ENSURING PEACE : THE FUTURE OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Address by Senator the Hon Gareth Evans QC, Minister for Foreign Affairs, to the Australian College of Defence and Strategic Studies, Canberra, 16 March 1995

The failings of the United Nations have been a faithful standby for the world's media for many years. Slow news days can always be enlivened with tales of UN incompetence and profligacy. If all else fails, the time devoted by the General Assembly to debating arcane or politically unpalatable resolutions is usually good for some knockabout editorial fun. Media attention and criticism of this sort has focused even more closely on the organisation over the past year in the lead-up to the fiftieth anniversary of its founding.

The past year has also brought a new edge to the criticisms, revealing in the starkest terms new challenges to the UN's effectiveness in promoting and protecting international peace and security. This is perhaps the UN's most centrally important responsibility, its historical *raison d'etre*, and the evidence now accumulating about its difficulties in discharging that responsibility is disturbing.

Images of blue helmets unable to prevent fighting, or confined to the role of onlookers in the face of horrific abuses of human rights, have become all too familiar. One such image, which sums up what is most troubling about the UN's role in these tragedies, is a photograph carried recently by *Newsweek* in an article on Bosnia. There, on a street in Sarajevo, lying in his own blood, is the body of a seven year old boy, the victim of a sniper. Beside him stand two distraught UN peace keepers, disbelief, helplessness and shock written on their faces. Then there were those pictures, in last month's withdrawal of the remaining UN forces in Somalia, of soldiers evacuated from a beach - firing back at the Somali people they had come to help just twenty months before.

The experiences of Somalia, Bosnia and Rwanda have inevitably had a corrosive effect on public attitudes to the United Nations. The criticisms they generate are, of course, unfair to some degree. They ignore the humanitarian benefits of UN operations in those countries - not least in Somalia, where hundreds of thousands of lives were undoubtedly saved. They ignore the very real successes the UN has had in recent peace keeping exercises in Mozambique, Namibia, Cambodia and El Salvador. They ignore its vital work in the so-called "silent emergencies" of poverty and deprivation - all its extensive programs of economic and social development. And they ignore the significant political and resource constraints under which the organisation must operate - the reality, after all, is that the UN can do no more than its member states allow it to do or give it resources to do. But, however unfair, the images of an organisation unable to meet its primary goal are giving fresh ammunition to the UN's

critics, both in the West, including in the now Republican-dominated US Congress, but also in the developing world. The need for the UN to find answers to these problems is crucial if it is to maintain the wide political support which is essential to its operations.

A characteristic of these new problems is that they are overwhelmingly to do with **intra-state** conflict, rather than with conflict between states. The statistics are remarkable. In the most recent compilation I have seen, no less than 79 of the 82 armed conflicts which occurred around the world between 1989 and 1992 were conflicts within states. The UN Secretary-General referred recently to the Cold War having masked or prevented some 30 small wars, most within states, with which the international community is now confronted. A high proportion of these conflicts have occurred in the so-called "zone of conflict", which includes the former communist states, much of sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Central and Latin America and South Asia. Conditions in these areas are typified by a downward spiral of economic decline, often exacerbated by official corruption and mismanagement, creating governments which are at or near collapse and which are being challenged, often violently, by their own citizens. Economic decline has hastened the process of national disintegration, and vice versa.

The collapse of the Soviet empire has brought extraordinary social, political and economic change to all of the former communist states. The transition from state repression to relative political licence has permitted the emergence of long-suppressed ethnic, religious and political hatreds and created new ones. In the former Soviet Union, the fighting in Chechnya is only the latest in a string of more than 20 violent conflicts which have resulted in thousands of deaths and over a million people displaced. The potential for still greater conflict is considerable. The vulnerabilities of the 25 million ethnic Russians who still live in non-Russian republics constitute a major potential security problem, as does the presence of 35 million non-ethnic Russians living in the Russian Federation. In the face of discrimination in the new non-Russian republics, some ethnic Russian minorities are demanding autonomy or even secession, while hundreds of thousands of others have voted with their feet and migrated back to Russian to swell the ranks of the unemployed and homeless. Protecting these Russian minorities has become a major strategic preoccupation for Moscow.

