

PEACEKEEPING

Introductory quotes

" [UN Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuellar, in his speech, said] I was, of course, gratified by the award of the Nobel Peace Prize last year to United Nations peace-keeping operations However, careful thought needs to be given to how the purpose and scope of peace-keeping operations can be adapted to the evolving and rapidly changing world situation.

.... Peace-keeping missions will have to be adjusted to types of situations not encountered before.

The financing of peace-keeping operations has presented difficulties time and again. Such serious undertakings, in which lives are at stake, cannot be initiated or conducted with divided counsel about their details and with expectations of short-cuts. Although linked with international diplomacy, peace-keeping by the United Nations must conform to the highest standards of military efficiency

.... Lacking a concerted effort to achieve a just and lasting settlement of the dispute underlying a conflict, the mounting of peace-keeping operations or mediation can produce an illusion of calm, beneath which resentments fester, threatening new outbreaks of hostilities. This has often been forgotten in the past, but ignoring it in future can present incalculable dangers to peace."

"Address by Secretary-General on peace-keeping in 1990s", United Nations Press Release SG/SM/1039, **November 2, 1989**.

[Note: Most unfortunately, this wise and eloquent counsel has continued to be ignored throughout the 1990s and to the present, as shown by the next two (and many other) entries below calling repeatedly for such a rethinking, i.e. going back to point zero many years later, only after the gravest consequences -- including repeated genocides -- of more than a decade's fumbling or inaction.]

"The Brahimi report implicitly criticizes the appointment of key peacekeeping personnel on geopolitical grounds, rather than on merit, and details how UN senior peacekeeping staff in the field -- civilian and military -- should prepare for duties. In the case of Sierra Leone, there is little evidence of any preparation at all. As the report states, 'Put simply, the UN is far from being a meritocracy today, and unless it takes steps to become one, it will not be able to reverse the alarming trend of qualified staff ... leaving the organization.' These are fighting words at the UN, where turf, national advantage, and every job are fought over and preserved with a vigor that belies the public image of UN torpor in most other respects. The UN is urged by the panel to create a standing pool of civilian personnel specializing in field service ... , in the absence of which inexperienced and untrained staff must start afresh in every peacekeeping operation, thus inevitably making many avoidable mistakes early on."

David M. Malone and Ramesh Thakur, "UN peacekeeping: Lessons learned?",

Global Governance, 7 (2001), 11-17 [14].

[Note: The report referred to is the Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations [the "Brahimi report"], UN document A/55/305 -- S/2000/809 of **August 21 2000**, which is available at <http://www.un.org/documents/> under the A document number]

"Secretary-General Kofi Annan has called publicly for a rethinking of the international institutions that were largely sidelined during the Iraq war.

.... The war [in Iraq] and more recent crises in Africa 'force us to ask ourselves whether the institutions and methods we are accustomed to are really adequate to deal with all the stresses of the last couple of years.'

Suggesting that some world leaders at the upcoming General Assembly should set aside time for basic discussions on these issues, he said: If we are going to make preventive action, or war, part of our response to these new threats, what are the rules? Who decides? Under what circumstances? Did what happened in Iraq constitute an exception? A procedure others can exploit? What are the rules?'

At one point, recalling the bitter dismissals of the United Nations last winter, he said, with a bare hint of satisfaction, 'I did warn those who were bashing the UN that they had to be careful because they may need the UN soon.'

Felicity Barringer, "Annan urges rethink of UN role in crises", International Herald Tribune, **August 1, 2003**.

[Note: "Peacekeeping" in this section is used as a traditional and broader term, which in recent years has come to include the subcategories "peacemaking," "peace building," and "peace enforcement", which all appear among the following entries]

Chronological quotes

"[When informed that North Korea had attacked South Korea on June 25, 1950, U.N.] Secretary-General Trygve Lie blurted, "This is war against the United Nations!'

.... Lie saw the immediate crisis and inherent danger to the future of the U.N [which] had been formed to keep the peace of the world

A native of a small and powerless nation Trygve Lie believed deeply in the purposes and necessity of the United Nations. If the U.N. proved it could not offer at least some protection to the weak, then it was useless, and would disappear.

Moving swiftly [the Security Council [adopted a resolution urging the cessation of hostilities.]

" [Lie succeeded only because] the Soviet Union was boycott[ing] the Council meetings over the issue of seating Red China.

" on the night of 27 June the Security Council passed a resolution [calling on U.N. members to assist South Korea] to restore peace and security in the area.

" The United States now had woven a U.N. cloak to carry out its national policy.

In the future, this 'cloak' would become both a help and a hindrance."

T.R. Fehrenbach, This kind of war: A study in unpreparedness, Macmillan, New York, 1963, pp. 65-66, 77-78, 86.

[Note: So began the first and most massive UN peacekeeping mission, where fighting ended with a cease-fire in **July 1953**, but in fact tensions and military activities continue on to the present day]

"Over 40 years, thinking about the purposes and justifications of the U.N. has evolved. the U.N. was [originally expected] to be the anchor or a new order of international law. The failure of the U.N. to fulfill this role is so obvious that everyone now expects the U.N. to ignore wars, invasions, and acts of terror except in the most selective of cases.

Which course is more likely to deter future international lawlessness: appeal to paper institutions or self-enforcement? ... handling the problem over to the U.N. is simply a way of tabling it.

