeeping as:

*... the deployment of a United Nations presence in the field, hitherto with the consent of all the parties concerned, normally involving United Nations military and/or police personnel and frequently civilians as well. Peacekeeping is a technique that expands the possibilities for both the prevention of conflict and the making of peace.*

While peacekeepers come from all branches of the Canadian Forces (Army, Navy and Air Force), the Army has provided the vast majority because of the nature of the tasks involved. More recently, thousands of men and women from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Elections Canada, the Canadian Red Cross and other governmental and non-governmental agencies based in Canada have served in peacekeeping missions.

Canada is one of a select group of countries to which the UN regularly turns when it requires valued peacekeeping advice and when it wants expert military contributions. The Canadian Forces have the well-earned reputation of being professional, well-trained and highly motivated, with a vast reservoir of knowledge and experience upon which to draw when faced with critical situations.

## Choosing to Serve

To react as quickly as possible to a UN request in time of crisis, Canada takes part in the UN Standby Arrangements System, indicating to the UN which types of Canadian units could be

readily available for a peace support mission. Under the Standby Arrangements, the deployment of troops remains the choice of the member state and if a member state does not wish to be involved in a particular mission there is no obligation.

The decision to establish a United Nations peacekeeping force is usually made, in the first instance, by the UN Security Council. Since the United Nations has no armed forces of its own, the Secretary-General must ask member states to provide specific forces for each operation. The Standby Arrangements System is designed to assist the Secretary-General at this stage of the peacekeeping mission.

A Canadian decision to make a contribution includes consideration of whether:

- there is a clear, achievable mandate from a competent political authority like the Security Council;
- the parties to the conflict have accepted the presence of a UN peacekeeping operation and the participation of Canadian troops within that operation;
- the peacekeeping operation is taking place against the backdrop of a process aimed at achieving a political settlement to the conflict;
- the number of troops and the international composition of the operation are suited to the mandate;
- the operation is adequately funded and has a satisfactory logistical structure;
- a Canadian contribution would be compatible with Canada's overall political relations with the country or region concerned; and
- Canada has the capacity given its existing multilateral engagements.

If the request is for a military contribution, the Department of National Defence assesses the availability of personnel and the Canadian capacity to fulfil the proposed requirements. If civilian police officers are requested, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and other police forces make a similar calculation. If the request involves monitoring elections, Elections Canada is consulted. Canada has a strong desire to help the UN whenever possible. Nonetheless, resource constraints compel Canada to make choices about which operations to support and how to support them. On only a few carefully selected occasions is Canada able to contribute complete military units.

While diplomats and public service professionals in various government departments work out many of the details, the final decision about Canadian participation in a peacekeeping mission is made by the Prime Minister and Cabinet. There is no legal requirement for Parliament to approve Canadian participation in a peacekeeping mission. However, Parliamentary committees closely follow foreign and defence policy issues and, in recent years, the House of Commons has held a series of debates on peacekeeping missions.

Like other UN member states, Canada pays its assessed contributions to all peacekeeping operations irrespective of Canadian participation in any particular operation. When Canada participates in a peacekeeping operation, the costs of Canadian personnel and equipment are higher than the reimbursements provided by the UN. The Canadian government meets these additional costs. This additional investment ensures that Canadian soldiers and civilians are adequately equipped and their lives are not jeopardized.

The decision to participate in a peacekeeping mission is only the beginning of Canadian

Government involvement in the area of conflict. UN peacekeeping operations are given mandates of limited duration and involve regular reporting back to the UN. Canadian peacekeepers also report back to the appropriate government departments and keep Ottawa informed about the often changing situation in the conflict area. Often mandates expire after six months and are assessed by the UN Security Council before being renewed or concluded.

Consequently, Canadian participation in peacekeeping missions is reviewed on a regular basis and military and civilian involvement is either renewed or withdrawn. Throughout the duration of the missions, Canadian officials monitor Canadian military and civilian participation and all decisions concerning Canadians remains the responsibility of the Government of Canada.

Since the earliest peacekeeping missions, the presence of the blue helmet has served as a reminder of the United Nations' commitment to preserving peace. With the full support and moral weight of the international community behind them, Canadian peacekeeping forces of the United Nations can and do make a difference.

When the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded in 1988 to UN Peacekeeping Forces, it was the eighth time this honor was bestowed on a UN initiative. As Canadians have always been at the forefront of UN peacekeeping, the Government of Canada acknowledged this honor by sponsoring the creation of a peacekeeping monument in the heart of the nation's capital.

This fitting tribute was dedicated to remind future generations of the need to promote international peace and security, and to inspire pride in Canada's great peacekeeping heritage. Perhaps by sheer coincidence, this monument somehow also seems to speak to the very heart of what it means, and how it feels to be Canadian. Nowhere is it felt more strongly, than in the hearts and minds of Canadians on UN peacekeeping missions in troubled spots around the globe.

In 1994, Canada established the "Lester B. Pearson Canadian International Peacekeeping Training Centre" in Cornwallis, Nova Scotia. The Centre offers instruction in the theoretical foundations of peacekeeping, as well as its more practical aspects.

### **Peacebuilding and Human Security**

Canada's traditional role as a peacekeeper is today being complemented by our leadership in responding to two of the most significant challenges we face in the post-cold war world: peacebuilding, or building sustainable peace in countries prone to recurring cycles of violence; and human security, or promoting the safety and security of people.

Canada was one of the first countries to promote the concept of peacebuilding in 1996, when it launched the Canadian Peacebuilding Initiative. A key goal of the Peacebuilding Initiative is to improve co-ordination among international actors. This involves strengthening the UN's capacity to prevent conflict, to respond rapidly when conflict erupts and to provide for post-conflict reconstruction.

Canada believes that promoting human security is an important dimension of the UN's role. One of the human security initiatives launched by Canada at the UN is our effort to enhance the protection of civilians in armed conflict. Under Canada's presidency in February 1999, the

Security Council debated this issue and called on the Secretary-General to prepare a report. Issued in September, the report contains concrete recommendations for protecting civilians in conflict situations. Canada and other countries are now working toward implementation of the recommendations.

### **Human Rights**

Since the end of the Second World War, Canada has been a consistently strong voice in the world's councils for the protection of human rights and the defence of democratic values. From the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights over 50 years ago through actions taken in a vast range of forums and circumstances, Canada has always been there.

Canada is an active participant in the annual meetings of the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, and it regularly co-sponsors a number of resolutions. Sometimes these are on specific countries where the human rights situation is particularly serious. They may also be on issues Canada feels strongly about, such as violence against women, freedom of expression or impunity.

Canada also played a significant role in establishing the International Criminal Court. It actively took part in the preparatory discussions and chaired the June 1998 international negotiating conference. Canada's contribution helped bring about an international court in which to try cases of genocide, crimes against humanity and other war crimes.

Canada plays a major role as well in the preparation, debates and follow-up of various UN world conferences concerned with human rights - for example, the 1993 Vienna World Conference on Human Rights and the upcoming 2001 Conference on Racism.

As a signatory of all the principal UN treaties on international human rights, Canada regularly submits its human rights record to review by UN monitoring bodies.

By working through the Canadian International Development Agency, via bilateral assistance as well as participation in the UN funds, programmes and special institutions, Canada continues to help societies build human rights capacity through strengthening the electoral process, the judicial system, legislatures and independent media.

<http://www.weblearn.ca/teachersite/UNPeacekeeping/Readings/histformation.htm>