

THE UN AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

Effective global governance is a critically important topic and priority effort, if mankind is to master the complexities of the 21st century. Although it is a relatively new concept, it is already a vast and complex one, as illustrated by the many useful sources already cited at the end of this subsection. IO Watch's objective here is simply to try to get a better fix on what meaningful role the UN can - and cannot -- play within the turbulent constellation of global governance forces.

The UN's most loyal and enthusiastic boosters see it at the top of the pyramid, as a -- or even the -- pivotal element. In October 2000, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded in equal portions to the United Nations and to its Secretary-General Kofi Annan. The Peace Prize citation of the Norwegian Nobel Committee stated in part that:

"The UN has in its history achieved many successes, and suffered many failures. Through this first Peace Prize to the U.N. as such, the Norwegian Nobel Committee wishes in its centenary year to proclaim that the only negotiable road to global peace and cooperation goes by way of the United Nations."

"Text from Nobel Peace Prize Citation," Associated Press, Friday, **October 12, 2001.**

However, in September 2003 Secretary-General Annan himself confirmed the urgent need for drastic changes in the UN's role and performance, in introducing his annual report to the General Assembly. (In effect, he repeated the words of his various predecessors over the past five decades, and established yet another distinguished panel to ponder the perpetual UN performance problems and propose solutions.)

"Secretary-General Kofi Annan said Monday that the United Nations must consider sweeping reforms in the wake of the Iraq war and warned that the organization had lost the confidence of many across the globe.

In unusually strong language Annan suggested that the credibility of the Security Council, the General Assembly and other UN bodies was at stake.

'If they are to regain their authority, they may need radical reform,' Annan said before making public his report on the organization's future."

"UN needs big changes, Annan says", AP, AFP, International Herald Tribune, **September 9, 2003.**

Similarly, a newspaper editorial concluded at the same time that:

"President George W. Bush's turn to the United Nations for help in Iraq was a welcome, if belated, recognition that global policing can acquire legitimacy only through multinational endorsement. But the record of the major political bodies of the UN ... has little to show that this is the place to find that sort of legitimacy in the 21st century.

The [General] Assembly is usually mired in speechmaking. The [Security] Council is increasingly perceived as a relic of the cold war. These are not just the sentiments of neo-conservatives in Washington; they were voiced most recently by Kofi Annan, the secretary general of the United Nations. In an unusually candid report issued on Sept. 8, Annan challenged the UN to make radical reforms.

The real task is to open a serious debate on what a multilateral institution should be today, and what rules and instruments it should have. As the world's leaders arrive for the General Assembly this week, they would do well to present some concrete ideas on what the United Nations should be."

"Restructuring the UN", International Herald Tribune, **September 22, 2003**.

The material in this entire archive indeed flashes a giant caution sign about hopes for UN leadership of global governance. The UN is afflicted with multiple performance problems, weak accountability and oversight, self-exemption from the rule of law, and -- above all in this context -- 190-some Member States who "govern" it in an extremely disorderly and snail-like fashion. In this condition, the UN is not ready, and never can be, to lead the world.

Within "global governance," there are many participants, significant and dynamic networks, a constantly changing panorama of issues, and multiple interactions. The UN is only one of many participants, and it is definitely not the most effective or powerful (nor is it arguably even the most representative or democratic one.)

IO Watch offers here several fundamental observations and cautions from this archive indicating the importance and complexities of present-day global networks, and a representative overview of the UN's often-limited role. The other subsections which follow explore the UN's past and continuing limitations, and what must be done if the Organization is to become a more competent and reliable participant in global governance.

FIRST, the basic dimensions of global (or any) governance reach far back in human history. The following quotes make it clear that all leaders of such efforts must be regarded with a healthy skepticism by vigilant media, civil society, and global citizens.

"In those days the world teemed, the people multiplied, the world bellowed like a wild bull, and the great god was aroused by the clamor. Enlil heard the clamour and he said to the gods in council, 'The uproar of mankind is intolerable and sleep is no longer possible by reason of the babel.' So the gods agreed to exterminate mankind."

--The Epic of Gilgamesh, the earliest version of the Great Flood myth., an introductory quote Garrett Keizer, "Sound and fury: The politics of noise in a loud society", Harper's Magazine, **March 2001**.

"Some ordinary villages are peaceful and well policed. The global village is of another kind. It has feuds and vendettas which often break into violence. All the inhabitants are armed. The part-time police force is amateurish and weak. It is run by a committee of villagers who rarely agree on what it should do. Powerful neighbors sometimes suppress violence by force. Peace will only come to such a village when the rule of law is imposed."