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

Emerging ethnic and religious movements in the "zone of conflict" offer an increasingly

serious challenge to those sovereign states which are failing to meet the basic need of their citizens. Some movements seek to secede and create their own states, some seek to overthrow existing regimes, and others seek some form of autonomy. The desire to achieve ethnic "purity" out of the ethnically intermingled populations of most states leads in many cases to intra-communal atrocities.

The available evidence strongly suggests, in fact, that violent intra-state conflict is unlikely to decrease of its own accord in the near or mid-term future. The decline in individual living standards, and the erosion of good governance, with which civil strife is so closely linked, will not be quickly reversed anywhere in the zone of conflict although the states of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union are at least able to build on already established infrastructures and systems of education and administration which are lacking in, for example, most African states.

These new forms of conflict have thrown up fresh complications for effective United Nations action. There are new tasks to be undertaken in what has come to be known as "expanded peace keeping", in which UN operations have moved beyond a more or less passive observation and monitoring role to full-scale election organisation, refugee resettlement, human rights development and civil administration. The major political constraint circumscribing UN action during the Cold War - the use of the Security Council's veto power - has effectively disappeared. At the same time, however, there are new questions of political acceptance to be faced, including developing world sensitivities about the perceived readiness of the West to ignore the principle of sovereignty. And there are growing problems of financing and resourcing a greatly expanded UN effort. As the Secretary-General recently put it, "In 4 or 5 years, peace keeping operations went from 2 or 3 to 17 or 18, and their budget from $300 million to $3,800 million." Since 1986, the UN has fielded more new peace keeping missions than in all its previous history, with a total of just over 70,000 personnel in the field last year.

Whatever the reasons, the unhappy truth is that the United Nations is simply not coping well with its central responsibilities, and there is an urgent need to find new approaches to allow it to do so. The answers to the problems are unlikely to lie in single or simple fixes but in an array of balanced responses which are bold and imaginative in scope, but realistic in recognising the political and resource limits.

There has certainly been no shortage of ideas around for what is to be done, including those set out in the United Nations Secretary-General's *An Agenda for Peace*. But structured, systematic and comprehensive approaches to the subject are still fairly rare, and it was this which prompted me to put forward my own ideas in my book, *Cooperating for Peace*, which I launched at the UN in September 1993. In that book, and in my subsequent speeches to the General Assembly in 1993 and 1994, and the revised edition of my book *Australia's Foreign Relations* released earlier this month, I have proposed and sought to highlight a new approach, based on the theme of cooperative security.

The idea of cooperative security is to express, in a single conceptual theme, a set of balanced and realistic responses to international security problems. It places emphasis on preventing security problems from arising in the first place and embraces three separate ideas - collective security, common security and comprehensive security - which have been evident in thinking about international security cooperation for some time. The first of these, *collective security*, has a long tradition in the United Nations and other groupings of states. It involves the notion of member states agreeing to renounce the use of force among themselves and collectively coming to the aid of any member attacked by an outside state or a renegade member. Its power to prevent conflict is based on the idea of deterrence against aggression. In the 1980s recognition of the need to act at an early stage to prevent conflicts occurring gave currency to the idea of *common security*, of states finding their security by working <u>with</u>, rather than against, others. Then attention came to be given to the idea of *comprehensive security*, with widespread acceptance of the notion that economic and social co-operation needs to be combined with purely military security in a multifaceted, multi-dimensional approach.

It is this latter thread which makes cooperative security a particularly appropriate reaction to the current problems, because it brings together the peace-and-security and social-economic sides of the United Nations work. The effect is to make irrelevant the sterile and false debate which often rages over choices between the two, because it accepts that both are vital to the search for peace, and that both are indissolubly linked. It forms part of the effort to reintegrate the United Nations - the goal which I emphasised in my General Assembly speech last year, ie of linking once more the three basic Charter objectives of peace, development and human rights and justice.

Under a cooperative security approach, challenges to peace can be matched by a set of responses graduated to cover the entire spectrum of situations, both before and after the threshold of armed conflict has been crossed. At one extreme this would involve long-term programs to improve economic and social conditions which are likely to give rise to future tensions. At the other end, it includes the enforcement of peace by military means. These responses fall naturally into three broad categories, in ascending order of the stage reached in the conflicts to be dealt with: building peace, maintaining peace, and restoring peace.