... Camp David shows how utterly dispensable the U.N. is in its last 'peacekeeping' role. Peacekeeping troops can only remain in place at the sufferance of both belligerents. Belligerents that want to make war can get rid of the U.N. And belligerents that want to make peace do not need it. They can agree on any peacekeeping force they want. Indian troops police northern Sri Lanka, Syrian troops police Beirut, and a force put together by the United States polices Sinai. Lebanon shows that you can have blue helmets without peace. Sinai shows that you can have peace without blue helmets."

Charles Krauthammer, "Let it sink: Why the U.S. should bail out of the U.N.", The New Republic, **August 24, 1987**, pp. 18-23 [19-20].

"For a decade, the Cambodian question has been addressed by the United Nations as if only one issue were of international concern: Vietnam's illegal invasion and occupation. The other grave issue, the crimes against humanity committed by Pol Pot and his government, have been ignored in order to ensure that Vietnam left Cambodia.

.... The Vietnamese army has finally gone, according to all available information.

[Now] Pol Pot's ... army is leading an offensive in a new civil war.

Stopping the Khmer Rouge cannot be considered [or dismissed as] an 'internal' problem for Cambodians. The international community has been actively involved in the Cambodian war since 1979. [It should be equally involved in seeking] a peaceful political settlement and a immediate end to the civil war.

The United Nations could ... work with the Paris conference on Cambodia for the cease-fire. ...

You will hear arguments that the Cambodian question is very complicated and subtle and requires morally ambiguous solutions. Consider only one fact: Cambodia is at war. If the Khmer Rouge win, there will be nothing complicated or subtle or ambiguous about their genocidal rule. It will happen again."

Elizabeth Becker and William Shawcross, "Act now to stop another Cambodian catastrophe", International Herald Tribune, **November 14, 1989**.

Note: Ms. Becker is author of When the war was over, a history of the Cambodian revolution. Mr. Shawcross is author of The quality of mercy: Cambodia, holocaust and modern conscience.]

"The United Nations is an incompetent and poorly run organization, which has succeeded only in endangering the lives of its own troops in Bosnia, according to the former head of UN forces in Sarajevo, Major-General Lewis Mackenzie [of Canada.]

'Countries don't give their troops to the UN in trust to be killed trying to implement a really lousy ceasefire agreement arranged by a bunch of diplomats and politicians ... That's what's happening in Yugoslavia.' The plan put into place 'never had a chance of working', the general said, and 'now people are dying.'

He contemptuously dismissed the diplomats and bureaucrats at the UN's New York headquarters as 'a nine-to-five civilian operation' ... and [advised future commanders] 'don't get into trouble in the field after 5pm New York time or Saturday or Sunday. There is no one to answer the phone.'

[UN representative] Cedric Thornberry told the *Independent*, 'My only regret is that [General Mackenzie] did not make a more substantive contribution to the future of UN peace-keeping. Like many splendid peace-keepers, he fails to get to the heart of the problem. The UN is the sum total of what governments want us to be.'

Simon Jones, "Gen. Mackenzie slams UN's nine-to-fivers", Sunday Independent (UK), **January 31, 1993**.

"It's been a bad year for peacekeeping -- and for the United Nations, which was expected to be the agency of a new world order.

There are 13 peacekeeping operations underway, a record number. [and] More than 50,000 soldiers and police officers wear the blue headgear

United Nations peacekeepers are criticized all over the world. Their rules of engagement, and their lack of heavy weapons and air support, prevent them from doing any real fighting. The U.N. philosophy is 'to show that you're a friend. Sometimes this works' Other times, troublemakers 'see this as weakness.'

In some hardship posts, U.N. officials live embarrassingly well. They are paid \$140 a day for expenses in Cambodia -- where the average annual wage is \$110. Salvadorans refer to the United Nations as the 'Vacaciones Unidas' (United Vacations). Yet back in New York, peacekeeping and humanitarian staffers are crushed by overwork.

With the Cold War over, the United Nations probably needs to be reinvented or at least overhauled The first requirement is a clear idea of what the United Nations can do -- and what it should not even attempt to do."

Russell Watson with Anne Underwood, "Perils of peacekeeping: With more operations than ever, the United Nations is stumbling badly", Newsweek, **February 15, 1993**, pp. 13-14.

"Simultaneous crises in Somalia, Bosnia and Cambodia have exposed severe shortcomings in the UN peacekeeping operations that the United States and its allies had hoped to use in settling conflicts around the world.

.... the basic ideas of peacekeeping are being rapidly revised and expanded, in ways that lead to doubts and clashes on the ground. But Secretary-General Butros Ghali has led the UN, with the enthusiastic consent of its most powerful members, into a new area he calls 'peace enforcement.'

In a [recent] speech, U.S. chief delegate [to the UN] Madeleine K. Albright described the 'programmed amateurism' of UN peacekeeping. She cited a 'near-total absence of contingency planning', a 'lack of centralized command and control,' and 'lift arrangements cobbled together on a wing and a prayer.'

She said the troops and civilian staff were 'hastily recruited, ill-equipped and often unprepared.' The UN has no global troop training program of its own, but must rely on individual nations to train their own troops and then gives them manuals and briefings when they come under UN command."

Julia Preston, "Three simultaneous crises expose frailties of the UN", International Herald Tribune, **June 16, 1993**.