Jonathan Glover, Humanity: A Moral History of the Twentieth Century, Chapter 18, "The political containment of tribalism: Policing the global village:", Yale, New Haven, CT, **1999**, p. 140.

"Considerations of conflict resolution, decision making, economics, and space [require] large societies to be centralized. But centralization of power inevitably opens the door -- for those who hold the power, are privy to information, make the decisions, and redistribute the goods -- to exploit the resulting opportunities to reward themselves and their relatives. To anyone familiar with any modern grouping of people, that's obvious. As earlier societies developed, those acquiring centralized power gradually established themselves as an elite

Those are the reasons why large societies cannot function with band organization and instead are complex kleptocracies."

Jared Diamond, Guns, germs, and steel: The fates of human societies, Chapter 14, "From egalitarianism to plutocracy: The evolution of government and religion", Norton, New York, 1999 and **2003**, p. 288. [Winner of the Pulitzer Prize, 1998]

"To try to do something which is inherently impossible is always a corrupting enterprise."

[a quote from philosopher Michael Oakshott in] George F. Will, "Daniel Patrick Moynihan: An exemplary public life", International Herald Tribune, **September 19, 2000**.

"In this imperfect world, corruption is bound to be happening somewhere; no country is exempt. ... What are the major current concerns about corruption?

First ... is business bribery, which is rampant throughout the world and endemic in all transactions, public and private.

Second, and related ..., is the large amounts of money being laundered worldwide ...

Third, related to dirty money, is organized transnational crime, particularly the operation of crime syndicates and drug cartels, which cross borders at will ...

Fourth is the growing influence of money in political life ... to secure [votes] ... and obtain favored treatment through bribes and other personal rewards; ... manipulate mass media ...; [by] asset-stripping ... to obtain public resources [cheaply] ...; and tax avoidance and evasion. ... what is new is the sophistication and ingenious devices employed to prevent common knowledge of political corruption, the spin placed on illegal political contributions when exposed, and the condescension in official circles toward the public -- as if everybody does it ...

Fifth is yet another traditional form of corruption, kleptocracy, where public resources are viewed as private spoils, state largesse is seen as a personal gravy train, and ... [p]ublic office is a means of self-enrichment with no holds barred. ...

Sixth is the embarrassing situation of the non-governmental organizations, ... Some NGOs are ... beyond the reach of public accountability mechanisms. While some are indeed noble and heroic, others have become fronts for organized crime or merely self-aggrandizing, rewarding themselves handsomely for outcomes hardly worth the bother."

Gerald E. Caiden, Chapter 17, "Corruption and democracy", in Gerald E. Caiden, O. P.

Dwivedi, Joseph Jabra, eds., Where Corruption Lives, Kumarian, Bloomfield, Conn., USA, **2001**, pp. 227-243, [232-235].

"The great majority of mankind are satisfied with appearances, as though they were realities ... They are often more influenced by things that seem than by things that are."

Niccolo Machiavelli

" I learned as an adult what I had learned as a child, which is that the world is a dangerous place -- and learned also that not everyone knows this."

Daniel Patrick Moynihan with Susanne Warner, A dangerous place, Atlantic Monthly, Little, Brown, Boston, Toronto, **1978**.

[Note: The quote is from the opening chapter of the book, which covers his service as U.S. Ambassador to the UN in 1975-1976.]

"Above all, he warns, never tolerate 'a concrete evil' in the name of 'an abstract good;' expose the pretenses of the system at every opportunity."

Andrew Nagorski, a phrasing of Vaclav Havel's beliefs, in a book review "The most potent weapon of all: How Havel prepared for 'the gentle revolution'", Newsweek International, **June 25, 1990**.

[Note: The book is Vaclav Havel, Disturbing the peace, A conversation with Karel Hvizdala, translated by Paul Wilson, Vintage, New York, 1991.]

"A wise restraint is central to Berlin's thinking, an acceptance of the fact that tragedy inheres in all choice, because there is no choice that leads to the solution of all problems. An anti-utopian point of view, in other words, required a certain resignation to social imperfection and the conviction that the first task of government is similar to the first task of physicians, to do no harm."

Phrasing of the thoughts of Isaiah Berlin, from a book review by Richard Bernstein, "Books, IB, a Life," International Herald Tribune, **November 25, 1998**.