I have been pleased to see that important aspects of the thinking behind this approach taken up - much more clearly than in the original 1992 document - in the Secretary-General's Supplement to *An Agenda for Peace*, released this January as his position paper on the occasion of the UN's Fiftieth anniversary, as well as in the Security Council statement which responded to it. The priority given to preventive diplomacy and other preventive approaches, and the recognition of the need to draw clear distinctions between different types of responses - especially between peace keeping and enforcement - is very welcome.

Peace building

At the earliest level of action are strategies designed to **build** peace, both between and within states. At the <u>inter-state</u>, or international, level such strategies centre on building or strengthening a range of international structures or regimes aimed at minimising threats to security, building confidence and trust and operating as forums for dialogue and cooperation. Multilateral arms control and disarmament regimes; treaties governing issues like the Law of the Sea; forums like the International Court of Justice and other international bodies for resolving disputes; and multilateral dialogue and cooperation forums are all examples of these structures.

A prime example of structure building in our own region is the ASEAN Regional Forum, established just last year. The basic rationale for the Forum has been the generation of a new atmosphere of multilateral cooperation in a regional security environment that was dominated throughout the Cold War years by division into major competing blocs, supported in each case by bilateral alliance relationships. With the end of the Cold War, momentum has been growing for a new approach to regional security - one which would see not the abandonment of traditional alliance relationships but rather that being supplemented by multilateral dialogue processes. No less than eighteen states, including China, Russia and the United States, were represented at Foreign Ministers level at the Forum's inaugural meeting and the Forum has already become widely accepted as the region's major security dialogue structure.

<u>Intra-state</u> peace building is a long-term preventive strategy which focuses on addressing the underlying causes of insecurity within particular states. We should think of peace building being as much about building peace well <u>before</u> disputes or conflicts appear on the horizon, as it is about <u>post</u>-conflict reconstruction efforts designed to prevent the recurrence of hostilities (although the Secretary-General continues to use the term only in a post-conflict context). Peace building seeks to encourage equitable economic development in order to enhance human rights broadly defined, and to facilitate good governance. These are goals which we ought to be pursuing not only for their own sakes, but also because advancing them contributes directly to national and international security. Policies which enhance economic development and distributive justice, encourage the rule of law, protect fundamental human rights and foster the growth of democratic institutions are also <u>security</u> policies. They should be recognised as such, and receive a share of current security budgets and future peace dividends.

Economic development, human rights, good governance and peace are, in fact, inextricably connected and mutually reinforcing. Peace is a necessary precondition for development; and equitable development eradicates many of the socio-political conditions which threaten peace. It comes as no surprise to find that those countries whose

economies are declining, whose political institutions are failing and where human rights are abused, should also be the ones experiencing the greatest amounts of violence and turmoil.

The relationship between democracy and security is a very direct one, and it is a striking fact that there is no clearly recorded instance of democracies going to war with each other. There is also a strong relationship between democracy and the question of violence within states. From the beginning of this century to 1987, according to one estimate, nearly 150 million people have been killed by their own governments, over and above the death toll from war and civil war (which accounted for an additional 39 million). Totalitarian states were responsible for 84 per cent of the deaths, authoritarian states for most of the rest. Democratic states are not only less war-like; they are also, as one might expect, less prone to violence against their own citizens.

There are some reasons for long-term optimism about the future of peace building within states. The proportion of the world's population living in abject poverty fell from 70 per cent in 1960 to 32 per cent in 1992. The world is slowly becoming more democratic, with more than half its population now living under relatively pluralistic governments. The just concluded UN World Summit for Social Development has provided an important impetus for countries to re-examine the role of social development and justice in the international political agenda.

But unfortunately - perhaps almost inevitably - the areas which suffer the greatest levels of intra-state violence are also those in which economic conditions are declining and governments are failing. Part of the problem lies in the aid policies of the developed world. Two thirds of the world's 1.3 billion poor people live in countries which receive less than one third of official development assistance. National governments in the "zone of conflict" must, however, bear much of the blame for the deteriorating economic and political conditions which exacerbate internal conflicts.