"Since 1989, the 'international community' ... has been gripped by collective amnesia where the UN is concerned. Long reviled as a 'talking shop', the UN was suddenly called upon to perform incredible tasks. The same bureaucrats who were considered incompetent in the past were immediately asked to organize food and weapons for armies in Bosnia, Cambodia, Somalia.

In fact, many of the problems which have appeared abroad merely reflect difficulties which have always plagued the UN's New York headquarters.

Given the UN's institutional flaws, ... what is extraordinary is that anyone ever thought [the recent peace-keeping efforts] would work in the first place. Leaving aside the fact that the UN is not, as many pretend, a sovereign state, which can command soldiers and expect them to obey Giving huge new projects to an old-fashioned, unreformed bureaucracy was always going to be a recipe for disaster."

Anne Applebaum, "Is the UN really necessary?", The Spectator (UK), **31 July 1993**.

[Note: Ms. Applebaum is also the author of, *inter alia*, a very well-received recent book, Gulag: A history, Doubleday, New York, 2003.]

"The responses to allegations of black-market dealing and drug smuggling among peace-keeping troops in Yugoslavia are already looking unpromising. Sylvana Foa, the spokeswoman for the U.H. High Commissioner for Refugees, found it odd that anybody should be surprised that 'out of 14,000 pimply 18-year olds a bunch of them should get up to naughty tricks'".

The Spectator, **September 4, 1993**, p. 5, as quoted in Houshang Ameri, Politics of staffing the United Nations Secretariat, Major Concepts in Politics and Political Theory, Vol. 8, Peter Lang, New York, 1996, p. 399.

"The failures of the United Nations as peacekeeper were summed up in a report issued recently by the International Institute for Strategic Studies. And dismal reading it made. Every mission, it said, lacked an effective system of command and control. Units were inadequately trained. Once deployed, the troops were not mobile enough and were poorly protected. Financial and administrative authority remained centralized in New York, which hampered commanders on the ground. ...

'The United Nations has become the world's emergency service', said Sir Brian Urquhart, ... 'But it is simply not set up politically, economically or constitutionally to cope with this role.'

From the Secretary-General on down, UN officials, military men, and diplomats sense that the machinery of international action is not working [to meet the challenge of new peacekeeping roles]."

Michael Sheridan, "United Nations: What's gone wrong? Structural defects: Chaotic harmony or just chaos?", The Independent (UK), **1 November 1993**.

" ... From Rwanda to Haiti, the world is full of the noise of the rich preparing to intervene in the affairs of the poor.

This is a world without rules. But it's at least worth trying to understand why countries risk their young men's lives overseas. Here's a short guide.

-- The Wallflowers. Some nations, for reasons of habit or history, are wary of ventures beyond their borders ... The two classic cases are Germany and Japan. Mexico is another ... so is Switzerland.

-- Do Gooders. [When nations send troops abroad, they say it is] for 'humanitarian reasons' or for 'stability' in a troubled region. Here's a rough rule of thumb: believe such claims when they're made by Canada, Australia or the Scandinavian countries. Otherwise, take them with a pinch of salt.

-- The imperial twitch. This used to be the most common motive for interventions abroad ... to secure or maintain a sphere of influence. It's out of favor now with everyone but the French.

Backyard bullies. They practice intervention to defend some 'vital interest' close to home. The Americans ... the Russians ... India ...

How do today's interventions fit this taxonomy? Not very neatly."

Michael Elliott, "A calculus of incursion", Newsweek, **August 1, 1994**, p. 17.

"In the past two years...[UN] peacekeepers have been shot, butchered, shelled, and taken hostage by people they are trying to help.

.... [from] 1948 until 1992, the UN lost on average one peace keeper every two weeks. Fatalities now average one every two days. In 1994, 144 peacekeepers died on duty.

.... A few more disasters ..., and many of the more than 80 countries that now contribute to peacekeeping might develop cold feet.

.... more than two years ago, [at UN headquarters there was] a military staff of only six [and] about 25,000 peace keepers in the field. The setup looked pretty amateurish -- one of the first plans for troop deployment in the former Yugoslavia was drawn on a Michelin road map with Magic Markers. Today, headquarters has about 100 staff members and about 75,000 peacekeepers.

Many countries are showing the strains of their commitment. Moreover, there have been continuing problems with troops from developing countries showing up without proper equipment. The UN provides a subsidy for each peace keeper of \$1,000 a month, which is why many poor counties have large contingents."

Jeff Sallot, "The blue berets' battle fatigue", The Globe and Mail, Toronto, **October 8, 1994**, as presented in "The UN at 50: Midlife crisis", World Press Review, June 1995, p. 11.

"[Major, continuing, recently-ended, or longest-continuing of seventeen] missions by UN troops, observers, and civilian police:

UNPROFOR: Protection force in Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia. Begun March, 1992. Annual cost: \$1.6 billion

UNOSOM II: Operation in Somalia. Begun May, 1993. Ended March, 1995. Annual cost: \$942 million.

ONUMOZ: Operation in Mozambique. Begun December, 1992. Ended January, 1995. Annual cost: \$295 million.

UNIFIL: Interim force in southern Lebanon. Begun March, 1978. Annual cost: \$142 million.

UNIKOM: Iraq-Kuwait observer mission. Begun April, 1991. Annual cost: \$63 million.

UNFICYP: Peace-keeping force in Cyprus. Begun March, 1964. Annual cost: \$42 million."

"Keeping the world's peace" [Chart, Source: UN], in articles on "The UN at 50: Midlife crisis", World Press Review, **June 1995**, p. 11.