[Note: the book, by Michael Ignatieff, is Isaiah Berlin, A life, Metropolitan Books, Henry Holt, New York.]

SECOND, modern global society has become a complex collection of networks, vastly facilitated by the "information society" and its technologies. Not all of these networks are admirable or effective (and some of the least admirable are the most effective, and vice versa.)

"A new group of power-seekers are leaping on the world stage and seizing sizable chunks of the clout once controlled by nations alone. Some are good, some, decidedly evil. ...

... the United Nations, which until now has been little more than a trade association of nation-states, may eventually be compelled to provide representation for non-states (beyond the token consultative role now granted to certain ... NGOs). ...

But whether or not such speculations prove correct in the future, the new Global Gladiators -- corporate, criminal, religious, and other -- already share increasing *de facto* power with nation states."

Alvin Toffler, Powershift: Knowledge, wealth, and violence at the edge of the 21st century, Bantam, New York, **1991**, pp. 450, 456-457. [emphasis added]

"Whether local, national, or international, networks and network structures have had a lasting impact on governance. The following articles discuss networks and network structures in a variety of instances."

"Governance: Impact of networks and network structures," PA Times (USA) **November 2002**, pp. 3-5.

{Note: see the following three related article excerpts below.}

" ... Digital diasporas [which are a people dispersed through migration, but reconnected by information technology, here "DDs"] have the potential to influence national and international policies through broader electronic policy networks. DDs raise important questions for public administrators and policymakers. ...

We believe that digital diasporas represent significant opportunities to alleviate challenges posed by globalization. ...

DDs hold particular promise in contributing to international development. ...

[They can] ... enhance the capacity available to address development challenges in their home countries. ,, [Their policy advocacy] can support commitments of greater resources from other sources ... their identity can [help] ... inform the substance and delivery process of aid policy within donor agencies and among international development NGOs. ...

Through the use of information technologies, members of diaspora communities and their DD organizations can become an important node in a larger socio-political-crosscultural network ... thus fostering cooperation."

Lori A. Brainard and Jennifer Brinkerhof, "Digital diasporas, networks and international policy processes," PA Times (USA), **November 2002**, p. 3.

"In a rapidly changing society, the basic structure of many governmental organizations is ill fitted to the tasks they are expected to perform and the problems they are expected to solve. ... the larger pattern must be seen in the structure of governmental agencies for action in a dynamic, uncertain environment. ...

The issue is not that governmental agencies are negligent, but rather that ... in rapidly evolving conditions, network organizations demonstrate greater flexibility in enabling key nodes to share information and maintain basic functions under conditions of disruption or failure in other parts of the organization.

... Most important, network organizations designed for governmental performance need continued calibration against the context in which they will operate to ensure effective performance. There is no easy, one-time solution to this problem. Rather, it requires an on-going process of monitoring ... goals against actual practice ... Effective organizational performance is a product of continuous learning and adjustment to a clear, albeit moving, goal."

Louise K. Comfort, "Networks of action for emerging systems," PA Times (USA), **November 2002**, p. 4.

"While all ... public organizations try to control the "problems" they are jointly dealing

with, there is a set of actors (both individuals and organizations) who are bent on making the problem worse.

... [these actors] constitute dark networks striving to achieve ends which create collective action problems for governments all over the world.

... [Alongside military and economic power in international relations] ... are a variety of dark networks. Some, like arms trafficking and drugs are illegal and pursue power and wealth ... whereas some, like Al Qaeda, wish to destroy the military, economic and cultural power of the West.

... Do [dark networks] ... adopt a similar structure to cope with their need for secrecy? ... is there a point where dark networks come together? ... what can we learn from studying them that might help legitimate states to combat them? ... [Dark networks] are a major policy problem, like piracy was in the 18th and 19th centuries. ...

While we are in the very early stages of network evaluation ... there is no reason to restrict our focus to only legal and covert networks when the need to combat dark networks is so great."

H. Brinton Milward and Jörg Raab, "Dark networks as problems," PA Times (USA), **November 2002**, p. 5.

"The illegal trade in drugs, arms, intellectual property, people, and money is booming. Like the war on terrorism, the fight to control these illicit markets pits governments against agile, stateless, and resourceful networks empowered by globalization. Governments will continue to lose these wars until they adopt new strategies to deal with a larger, unprecedented struggle that now shapes the world as much as confrontations with nation-states once did.