Peace maintenance

Preventive strategies must not only try to remove the underlying causes of insecurity they must also address actual disputes which may, if they are not resolved, deteriorate into armed conflict. Peace building, then, has to be supplemented by strategies of peace maintenance, the major strand of which is **preventive diplomacy**. This term embraces a variety of strategies to resolve, or at least contain disputes by relying on diplomatic or similar methods, rather than military ones. These are the classic "peaceful means" described in Article 33 of the UN Charter - negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration and judicial settlement. Such methods can, of course, also be applied after a dispute has escalated into armed conflict.

Like peace building, preventive diplomacy tends by its nature to be a low profile activity, lacking the obvious media impact of blue helmet peace keeping and peace enforcement operations. (Preventive diplomacy should be distinguished from **preventive deployment**, where military resources are deployed - as in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia - in order to deter the escalation of a dispute into armed conflict.) Preventive diplomacy often succeeds when things do not happen. It is most successful when it is applied early, well before armed conflict is likely. It is unfortunately the case that, too often in the UN system, preventive diplomacy efforts have been attempted too late, when the dynamics of escalation are so advanced that a slide into hostilities is almost inevitable.

Despite the importance of this activity, the UN devotes relatively few resources to it, even though it is now universally acknowledged to be the most cost-effective means of dealing with potential conflict. There are only some forty UN officials assigned to tasks immediately relevant to preventive diplomacy. This compares with more than 70,000 UN peace keepers last year and approximately 30 million armed service personnel world-wide. Some reforms to UN practice have been implemented but far more needs to be done.

If the UN is to play its rightful role as the preeminent cooperative security institution in the post-Cold War era, it must upgrade its capacity to the point where it can offer an effective dispute resolution service to its members, providing low-profile, skilled, third party assistance through good offices, mediation and the like. In *Cooperating for Peace,* I put forward the proposal that regionally-focused UN preventive diplomacy units should be established. Staffed by senior professionals expert in dispute resolution, closely familiar with the areas and issues on which they work, and with the experience and stature to be able to negotiate at the highest levels, preventive diplomacy units could operate not only at UN headquarters, but also in the field, in regional centres. They would require adequate resources and infrastructure, with appropriate back-up personnel and equipment, and close consultative links with regional organisations, specialist scholars, peace research and other academic institutes. Because preventive diplomacy is so cost-effective, a large increase in the UN's capability could be achieved at minimal cost. The creation of, say, six regional preventive diplomacy centres, of the kind I have described, with a total staff of one hundred and the necessary support funding, would cost little more than $20 million a year. By comparison, the UN's peace keeping budget for 1993 was $3.7 billion, and the cost of its operation in Mozambique was over $1 million each day (and the cost of waging the Gulf War, for the US-led multinational force, was $70 billion).

Since 1993, regional mechanisms for conflict prevention have begun to emerge in Europe, Africa and the Middle East. For example, the Association of Southern African States (ASAS) has recently been formed as a part of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) with a strong conflict prevention objective. SADC is seeking recognition from the UN as a regional security body with a preventive diplomacy role. In the Middle East, the proposed Regional Security Centre in Jordan, and two related centres in Qatar and Tunis to be established through the Arms Control and Regional Security

(ACRS) working group, should also contribute to enhancing preventive diplomacy. There is as well discussion in the ARF context of a possible centre in East Asia. Australia has proposed that the UN Secretary-General should report to UNGA 50 on what could be done to support the development of regional centres.

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

As a measure of the importance we attach to preventive strategies, Australia has circulated a draft resolution on peace building and preventive diplomacy at this year's General Assembly. The particular aim of the resolution, so far as preventive diplomacy is concerned, is to encourage the UN to build stronger machinery in a manner consistent with the proposals in *Cooperating for Peace,* in particular through an effective dispute resolution service. We are seeking through the resolution to develop the UN's capacity to operate as an active agent in the peaceful settlement of disputes and to encourage progress in developing more effective collaboration on preventive diplomacy between the UN and regional bodies.