"A long-awaited internal investigation [concludes] that the United Nations appeased and unwittingly abetted the Bosnian Serb military in 1995 as it carried out the worst mass murder in Europe since World War II.

The 155-page report is a chilling play-by-play of one of the UN's darkest episodes.

....

The blame for the fall of Srebrenica was not the UN's alone, according to the report. It says the 15-nation UN Security Council was the chief architect of a policy that was doomed to fail from the start. The outgunned, lightly armed Dutch peacekeepers also come under criticism for failing to [fight] or to warn of the enormous danger facing the enclave.

But the report reserves its harshest criticism for the UN leadership

The use of force, not diplomacy, is the only appropriate way to confront a determined aggressor, the report says

'In Bosnia and Kosovo, the international community tried to reach a negotiated settlement with an unscrupulous and murderous regime' it says. 'In both instances, it required the use of force to bring a halt to the planned and systematic killing and expulsion of civilians.'

Colum Lynch, "UN admits it appeased Bosnian Serbs in '95," International Herald Tribune, **November 16, 1999**.

"It is not easy to admit the truth of Srebrenica, the Bosnian town where thousands of Muslim men were executed and hundreds buried alive ... But in its report on Monday, the United Nations accepts its share of the blame.

The UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, should be commended for this stark admission. The question, however, is whether his honesty will spur bolder peacekeeping in the future.

.... In the recent case of East Timor, the council supported the idea of a UN referendum on independence but refused to send troops to deter a bloodbath that was widely predicted.

Sometimes the United Nations' failure is built into its structure. Where a permanent member of the Security Council opposes intervention, no action will be authorized -- hence the current UN silence about war crimes in Chechnya, and its early impotence on Kosovo. But in cases where the Security Council does approve action, it is fair to insist that it be serious. The UN member states need to embrace force to secure peace; they need to shove neutrality aside and denounce evil in order to combat it."

"The UN apologizes", *The Washington Post*, International Herald Tribune, **November 19, 1999**.

"In international politics, few words are quite as dirty as appeasement. It smacks of cowardice, wishful thinking and prevarication, coupled with a naïve belief that aggressors, once appeased, will go away content

So when [Secretary-General] Kofi Annan admits to appeasement [in his report on the 1995 Srebrenica massacre], it is worth taking note.

.... [He concludes that] ethnic cleansing 'must be met decisively',

.... [but might also] have suggested that an early failure to warn aggressors clearly of the consequences of their actions will almost inevitably either allow aggression, or lead to war. Ambiguity may indeed be just as dangerous as appeasement.

This, alas, is the lesson not just of the 1990s, but of the 20th century. at least five wars the two world wars [and the Korean, Falklands, and Gulf wars] -- might all have been avoided had the ultimate victors made it plain from the outset that they were willing to fight.

One of the hardest tasks for western politicians in the post-cold-war world is to persuade public opinion that the surest way to avoid more wars is, paradoxically, to display an unwavering readiness to fight them."

"Lessons from Bosnia: The UN admits to appeasement. Ambiguity can be as great an evil", The Economist, **November 20, 1999**, p. 18

"A damning report issued Thursday by an international panel of experts holds both United Nations officials and leading member countries, primarily the United States, responsible for failing to prevent or stop the genocide in which hundreds of thousands of Rwandans were slaughtered

in 1994.

.... the leader of the investigation, Ingvar Carlsson, a former Swedish prime minister, said it was 'hard to understand' why the Security Council decimated the peacekeeping force in Rwanda, reducing it to a few hundred from 2,500 troops when the genocide began, and then increased the force to 5,500 when the weeks of massacres were over.

'Information received by a United Nations mission that plans are being made to exterminate any group of people requires an immediate and determined response,' the report said.

The panel found that a cable from [General Romeo Dallaire of Canada] in January 1994 warning of Hutu plans for massacres of Tutsi was not given to Secretary-General [Butros Butros-Ghali], whom activists in Europe have attempted to charge with genocide.

[That cable] has become the center of accusations that the United Nations could have predicted genocide and did nothing."

Barbara Crossette, "UN bungled intervention in Rwanda, inquiry says", International Herald Tribune, **December 19, 1999**.

[Note: see also more entries on the above report in the Security Council section above]

"Kofi Annan was brave to set up an inquiry [into the Rwanda genocide in 1994]. The report does indeed show that Mr. Annan acted as an ultra-cautious bureaucrat, who urged his staff to stick strictly to their mandate in the midst of murder, asked for information not action and, worst of all, failed to follow up a crucial telegram that gave warning of impending planned genocide.

[However,] the blame is widespread.

Mr. Annan has apologized to the Rwandan people for the UN's failures. Should he have resigned? He would certainly have set a new standard in international public life had he done so. But his resignation alone would not have been right. First, several other individuals were also culpable. Second, he has admitted publicly to his errors and is [seeking agreement on new intervention principles for the future].

[The reactions of the Secretariat and Security Council]

seem at best like incompetence, at worst like callous indifference. But the crucial failure of political will was not the fault of UN officials [but] most of all [that of three] permanent members of the Security Council -- America, Britain and France."

"Rwanda revisited: A look back at the biggest bloodstain on the world's conscience in the 1990s", The Economist, **December 23, 1999**, pp. 5-6.