Why governments can't win [these wars]

They are not bound by geography

They defy traditional notions of sovereignty

They pit governments against market forces

They pit bureaucracies against networks

Rethinking the problem

Develop more flexible notions of sovereignty

Strengthen existing multilateral institutions [particularly INTERPOL]

Devise new mechanisms and strategies

Move from repression to regulation."

Moisés Naim, "The five wars of globalization," *Foreign Policy*, **January/February 2003**, pp. 29-37.

[Note: the article identifies other areas traded illegally for huge profits, including human organs, endangered species, stolen art, and toxic waste. As with most other *Foreign Policy* articles, it also contains an excellent guide for further reading on these topics.]

"As a European business leader ... over the past decade, I actually feel that business has relatively diminishing power as the game gets infinitely more complex.

... By going global, business faces new challenges on three distinct levels. First, the supranational level ... means dealing with international institutions such as the {EU, WTO, UN, and even NGOs} that have increasing global reach. These bodies have not replaced the state but have become additional, sometimes decisive, players.

The second level is the traditional nation state. It includes parliaments, congresses, unions, lobbyists, regulatory agencies, and national NGOs ... in every country. ... the changing landscape includes rising nations such as China, India, and Russia, and the emerging markets of Eastern Europe.

The third -- and sometimes most powerful -- level is local. It means having to negotiate with governors, mayors, city councils, county officials, planning boards, party officials, citizen

groups, local NGOs, activists, or one concerned individual.

... Power today is more a mosaic than an org chart, and it's no longer easy to figure out whether it is indeed "shifting." ...

Moving forward, it's a world of multiple stakeholders, with "multi" in the truest sense of the word."

Heinrich von Pierer [the president and chief executive of Siemens AG], "The cornered CEO," Newsweek International Special Issue, **December, 2003**, p. 53.

[Note: heads of large public, NGO, and international organizations too must surely face the same problems]

"... The insurgents, terrorists, militias, jihadis, smugglers, rogue armies, transnational criminal networks, and computer hackers that seem to be sprouting everywhere [are] ... testing the [US] superpower's mettle. ...

Of course, these termites had long been expected. ... In *Sovereignty at bay*, a popular 1971 book, ... Robert Vernon argued that rapidly growing multinational corporations would render the concept of national sovereignty obsolete. ...

... Experts who observed the rising influence of nonstate actors in the 1990s viewed ... it as a largely benign ... era of civil society ... [not recognizing] the fact that the changes in politics and technology that empowered NGOs did the same for terrorists. Admittedly, several expert commissions warned of the threat posed ... but the roaring, globalizing, democratizing, and economically booming 1990s ... blinded [leaders and experts] ... to the dangers of a world where networks of stateless civilians acquired unprecedented capabilities for inflicting mayhem.

The [US] 9/11 Commission recently ... [cited] a 'failure of imagination.' ... What is ... [needed] is to imagine more effective ways to deal with the termites that are chipping away at the foundations of the Western World. No problem has ever been solved before it was acknowledged."

Moisés Naím, "Devour and conquer: How the White House got a termite problem", Foreign Policy, **November/December 2004**, pp. 95-96.

THIRD, some excellent recent books, articles, and reports illustrate the vast complexity, urgency, competitiveness, and dynamism of global governance processes, in a sea of vigorous activity and competition among actors far removed from the leisurely diplomatic routines at UN headquarters in New York City. The following citations move from the broadest analytical scope on down toward the specific UN role, to get a better sense of its limited role in the global governance scheme of things.

A major and definitive, if introductory, work by Held *et al.* in 1999, was based on nearly a decade of research. Using a rigorous analytical framework, the project set out to investigate the extent to which regionalization and globalization are transforming the nature of world order, and the position of national sovereignty and autonomy within it. It identified and then explored:

"... the central questions [at the root of controversies and debates about globalization]:

- What is globalization? How should it be conceptualized?
- Does contemporary globalization represent a novel condition?
- Is globalization associated with the demise, the resurgence or the transformation of state power;

- Does contemporary globalization impose new limits to politics? How can globalization be 'civilized' and democratized?"

David Held, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt, and Jonathan Perraton, Global transformations: Politics, economics and culture, Stanford University, Stanford, CA, 1999, pp. ix, [1-2.]

This broad-scale book devoted very little attention to the UN and the UN system per se, with most of that being a mere list of the organizations involved and the 45 UN peace-keeping missions (15 during the Cold War, 30 since). Near the end, however, it did briefly state that:

"It would be easy to be pessimistic about the future of political communities ...