Restoring peace

The truism that preventing armed conflict will always be better than curing it does not avoid our having to acknowledge that, realistically, there will remain some conflicts which cannot be prevented by other means. In such cases, it will be important for the international community to have the ability to deal credibly and forcefully with these scenarios.

There are some circumstances where the preventive diplomacy techniques - negotiation, enquiry, mediation and so on - which are aimed at averting armed hostilities, are also appropriate if fighting does break out. These strategies can be appropriate in **peace making** - in negotiating for immediate goals, such as a ceasefire and a stabilised deployment of the warring parties' forces, as well as in securing durable overall political settlements.

Such diplomatic action will often need to be supplemented by monitoring and supervising mechanisms - and this is where the traditional UN response of **peace keeping**, involving the deployment of unarmed or lightly armed peace keepers, becomes relevant. Such deployments of military or police personnel, or civilians, presuppose that the governments

or parties are involved in the conflict are willing to cooperate and are able to reach and maintain agreement. UN peace keepers may be involved in such familiar activities as monitoring, supervising and verifying arrangements for ceasefires, withdrawal of troops, respect for buffer zones and related agreements. Examples of this level of activity include UNMOGIP in Kashmir, UNFICYP in Cyprus, and UNTSO in the Middle East.

Perceptions as to what peace keeping is capable of achieving have expanded in recent years, and UN peace keeping forces have increasingly supplemented their traditionally limited role with activities such as organising and monitoring elections, protecting human rights, and exercising or assisting civil administration functions during the transition to independence or democracy. The UNTAG operation in Namibia, UNTAC in Cambodia and ONUMOZ in Mozambique are examples of this additional dimension of activity.

Situations do of course arise where peace cannot be restored by diplomatic and peace keeping means, where the agreement to UN action of all relevant parties or governments is lacking, and where the UN is consequently forced to consider the drastic strategies of enforcing peace, either by military or non-military means.

Non-military enforcement in the form of **sanctions** designed to compel or bring to an end a course of action has been applied on a number of occasions by the UN - the best known cases being the web of sanctions against the apartheid regime in South Africa, and those applied against Iraq in the aftermath of the Gulf War. The aim of sanctions is to deny the government or party involved continued access to the goods or services which it needs to maintain its economic, social or political infrastructure or well-being. Typically, this has involved actions such as the cessation of military supplies; the complete or partial interruption of economic relations; the severing of communications links such as postal, telephone, radio, rail, sea and land links; and the severance of diplomatic links. Actions to freeze foreign reserves or disrupt financial transactions may also be applied. Such actions achieve their objective by depriving the state concerned of the military and economic means to maintain the offending behaviour; by precipitating domestic pressure on the its government; or by bringing moral pressure to bear on it internationally.

Finally, there may be conflicts or major crises when, in the absence of agreement by the parties concerned, the UN is faced with the need to intervene to enforce peace with the threat or use of **military force**. This may be required in response to aggression across international borders such as, for example, the Korean War and the 1991 Gulf War; in support of peace keeping operations, for example in situations where one or more parties to an agreement have subsequently withdrawn and there is a need to enforce a ceasefire or, as in Bosnia, protect safe havens and enforce "no fly" zones; or in the difficult area of supporting humanitarian operations, such as the operations in Somalia.

In the past, enforcing peace, whether by sanctions or by the use of military force,

presented few conceptual problems, particularly when it was applied to fairly clear-cut cases of cross-border aggression. For intra-state conflict, however, the conceptual basis for such actions - in particular military force - is considerably more problematic. On a traditional view, the UN's security role is essentially limited to protecting the physical and political integrity of states. As the pressures grew, following the end of the Cold War, for recognition of a "right of humanitarian intervention" in response to various crises, developing countries began to express concerns that this might presage a new era of imperialism, with an American-led Security Council using humanitarian crises as a vehicle for forcing its will on states which it disliked. In practice, however, and in the light of peace operations experience in the last couple of years, these concerns seem to have abated. Less attention is being paid to formal jurisdictional limits on intervention, as may or may not be expressed or implied in the UN Charter, and more to questions of the effectiveness of that intervention - and the political will to undertake it given domestic hostility or indifference. The difficulties which arise now are to do with defining what are appropriate cases for intervention, and with delivering effective responses.