"After the humiliating failures of United Nations peacekeeping efforts in Bosnia and Rwanda there was a consensus that new ways of undertaking them [needed urgently to be] developed. That is what makes the recent decision to deploy 5,500 U.N. peacekeepers to the Democratic Republic of the Congo so incomprehensible.

As the United Nations itself now concedes, [the efforts] in Rwanda and Bosnia ... never had either the means or the mandate to accomplish anything more than a bit of marginal humanitarian relief. [Yet in] the proposed Congo deployment the identical mistakes are being made once again. The fact that they are being made with the best of intentions alters nothing, and may, in fact, make the effects of what will almost certainly be another catastrophic failure all the more damaging. For to the public, the fact that the mission has neither the funding nor the authority to do much of anything will not be clear. Instead, it will seem as if the world tried to do something for Africa, but nothing could be done. Such a conclusion helps nobody, least of all those Africans who deserve so much better from the rest of the world."

David Rieff, "Making the same mistakes: Memo to the United Nations: A peacekeeping mission to Congo may do more harm than good", Newsweek, **March 20, 2000**.

[Note: Mr. Rieff is the author, among other books, of A bed for the night: Humanitarianism in crisis, Simon and Schuster, New York, 2002.]

" the Security Council pledged 11,100 troops for the Sierra Leone operation, which would make it the biggest current peacekeeping force and a test case for UN resolve in Africa. It is not going well

The UN force is supposed to monitor a peace deal, signed last July

[but a] recent UN report accused the RUF rebels of continuing to terrorise civilians. 'There have been almost daily reports of looting of villages, house burnings, harassment and abductions of civilians, rape and sexual abuse,' [and] cannibalism and chopping off limbs have been RUF specialties.

[This may be occurring with rebel leader Foday Sankoh's] blessing, or even encouragement. His attitude to peace and the UN is troubling. He recently told UN officers: 'The UN has no reason to be in Sierra Leone. We have no business with you. You are not helping us, [you are] a threat to the security of our people.' For good measure, he described President [Ahmed Tejan] Kabbah as an agent of colonialism and called [Secretary-General Kofi] Annan 'a nuisance.'

"Sierra Leone: Out of control", The Economist, **May 6, 2000**, p. 43.

"Secretary-General Kofi Annan on Tuesday welcomed indications from the United States and Britain that they would provide limited help to a United Nations peacekeeping mission in Sierra Leone that is jeopardized by rebel attacks and the detentions of more than 500 peacekeepers.

But UN officials said that Mr. Annan's appeals for a rapid reaction force of troops to save the peacekeeping effort had so far gone unanswered.

.... Though British officials say they are not joining the UN effort, Mr. Annan expressed gratitude Tuesday for their presence, which has helped stabilize security in the capital.

'As I said, the British presence is some kind of help', he said.

Bernard Miyet, the undersecretary-general for peacekeeping operations, arrived in Sierra Leone on Monday night to strengthen the morale of the UN peacekeepers. On Tuesday, Mr. Miyet visited units from Ghana and Guinea. He was also expected to review the mission's administrative problems and talk with the Sierra Leone government about how to secure the release of the detained peacekeepers.

[A UN official] said the United Nations mission still had no idea what had happened to the rebel leader Foday Sankoh, who disappeared Monday from his residence in Freetown."

Christopher S. Wren, "Annan struggling on Sierra Leone aid: Weak response to peacekeeper plea; U.K. speeds evacuation of Freetown", International Herald Tribune, **May 8, 2000**.

"The drama in Sierra Leone, where a rebel group is holding 500 United Nations peacekeepers hostage, is all the more distressing because of the circumstances. The soldiers wandered into the West African bush with outdated maps, got lost and then were captured and stripped of their weapons by the very guerrillas they had been sent to disarm.

... the effort to intervene in Sierra Leone's brutal nine-year civil war was doomed from the start.

It was the product of wishful thinking by Western countries, which have the world's best ... armies, but thought they could fulfill their commitment to peace in Africa by hiring unprepared Third World soldiers and putting them in blue helmets.

Without a full commitment from the West the United Nations has no authority. Combatants see the policing force for what it is, a ragtag collection of Third World armies."

Michael Maren, "UN humiliation when major members don't care", International Herald Tribune, **May 10, 2000**.

Note: Mr. Maren is the author of The road to hell: The ravaging effects of foreign aid and international charity, Free Press, New York, 1997.

"The UN record on peacekeeping has been badly tarnished in recent years. The international community was repelled when peacekeepers were chained to bomb targets in Bosnia and U.S. Army Rangers were dragged through the streets of Mogadishu. Now several hundred U.N. troops are held hostage in Sierra Leone.

The United Nations should get involved only when there is peace to keep.

Peacekeeping operations need money, manpower, disciplined command and clear terms of engagement.

Regarding deployment, the United Nations must improve the technical planning and execution of its missions.

More than light armor, troops need enough firepower to show strength and deter aggression. They should be combat ready, have an adequate communications infrastructure and up-to-date maps

No peacekeeping operation is forever. The United Nations needs an exit strategy. There is a difference between peace-keeping and peace-building.

The United Nations should not be dissuaded from fulfilling its responsibility to promote peace and security. But UN troops must not become casualties in the conflicts they are supposed to prevent. Nor should the image of the United Nations be tarnished by two-bit tyrants like Foday Sankoh."

David L. Phillips, "Things the United Nations ought to be learning in Sierra Leone", International Herald Tribune, **May 11, 2000**.