But there are other forces at work which create the basis for a more optimistic reading ... one must note the emergence, however hesitatingly, of regional and global institutions and mechanisms of governance in the twentieth century. The UN is, of course, weak in many respects, but it is a relatively recent creation and it is an innovative structure which can be built on. The UN system, with its myriad of organizations, constitutes a resource which provides -- for all its weaknesses -- an enduring example of how nations might (and sometimes do) cooperate better to resolve, and resolve fairly, common problems."

David Held, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt, and Jonathan Perraton, Global transformations: Politics, economics and culture, Stanford University, Stanford, CA, 1999, pp. 63-67, 126-129, [451-452].

Another recent book provided an encyclopedic (1,497 pages) review of the rapidly-expanding international human rights field, one of the most significant recent developments on the international scene. It examined major themes such as changing notions of autonomy and sovereignty, the changing public-private divide in human rights ordering, the play of duties and rights in the gradual expansion of the human rights movement, and the striking evolution of ideas about the nature and purposes of the movement itself over a half-century. It also gave major attention to the workings of international human rights organizations -- intergovernmental and nongovernmental -- to make the reader aware of "the essential and pervasive relationships among norms, institutions and processes at the international as well as national levels."

Henry J. Steiner and Philip Alston, International human rights in context, 2d ed., Oxford University, 2000, pp. v-vii.

The fourth edition of the most long-standing chronicle and analysis of international organizations, by Jordan et al., was published in 2001. It argued that a shift from the primacy of the nation state to relations through international organizations is underway, but the process is incomplete and the outcome indistinct, because of its halting, largely unplanned and unanticipated manner. This book emphasized international organization management, but believed that this process hinges on the presence or absence of cooperation on given issues, and thus requires the management of this cooperation. It had little detailed analysis of UN management, but it does provide a welcome focus on the general issues and problems of

management and decision making in international organizations.

Robert S. Jordan, et al., International organizations: A comparative approach to the management of cooperation, fourth ed., Greenwood/Praeger, Westport, CN (USA), 2001, pp. 1-2 and *passim*.

[Note: This book reveals (Appendix C) the extraordinary growth in such organizations, from 176 intergovernmental organizations in 1909 to 5,825 in 1999, and from 37 international NGOs in 1909 to 251 in 1999, as compiled by the Yearbook of International Organizations in Brussels, Union of International Associations.]

Another recent book provides a very innovative and much-needed effort to systematically analyse the management of global issues. It examines failures and successes of cooperative efforts in sixteen specific areas (such as corruption, environment, and health), presented in terms of four key phases of international governance: agenda setting, negotiation, implementation, and reactions to noncompliance. It is not a manual for global problem solving, but it does provide an inventory of what has been tried so far, how the tools and approaches have worked, and other possible options. The lessons learned are considered a solid base on which to build a rigorous field of knowledge and solid practical experience for alleviating global problems. The editors conclude that progress depends on the kinds of goals set, the realism of commitments, and the attention and resources devoted to implementation. In particular, they emphasize that:

"whatever approach is taken at the start, *continuous sharp-eyed scrutiny of performance makes much of the difference between lip service and genuine implementation.*"

P. J. Simmons and Chantal de Jonge Oudraat, eds., Managing global issues: Lessons learned, Carnegie Endowment, Brookings Institution, Washington, DC, 2001, pp. viii, 720.

Important issues are also raised by a timely exploration of the often-contentious but superficial recent debates over "multilateralism." Special attention needs to be given to "dysfunctional multilateralism" (that is, to its sub-optimal or counterproductive processes), and to the important issues, patterns, and experiences of compliance or non-compliance. Van Oudenaren concludes that multilateralism raises complex questions with no clear-cut answers. He argues that international relations would be well-served by a much more intellectually-sophisticated dialogue on what multilateralism is, when it does and does not work, and how it can best serve nation-state interests.

John Van Oudenaren, "What is 'multilateral?'," Policy Review (USA), **February & March 2003**, pp. 33-47.

The UNDP has made twice examined global governance issues in its annual Human Development Reports. In 1992 it reviewed the existing framework of global institutions and found the international organizations wanting, but urged significant new roles for them. In a 2002 followup, it emphasized the need to "deepen democracy" at the global level and build more democratic institutions.