There are a number of possible threshold criteria for determining whether intervention in an intra-state conflict is warranted. These include such considerations as consensus that the most basic human right, the right to life, is under direct and widespread threat; that there is no prospect of alleviation of the situation by the government of the state in question; that all non-force options have been considered and all non-forcible means to alleviate the situation have failed; that an impartial and neutral source (such as the International Committee for the Red Cross) has reported that the crisis can no longer be satisfactorily managed; that there has been consultation on the intervention with a wide spectrum of expert advice and, so far as possible, with the external and internal parties involved; that there is wide consensus on the issue between developed and developing countries; and that hard-headed assessments have been made about the international community's will to follow through.

Proposals for a UN military force

Overcoming such doctrinal and threshold practical issues, however, is not enough. Intervention also involves the question of capacity. Being a suitable case for treatment will never be sufficient grounds in itself, given the resource constraints, to guarantee it. But the impossibility of intervening everywhere should not bar the UN from acting anywhere: the international community must accept the inevitability of what might be called opportunistic idealism.

This sort of idealism, however, is in increasingly short supply. As the initial response to the Rwanda crisis demonstrated, it is becoming difficult to get the UN's member states to intervene forcibly anywhere. The underlying reality is that, if vital national interests are not threatened, it has become extremely difficult for democratic states to sustain domestic support for distant and risky military operations overseas - even when governments may

wish to do so. Public education programs about the importance of international peace efforts may help, but probably not much. In other cases - and Bosnia is a clear recent example - governments have not even shown much inclination to put public opinion to the test, adhering, as one commentator recently noted, to the perverse doctrine that a great military machine must be reserved for the mythical kind of war fighting where there are no casualties.

Ideas for meeting the problem of resistance to involvement in dangerous UN operations by creating a United Nations military force have been around for some time, going back to the 1950s. Sir Brian Urquhart, a former UN Under Secretary General, has been a persistent advocate of a professional volunteer UN standing force as a means of solving the commitment problem. Such a force, which he put at 5000 personnel, would also provide the attraction of rapid deployment capability, able to get to conflict sites - and hopefully defuse them- much faster than is possible at the moment, when each new UN operation has to be laboriously assembled from scratch.

The idea of a UN standing force has, in the past, been ruled out as unrealistic by many people, including by me. Rwanda - and the UN's impotence in the face of genocide - has, however, confronted us quite squarely with this central problem, and I believe the time has come when we need to re-examine the various ideas for a UN force which are currently in play. One of these is the proposal, set out in the Secretary-General's Supplement, for a rapid reaction force, under his executive command, as the Security Council's "strategic reserve" for emergency intervention in crises. In theory at least, this force could be formed by strengthening national stand-by arrangements with member states making available battalion-sized units at a high state of readiness, trained and equipped to an agreed standard.

Other variants of the proposal are currently being considered. The Netherlands is studying the feasibility of establishing a permanent volunteer brigade. According to a non-paper circulated by the Netherlands, the brigade would be established by the Security Council, which would retain the exclusive authority to deploy it, and would be available for preventive deployment; traditional peace keeping during the interval between a Security Council decision and the arrival of the full force; peace enforcement Under Chapter VII of the Charter; and intervention in humanitarian emergencies. The personnel of the brigade would be recruited on an individual basis, similar to that used for recruitment of civilian staff from national governments to the UN Secretariat. The Netherlands intends to take this proposal to the next session of the UN's Special Committee on Peace Keeping Operations in April.

The International Peace Academy, in conjunction with the Ford Foundation, is proposing to undertake a year-long detailed study of the feasibility of establishing a "UN volunteer military force". A somewhat broader approach is being taken by Canada, which has assembled an international consultative group of experts to assist in a detailed study of

ways in which the UN's rapid deployment capacity could be improved. The establishment of a UN standing force is just one of the options which will be canvassed. The study will focus on the elements necessary to improve rapid deployment ability, such as early warning, integrated planning, command and control systems, logistics, doctrine and interoperability.