[Note: Mr. Phillips is a senior fellow at Columbia University's International Conflict Resolution Center]

"Sometimes it is better to wage war than to agree to an unstable and unworkable peace, [as] the current Sierra Leone crisis bears out.

A peace accord signed in July 1999 mistakenly assumed that the rebels were interested in peace, let alone in real governing. And it treated Mr. Sankoh as a legitimate champion of the rural poor, whose interests he claimed to represent. In reality, he [wanted only to exploit] a corrupt state that had collapsed.

From the rebel's point of view, why have peace when it is the absence of law and order that enables one to loot? Why let peacekeeping troops into the country's diamond mining area if one is profiting from the sale of these riches on the black market?

The United Nations, so reflexively attached to the mantra of peace at any price, sent peacekeeping troops when there was no peace to keep.

The peace accord was quick and cheap, but doomed.

[Supporting Nigerian troops] is the best solution, because Nigeria has national interests at stake. and might recognize what the West has not: that peacekeeping in the region can be won only through war."

William Reno, "War in Sierra Leone can be better than an impossible peace", International Herald Tribune, **May 11, 2000**.

[Note: Mr. Reno is the author of Warlord politics and African states]

"[Secretary-General Kofi Annan] spoke of the lessons the [UN] is learning [in Sierra Leone] about how to be better prepared for an era of messier wars and free-lance warlords impervious to the international pressures that once helped keep a check on renegade

governments.

To confront these conflicts, Mr. Annan said, the United Nations will need a force of rapid-reaction contingents on call in countries with well-trained and well-equipped troops ready to move fast to pave the way for peacekeeping forces to follow.

The Security Council will also have to give these forces stronger combat authority and better equipment

The organization will also need better intelligence and more intelligence sharing, he said. 'We were completely sleeping on the issue of intelligence,' Mr. Annan said, referring to Sierra Leone. 'The way things happened, they must have been reasonably well coordinated. We should have had a sense of what was going on.'

Barbara Crossette, "With U.S. loath to send troops, UN seeks peacekeeping changes", International Herald Tribune, **May 15, 2000**.

"As [Fohday Sankoh's Sierra Leone forces] began abducting hundreds of United Nations peacekeepers 10 days ago, [Sankoh repeatedly assured] the United Nations special representative, Oluyemi Odeniji, that there would be a peaceful resolution

Mr. Odeniji, who called Mr. Sankoh 'my brother', then told other diplomats that they worried too much and special Libyan envoy Ali Treki told journalists that Mr. Sankoh had promised to release all 500 hostages

That fundamental misreading of Mr. Sankoh along with poor [field] communications and a weak mandate combined to lead to one of the international body's most visible fiascoes, according to [numerous sources].

'It is hard to imagine how much more wrong you could be' [an official] said. 'They kept telling us not to worry, but where was the intelligence? Why not just wave a white flag and say 'Don't shoot, I am a peacekeeper.'"

[Sources] said what kept the mission from crumbling entirely was [elite British forces] who arrived and '[put a stop to] bickering, finger-pointing, and hesitation' said a UN official. 'They [shaped up] everyone around by coming in, taking charge, and simply stating that [Sankoh's forces] would not be allowed to succeed.'"

Douglas Farah, "Hoodwinked by a rebel leader: UN's misreading of Sankoh hastened Sierra Leone fiasco", International Herald Tribune, **May 15, 2000**.

"The UN seems to survive only by forgetting. By forgetting, it manages to repress a legacy of shame. In 1994, Rwanda, in 1995, Srebrenica Only last autumn, Secretary-General Kofi Annan vowed to learn from these catastrophes. Now a new catastrophe unfolds.

The UN's department of peacekeeping operations knew that the contingents in Sierra Leone were under-strength and poorly equipped, yet it failed to protest publicly when the Security Council sent them anyway.

Institutional amnesia locks the United Nations system into a fatal compulsion to repeat. An incorrigible moral narcissism about its own good intentions makes it unable to recognize that its central ideal and instrument -- peacekeeping -- is so flawed that it must be abandoned altogether.

Where peace has to be enforced rather than maintained, what's required are combat-capable warriors under robust rules of engagement [with strong support] and a single line of command to a national government or regional alliance.

But the largest lesson of all is that peacekeeping is destroying the United Nations itself. If it still values its own survival, it must abandon an ideal that it has so comprehensively betrayed."

Michael Ignatieff, "A bungling UN is undermining itself", International Herald Tribune, **May 16, 2000**.

[Note: Mr. Ignatieff is the author of Virtual war: Kosovo and beyond.]

"Richard Holbrooke, the chief U.S. representative [at the UN] -- who is just back from an extended peace mission in Africa -- has called for a sweeping overhaul of peacekeeping operations and for more money from UN members to make the operations effective.

'Peacekeeping operations must be fixed in order to be saved', [he] said at a budget meeting.

[He also] called for a major expansion of the UN peacekeeping department and for allowing Secretary-General Kofi Annan more flexibility in staffing it. That matter is a focus of constant battle here, where staff allocations of all kinds are micromanaged by the politicized General Assembly.

Mr. Holbrooke also said countries given 'discounts' on their peacekeeping bills for more than a quarter of a century should pay more as their economies grow. All the organization's member states pay a proportion of the total peacekeeping costs.

Five nations answered the appeal and said they would pay more -- Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Israel, and the Phillipines.