The UNDP report called for more accountability, and included a discussion of "judicial-style accountability" (i.e., processes of redress to hold international organizations accountable for acting within their powers and in keeping with their operational rules, to publicize wrong-doing and encourage them to reconsider decisions.) Unfortunately, the UNDP analysis concentrated on the international financial institutions, and only discussed the UN itself in terms of the old, never-achieved, idea of reshaping the Security Council. Maybe, when the UNDP next revisits these issues, it can take a long hard look at the grave problems of UN accountability.

Chapter V, "A new vision for global human development," in United Nations Development Programme, Human development report 1992, Oxford University, New York and Oxford, **1992**, and

Chapter V, "Deepening democracy at the global level," in United Nations Development Programme, Human development report 2002: Deepening democracy in a fragmented world, Oxford University, New York and Oxford, **2002**, esp. pp. 116-117.

FOURTH, and finally, many thoughtful analyses and criticisms have been cited throughout this archive on the UN's role and handicaps in broader global governance. The alarm bells are now going off for the UN and its desired global role. Five "new millennium" quotes serve as pointed reminders of just how much remains to be done to make the Organization a reliable and effective part of efforts to deal with the new realities.

"Conventionally 'internationalist' administrations... are too inclined to see the IMF and the World Bank as ends in themselves, as signs of enlightenment and virtue, however much a mess they make of things.

It is quite right to ask ... whether these bodies need to exist at all, exactly what purpose they are intended to serve, and just how well they are discharging their duties, whatever they may be."

"Reforming the Sisters", The Economist, **February 17th, 2001**, pp. 20-21.

[Note: As the most astute chronicler of UN ups and downs over the years, The Economist would surely extend this wise advice to the UN as well]

"Challenges that must be globally managed keep popping up: genetic engineering, AIDS, and global terrorist networks. Yet ... the global landscape has dramatically changed in the last 50 years, but the institutions serving the world have not.

The institutions cannot reform themselves. Two generations of institutional contamination and tenured self-interest ensure that this deadlock continues. But this lack of coherence damages their collective credibility, frustrates their donors and owners, and gives rise to public cynicism. There is a consensus that something must be done, but no consensus on how to go about it.

.... It's time for a small group of national leaders to take on the challenge of reforming and rebuilding global governance. They should build this effort around the issue of the democratic deficit in multilateral institutions. The leadership must come from the top. Otherwise, endless seminars and conferences will inevitably bog down the process in the name

of consensus"

Similarly, [senior officials in national legislatures] should form a democratic caucus to provide systematic oversight of international institutions, focusing particularly on increasing the transparency of these institutions. [This informal] caucus would strengthen national governments in their role in holding these agencies to account."

Mike Moore, "Multilateral meltdown", Foreign Policy, **March/April 2003**, p. 75.

[Note: Mr. Moore was Director General of the World Trade Organization from 1999 to 2002 and a former Prime Minister of New Zealand. He is the author of A world without walls: Freedom, development, free trade, and global governance, Cambridge University, Cambridge, UK, 2003.]

" ... after all these years, the United Nations is still struggling to adjust its human resources policies and practices to the reality that surrounds it. ...

This is no time to stand idly by. In the area of development, the Bretton Woods institutions threaten to marginalize the UN system. In the area of global trade, the WTO overshadows UNCTAD. In peacekeeping and peace building, large regional organizations such as NATO move in when their interests are at stake (as in the Balkans) and play dead when there is nothing to be gained (as in Rwanda). In the delivery of humanitarian assistance, NGOs and bilateral agencies are becoming the agents of choice (as became manifest in Kosovo). In this highly competitive environment, the UN will have to reform its reforms, or go down reforming.

Several dilemmas that have crippled the UN for generations, however, remain unresolved, and this organizational pathology stands in the way of the UN's efforts to remain meaningful. ...

For most pathologies, there is a cure. For the UN, faith healing will not suffice."

Dirk Salomons, "Good intentions to naught: The pathology of human resources management at the United Nations," in Dennis Dijkzeul, and Yves Beigbeder, eds., Rethinking international organizations: Pathology and promise, Berghahn, New York and Oxford, **2003**, pp. 111-139 [136-137].

"Isolated diplomatically over Iraq, beset with financial and sexual scandals and manifestly failing to halt genocide in Sudan, the UN must prove its mettle in dealing with the humanitarian crisis in South-east Asia or face a threat to its very existence. ...

... Two interrelated crises ... have now brought the UN not only to impotence (a regular occurrence), but to institutional meltdown under Kofi Annan.

The 9/11 attacks ... created a new kind of threat to world order ... The UN Security Council is a forum for the big players to settle their differences, eyeball to eyeball. You can't do that with Osama bin Laden. ...