There are, of course, major obstacles to be overcome before a UN force can ever become a possibility. Most immediately, there is the question of reactions from the major UN contributors, which have, in the main, been quite negative. The United States, for example, went public soon after the release of the Secretary-General's Supplement with a specific rejection of the rapid reaction force idea. The reasons for resistance to the principle of a UN force are varied, and include political objections, questions of practicability and effectiveness, and fears about costs. But still, we should certainly not rule out the possibility that one or a combination of the variants now being discussed will be able to attract a broad consensus of UN opinion. Opinions on the subject are certainly not immutable, and current objections should not be seen as necessarily the last word on the matter. Again to take the example of the United States, Washington was in fact a strong supporter of standby arrangements for a UN force in the 1950s because it saw this as a way of putting out the fires of regional conflicts and preventing them from escalating into causes of superpower conflict.

Cost is certainly a major question for many member states, and there is no denying that the burden of setting up and maintaining an effective force would be considerable. Given what we know about minimum teeth-to-tail ratios, a force of the size suggested by Sir Brian would probably be too small for effectiveness, even if it were only to be used to mount initial operations which could later be taken over by a UN force set up in a more traditional way. But, if there really is a will to tackle the cost issue, there have been plenty of proposals for ways to do so. The order of magnitude of the task is put into context by making the point that if member states contributed just 5 per cent of their current defence spending to the UN, this would provide the world body with a security budget of some $40 billion a year - or more than ten times the current peace keeping budget. If modest reductions in defence outlays were applied to all states, relative military balances would be essentially unchanged and no member states would be militarily disadvantaged. Indeed, insofar as increasing the UN's security budget had the effect of enhancing global security , the security of individual states would actually be enhanced: no state would be significantly worse off economically since existing national defence outlays would remain the same - the only difference being that the UN would spend 5 per cent of them.

Direct diversion of defence expenditure is not likely, in the real world, to have much appeal. A simpler, and maybe more practicable, basis for increased country contributions could be constructed on the basis of diversion of defence savings: on current trends, some $460 billion will be saved by the reductions in global arms expenditure between 1994 and 2000 - a "peace dividend" of more than $70 billion a year.

UN member states should, of course, pay their existing assessed contributions on time and in full - and it would be of much assistance to the UN if they did just that. But there are plenty of other ways in which UN funding might be augmented. A number of proposals have been floated recently based on distributing more evenly the costs of maintaining international peace and security. For example, a flat rate levy of just $10 per international airline passenger sector would yield around $3 billion, nearly enough to cover the current peace keeping budget. Alternatively, a turnover tax on foreign exchange transactions of, say, 0.01 per cent, would yield no less than $30 billion. There are many sensitivities and complexities attached to such measures, but the point is that the conduct of international business, such as foreign exchange transactions and air travel, depends on stability between states, to which the UN makes a major contribution. Taxing such things would be an equitable way of putting a price on an important public good. It is no doubt a little gratuitous here to touch on recent misadventures in the international banking system, but it does put the costs question into context to realise that nearly half of the UN's annual peace budget can be wagered and lost by a single institution over a few days on the futures market.

The arguments about effectiveness, practicality and accountability depend to a large extent on what model of force is being considered. The possible permutations are many. One is the Urquhart model of a standing force of professionals who do not form part of the armed forces of their own countries and who owe their military loyalties directly and exclusively to the United Nations - sometimes referred to as the 'Gurkha option'. The advantages of such a force are clear, in terms of its ability to move quickly, its cohesiveness, its unified lines of command and control and the avoidance of the political problems currently faced by troop contributing states when their national interests are also engaged in the conflict. Its possible drawbacks relate to the image of a UN army of "mercenaries" who might be engaged in controversial circumstances involving the deadly use of force - a long way, some would argue, from the spirit in which the organisation was founded. Selectivity would always be a difficulty, given that the force would never be large enough to be simultaneously deployed in more than one or two conflicts, and difficult choices would be forced on the Security Council accordingly. Practical questions of assembling and training such a force, and keeping it occupied between the times it is needed in the field, would also need to be addressed.