Most diplomats [at the UN in New York], stung by the humiliation in Sierra Leone, would not fault the conclusion that peacekeeping needs to be rethought."

Barbara Crossette, "Holbrooke tells UN 'Fix peace role'", International Herald Tribune, **May 18, 2000**.

"In the spring of 1999, Foday Sankoh, [the brutal rebel leader in Sierra Leone] had at last been brought to the dock.

But a few months later, Sankoh was free -- the result of a misguided peace accord brokered by [the U.S. and the U.N.] that set the stage for the debacle that followed.

.... the West frittered away its chance to bring lasting peace to Sierra Leone by opting instead for an exercise in shallow and opportunistic diplomacy.

Most observers believe that the only solution was all-out war against the rebels [by supporting] the Nigerian Army -- a proven fighting force.

Mercenary armies are hardly a palatable long-term solution for international peacekeeping. But neither are half-baked peace treaties and underequipped multilateral forces lacking a mandate to use force. Meanwhile, the cynicism has hardly diminished. Jesse Jackson [is helping] press for the release of the U.N. hostages. The statesman anointed to handle the negotiations? Liberian President Charles Taylor, the former warlord whose [army murdered thousands] and turned his country into a wasteland during the 1990s."

Joshua Hammer, "The high cost of cheap peace: Sierra Leone's crisis arose from a mix of misjudgments and opportunistic diplomacy", Newsweek, **May 22, 2000**, p. 4.

"After the chaos in Sierra Leone, [many people have urged changes in UN peacekeeping]. But such demands assume that the UN is capable of reform. Unfortunately, that may not be the case.

The UN is always short of the personnel it needs for peacekeeping operations. First World countries with first-rate armies are usually unwilling to put their troops at risk. Thus, these operations are often left to Third World countries, and the UN sends some of the worst soldiers in the world off to situations where it can only hope they are not called on to do anything.

The same is true of the UN's police monitors, who are supposed to improve respect for human rights.

When peacekeepers perform badly, it is too politically embarrassing to remove them. This is particularly true of senior officials since they were often given their jobs not because of their ability but because of the country they represent. For instance, as the situation in Sierra Leone began to melt down, UN officials in New York, who usually micromanage things, began to

blame the officials in Africa for the failure."

Dennis C. Jett, "The UN's peacekeeping failures are built in and intractable", International Herald Tribune, **May 23, 2000**.

[Note: Mr. Jett, an advisor at the Carter Center, is the author of Why peacekeeping fails, St. Martins, New York, 2000, and was U.S. ambassador to Mozambique from 1993-1996]

" ... both the Security Council and the UN Secretariat had compiled an entirely inglorious record in the months preceding the [Rwanda] genocide. ...

... the UN Secretariat went far beyond being merely neutral bureaucrats carrying out the wishes of their political masters in the Security Council. Time and again, they imposed on UNAMIR the tightest constraints imaginable ...

The Secretariat did not exercise its right to function as an advocate with the Security Council by [urging members] ... to take more positive action. ... Their record is a dark stain on the UN and themselves.

... [In mid-1998], Secretary-General Annan [a direct participant] ... traveled to Kigali and apologized ... 'Looking back now ... we see the signs ... what we did was not nearly enough ...' Rwandan officials, who had no doubt whatsoever about the signs ... available, were furious with the Secretary-General's performance.

The price of the [international] betrayal was paid by countless Rwandans ... In contrast, ... of the key Security Council or Secretariat [actors] ... No one resigned ... Many of their careers have flourished greatly ... Instead of international accountability, it appears that international impunity is the rule of the day."

Rwanda: The Preventable Genocide, Report of The International Panel of Eminent Personalities to Investigate the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda and the Surrounding Events, Organization of African Unity, **7 July 2000**, Chapter 15, "The world during the genocide: The United Nations, Belgium, France, and the OAU", paras. 15.1, 15.34-.36, and 15.41. [emphasis added.]

Note: The entire report is available at the Aegis Trust website at www.aegistrust.org/

"There are now 14 'peacekeeping operations' around the world and 13 'peace-building missions'. with 89 countries contributing personnel at a cost this fiscal year of about \$2.2 billion.

.... [A recent UN report has made] practical recommendations on how to do better. The United Nations, being all the nations, cannot and must not have enemies, but it does have principles and practices to defend seriously and vigorously.

[One recommendation calls for assuring] that units being organized for dispatch to a UN operation have the training and equipment needed to do their jobs. This matters, because a lot of the manpower requirements [have] to be filled by small or poor countries eager for the pay as well as the prestige.

If they don't meet the standards, the report says, the contribution should be rejected. No country is named, but this is not hypothetical. It is a challenge and a rejection to the UN habit of overlooking incompetence on political grounds.

Getting a better, more effective peacekeeping job out of the United Nations is obviously in the world's interest. It requires not just peaceful exhortations but peaceful results."

Flora Lewis, Give peacekeeping muscle to the United Nations", International Herald Tribune, **September 1, 2000**.

[Note: After all the peacekeeping problems of the 1990s, why did the UN decide only in 2000 to assure the competence and readiness of the people it sent? See the November 1989 comments of Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuellar which introduce this subsection, and which called for much the same sensible

measures.]

"Counting on regional forces to bring peace to Liberia without substantial American participation is a mistake, one that will likely come with tragic consequences.

[In the mid-1990s the West African peacekeeping forces did little] to protect civilians.