The other new crisis is the descent of the permanent UN bureaucracy into wholesale corruption. There has always been petty sleaze, but it was accelerated vastly by the UN's oil-for-food programme ...

Annan is the first secretary general to be recruited from the ranks of the UN permanent staff. As such, he ... is more prone to defend his bureaucrats from outside criticism. ...

The best solution is a new secretary general ... perhaps a former prime minister or president -- who carries respect in the major world capitals."

George Kerevan, "Has impotent UN finally outlived its usefulness?", The Scotsman, **5 January 2005**.

"The United Nations, which extols the virtues of 'good governance', is not practising what it preaches, say [many long-time observers.] ...

The complaints ... come amidst several recent scandals, including accusations of bribery, nepotism, sexual harassment, and mismanagement of peacekeeping operations overseas.

'The underlying problem is a lack of transparency and accountability" says Hillel Neuer, [one close observer.] ..

... in 2003 the OIOS cleared the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime in Vienna of charges of corruption and mismanagement.

... Senior U.N. officials in New York [have reportedly routinely abused] their first class or business class airline privileges ...

[Neuer said] 'if some of the things that happen at the United Nations took place in a big corporation, people would have been fired.'

[A UN shortcoming, Neuer added, is that the investigation results emerge very slowly] ... are mostly 'white-washed' ... [and occur] only after 'a lot of prodding from the media and NGOs.'

Thalif Deen, "Corruption: U.N. failing to practice 'good governance', IPS Inter Press Service, **December 9, 2004**.

Since late 2004, the concerns with the need for good global governance (and the UN's role in that process) have grown enormously.

First, there was mounting criticism early in the new millennium that the UN was too busy talking, faced mounting scandals, and had been forced to acknowledge a weak management culture and unsatisfactory operational oversight and performance, see:

[UN system, Gilgamesh?, 2003-2006](#)

Second, by 2007, there was a disturbing pattern in which many parts of the UN and UN system, and other multilateral bodies, displayed only indecisiveness in the face of rapidly mounting global problems, see:

[UN system, Gilgamesh?, 2007](#)

In 2008 and beyond, as global problems and crises have exploded, multiple calls for better global governance have been met with increasing clamor but little decisive action. A streamlined, efficient organization is very much needed at the top of the system to provide effective coordination.

It seems increasingly clear that the leader will not be the UN and UN system, which will however continue, but perhaps the "Group of 20", an established, efficient group which well represents all present-day major global powers and regions of the world on financial issues and problems. The group might - hopefully - prove able to provide some effective global leadership not only for the ever-spreading financial crisis but for other issues as well, essentially

stepping in for the increasingly discredited and non-representative "Group of 8" leaders. Meanwhile, the current global governance muddle was captured beautifully on the front cover of *The Economist* magazine in July 2008, and its accompanying story on "What a way to run the world, as presented in

This topic continues in [The UN and Global Governance, II](#), which follows

Useful Sources

(Note: informally assembled by IO Watch, roughly ranked from "most useful" on down, and subject to change as new sources are added)

Nayyar, Deepak, and Court, Julius, Governing globalization: Issues and institutions, Policy Brief No. 5, United Nations University and World Institute for Development Economics Research, Helsinki, Finland, 2002.

Simmons, P. J., and de Jonge Oudraat, Chantal, eds., Managing global issues: Lessons learned, Carnegie Endowment, Brookings Institution, Washington, DC, 2001.

Roberts, Adam, Axworthy, Lloyd, and Bolton, John, in Krieger, Joel, ed., "United Nations", The Oxford companion to politics of the world, Oxford, London, 2001, pp. 865-874

Van Houtven, Leo, Governance of the IMF: Decision making, institutional oversight, transparency, and accountability, International Monetary Fund, Washington, DC, 2002.

Van Oudenaren, John, "What is 'multilateral?'", Policy Review (USA), February & March 2003, pp. 33-47.

Jordan, Robert S., et. al., Ch.2, "International organizations as historical phenomena", Ch. 9, "Decision making: Muddling through in search of global governance", and Ch.10, "International organizations and the management of cooperation", in International organizations: A comparative approach to the management of cooperation, fourth ed., Greenwood/Praeger, Westport CN (USA), 2001, pp. 17-44. 209-232, and 233-250.

"Governance: Impacts of networks and network structures", PA Times (USA), November 2002, pp. 3-5.