A variation on the "standing" notion is the concept of a force assembled, as necessary, from earmarked elements of the national forces of member states. Here the advantages are in significantly lowered costs (although earmarking and holding designated forces at a state of readiness for UN service inevitably raise costs for member states) and retention of the traditional idea of peace operations as actions carried out by member states themselves. It should be possible for earmarked forces to be assembled reasonably quickly, and with some degree of confidence that their constituent elements will, in fact, be made available when called upon. The main disadvantages are likely to arise in areas

such as those encountered under present arrangements - questions of political responsibility and accountability for the force's actions, and the interest of contributing countries in playing a role in command and control decisions.

UN reform

The need to put more UN resources into preventive strategies, and to find new and improved sources of funding for UN peace and security activities, are not the only areas of reform which will be necessary to allow the organisation to be effective in that and its other roles. Some of the key reform objectives which need to be addressed are these:-

* The basic configuration of the Secretariat needs to be restructured to ensure that the Secretary General has an effective chain of command to exercise authority over the whole range of major UN operations, not just in the peace and security area. Restructuring is needed to consolidate and coordinate the 40 separate departments offices, agencies, instrumentalities and commissions which presently report to the Secretary General. Australia has supported a proposal for a new senior structure at UN Headquarters in which the Secretary-General would have four Deputy Secretaries-General responsible respectively for Peace and Security, Economic and Social Operations, Humanitarian Operations and Administration and Management. Each such Deputy would have full executive responsibility for operational issues falling within his or her portfolio, subject to direction by the Secretary-General.

* The management of peace operations, both at Headquarters and in the field, needs to be improved. The creation of the new Department of Peace Keeping Operations in 1993 improved the Secretariat's capabilities in this area, but much more remains to be done to improve the UN's planning and organising capacity.

* The present structures for delivery of humanitarian relief require overhauling. A dramatic way of doing this would be to create a new disaster response agency which would take over the relief and basic rehabilitation functions of UNHCR, UNICEF and the WFP and work directly to the proposed new Deputy Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs. Less dramatic solutions would involve better coordination, at the proposed Deputy Secretary-General level, than is presently possible with the Department of Humanitarian Affairs recently established for this purpose.

* The profile of peace building within the UN system should be raised. This plane of intersection between the UN's peace and security role and its economic and social role should be given greater recognition and emphasis. The pursuit of peace and security has to include the satisfaction of basic human needs as well as the direct prevention, containment and settlement of armed conflict. More needs to be done to link together, organisationally, the system's activities in areas such as international law-making, disarmament, economic

and social advancement, sustainable development, democratisation and institution building.

* And there is a clear need to reform the <u>Security Council</u> - not because it is ineffective, but because it is clearly unrepresentative of the broad range of interests and perspectives of the UN as a whole: this is beginning to have an impact on its legitimacy which will certainly ultimately inhibit its effectiveness. The Security Council is the lynch pin of the whole UN peace and security system, and it is in nobody's interest that its credibility should be allowed to erode gradually. To ensure that it remains effective, outstanding questions about its size and shape - to ensure that the Council represents the power balances in the world of the 1990s, not the 1940s - will need to be resolved more quickly than presently seems likely.

<u>Conclusion</u>

The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations this year provides the opportunity to revitalise the organisation, to reintegrate its three basic objectives of peace, development and human rights, and to give it the new orientations it needs to meet the challenges of the 1990s and beyond. No challenge can be greater than meeting the central responsibility for ensuring that the people of the world enjoy the conditions of peace and security which the UN Charter promised them. If it is to do so, it is essential that the UN adopt new approaches to the new problems it faces.

I am realistic enough to accept that many of these problems cannot be solved in the short term. I sense that the international community has still not fully grasped the difficulties it is in, and is not ready for the hard decisions it will need to make. This is in part due to the increasingly isolationist mood of the US Congress since the elections last November, and the clearly evident lack of enthusiasm in Washington for multilateral action, in peace and security or anywhere else.

But making possible effective multilateral action through a reformed and revitalised UN is such an important task that we cannot allow the difficulty of achieving everything prevent us from trying to do anything. It is vital that we at least get consensus on what is to be done, get the agenda for action into place and begin some of the basic internal structural reform. That in itself would be a huge advance.