Naim, Moses, "The five wars of globalization" ["Why governments can't stop the illegal trade in drugs, arms, ideas, people, and money"], Foreign Policy, January/February 2003, pp. 29-37.

Dijkzeul, Dennis, and Beigbeder, Yves, eds., Rethinking international organizations: Pathology and promise, Berghahn, New York and Oxford, 2003.

Watkins, Michael D., and Bazerman, Max H., "Predictable surprises: The disasters you should have seen coming", Harvard Business Review, March 2003, pp. 72-80.

Moore, Mike, "Multilateral meltdown: It's time for another walk in the Bretton Woods", Foreign Policy, March/April 2003, pp. 74-75.

'Where is the international community?: Essays', Foreign Policy, September/October 2002, 28-46.

Massicote, Marie-Josée, "Review essay: Global governance and the global political economy: Three texts in search of a synthesis", Global Governance, 5(1999), 127-148.

Commission on Global Governance, Our global neighborhood: The report of the Commission on Global Governance, Oxford University, Oxford, 1995.

Huntington, Samuel P., The third wave: democratization in the late Twentieth Century, University of Oklahoma, Norman OK (USA), 1991.

Huntington, Samuel P., The clash of civilizations and the remaking of world order, Simon & Schuster, New York, 1996.

Ottaway, Marina, "Corporatism goes global: International organizations, nongovernmental organization networks, and transnational business", Global Governance 7 (2001), 265-292.

Krahmann, Elke, "National, regional, and global governance: One phenomenon or many?", Global Governance 9 (2003), 323-346.

Warkentin, Craig, and Mingst, Karen, "International institutions, the state, and global civil society in the age of the World Wide Web", Global Governance, 6 (2000), 237-257.

Jacobson, Harold K., Reisinger, William, and Mathers, Todd, Ch. 4, "National entanglements in international governmental organizations", in Diehl, Paul F., ed., The politics of global governance: International organizations in an interdependent world, Lynne Rienner, Boulder CO (USA), 1997, pp. 57-74.

Held, David, McGrew, Anthony, Goldblatt, David and Perraton, Jonathan, Global transformations: Politics, economics and culture, Stanford University, Stanford, CA, 1999.

Woods, Ngaire, "Good governance in international organizations", Global Governance, 5(1999), 39-61.

Nye, Joseph S., "Seven tests: Between concert and unilateralism", The National Interest (USA), Winter 2001/2002, pp. 5-13.

Childers, Erskine, "The United Nations and global institutions: Discourse and reality", Global Governance, 3(1997), 269-276.

www.yaleglobal.yale.edu, Yale Center for the Study of Globalization

Lynch, Cecelia, "The promise and problems of internationalism", Global Governance, 5(1999), 83-101.

Bazerman, Max H., Baron, Jonathan, and Shonk, Katherine, "You can't enlarge the pie": Six barriers to effective government, Basic, New York, 2001.

Diamond, Jared, Guns, germs, and steel: The fates of human societies, Norton, New York, 1999 and 2003.

Wood, Robin, Managing complexity: How businesses can adapt and prosper in the connected economy, The Economist Books, London, 2000.

Micklethwait, John, and Wooldridge, Adrian, "From Sarajevo to September 11: The future of globalization", Policy Review, February & March 2003, No. 117, 49-63.

Luck, Edward C., "Rediscovering the state", Global Governance, 8(2002), 7-11.

Fomerand, Jaques, "Recent UN textbooks: Suggestions from an old-fashioned practitioner", Global Governance, 83(2002), 383-403.

United Nations Development Programme, Human development report 2002: Deepening democracy in a fragmented

world, Oxford University, New York and Oxford, 2002.

Fredrickson, H. George, "Public administration, governance and the concept of universal jurisdiction", PA Times (USA), July 2003, p. 11.

United Nations, World public sector report: Globalization and the state, Part II, Executive Summary, Division for Public Economics and Public Administration, New York, 2001.

Brinkerhoff, Jennifer M., "Global public policy, partnership, and the case of the World Commission on Dams", Public Administration Review, May-June 2002, Vol. 62, No. 3, pp. 324-335.

Baker, Andrew, "The G-7 as a global 'ginger group': Plurilateralism and four-dimensional diplomacy", Global Governance 6(2000), 165-189.

Toffler, Alvin, Powershift: Knowledge, wealth, and violence at the edge of the 21st century, Bantam Books, New York, paperback, 1991.

Brown, Lester R., World without borders, Vintage, New York, August 1973.