In 1997, [the coalition] choreographed a lopsided election on [Charles Taylor's] behalf. [and] received credit for a rare peacekeeping 'success,.' Butit [arranged] the very disaster it had sought to prevent: the accession of Taylor at a cost of more than 100,000 civilian casualties from 1990 to 1997.

[The forces were involved in] systematic looting trafficking in narcotics [and] sexual violence.

And these are our peacekeepers of choice in Liberia today.

If U.S. forces are active, their professionalism will raise the bar considerably for everyone. [but] the responsibility is not America's alone. The United Nations needs to go public with its oversight, reporting on the actions of the soldiers sent to Liberia in a vigorous manner. It should place greater emphasis on fighting corruption. And it should fully detail the horrifying extent to which rape has been used as a weapon during the last 14 years."

Kenneth L. Cain, "How to save Liberia: Don't count on regional forces, send the Marines", International Herald Tribune, **August 11, 2003**.

[Note: Mr. Cain was a UN human rights officer in Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti and Liberia, and is co-author, with Heidi Postlewait and Andrew Thomson, of Emergency sex and other desperate measures: A true story from hell on earth, Hyperion, New York, 2004.]

"In May, 1,400 South African troops [joined] the hard-pressed UN peacekeepers [in the Congo, which has been gutted by civil war since 1998].

[The task] is proving, unsurprisingly, difficult. After four months, 80 shipping containers of computers, armored cars and other materiel have still not arrived.

.... hundreds of South African soldiers were left sweating idly for months in Kindu.

Some have now been deployed to forward bases But the South Africans have only six armored cars to cover a [very large and] thickly-forested area They had no helicopters, either, until India was recently persuaded to lend two.

Despite the hardships, [they] have notched up some successes. Their presence in Kindu [has help coax] 200,000 people [to return home from the bush].

But the South Africans' relations with the UN in Congo are tetchy. The South African commander in Congo complains that UN officers do not even bother to reply to requests for information, let alone for equipment.

South African soldiers are stretched. This mission falls under the authority of the African Union (AU), rather than the UN. The AU has failed to persuade any other African country to send peacekeepers."

"South Africa tries peacekeeping: Benign ambitions, limited reach", The Economist, **September 13, 2003**, p. 40.

"Eight years after the massacre of more than 7,000 Bosnians, doubts linger about [whether] ... the killings were coldly planned or were improvised in chaos. ...

No architect of the crime has ever explained in public what was in the killers' minds ...

But now, two senior Bosnian Serb officers ...have spoken out at the war crimes tribunal [in the Hague] ... describing the countdown to the massacre and depicting a well-planned and deliberate killing operation. ...

... the countdown to Srebrenica's capture had begun a year earlier, in June 1994. ... [with a] directive detailing Bosnian Serb policy toward the Muslims in the enclave protected by UN peacekeepers. ...

... harassment went on ... until late May 1995, and then the military began to prepare its final assault. ... with thousands of civilians fleeing, many hoping for safety near a UN base at Potocari. ...

The mass executions ... began on July 14 and lasted four days ... [one officer] said he had understood when he was asked to send engineers to dig mass graves.

[The other] ... said he became part of the cover-up ... to dig up uncounted corpses and rebury them at secret sites."

Marlise Simons, "Behind the Srebrenica massacre," International Herald Tribune, **October 13, 2003**.

"[Sergio] Vieira de Mello's death stunned the United Nations and its staff ...

There are few [UN system staff] ... that the secretary-general can call upon ... to assume leadership of crucial missions. ...

"[Sergio Vieira de Mello's death a year ago in the UN headquarters bombing in Baghdad] ... along with 22 of his colleagues ... stunned the United Nations and its staff ...

Why is the United Nations short on competent personnel to lead complex peacekeeping and political missions? ...

The answer is that there is a human resources crisis in the United Nations. An entrenched bureaucracy, fueled by counterproductive quotas, nepotism and outlandishly generous tenure policies, impedes the rise of talent and excellence through the ranks. ...

... This is why Annan was repeatedly compelled to rely on de Mello ... to undertake the three most delicate UN missions in recent times, sending him to Kosovo, East Timor and Iraq, all in a period of less than four years.

[The UN needs outstanding staff] .. with the requisite experience, competence, stature and charisma to manage the UN's presence in situations where thousands if not millions of lives and livelihoods are at stake.

With the support of the Security Council, Annan must thoroughly reshape his work force to improve its caliber and reward talent. Only then could he be sure of a reliable pool of crisis managers ..."

Ludovic Hood, "Remembering de Mello: The UN must let talent rise", International Herald Tribune, **August 13, 2004**.

[Note: Mr. Hood served with the UNDP in East Timor from 2001-2004, and his article was a personal comment.]

"Two weekends ago, spurred on by broadcasts over state radio, pro-government militias in Ivory Coast gathered their machetes and set off to attack French civilians ...

The continuing evacuation of ... Western civilians ... has been the focus of Western concern ... [but] once they have left, what will happen if the same militias once again turn their rage toward the northerners, Muslims and West African immigrants ... or the political opposition?

... One Ivoirian human rights activist told me, 'If it starts, it will start in the countryside first, far away from any UN peacekeepers or French soldiers.' ...

Since ... 2000, the militias ... have become partisan supporters of the ruling party.

Despite two internationally-brokered peace accords ...

the Ivoirian government's failure to hold the militias and security forces accountable ... has only strengthened their impunity ...

The peacekeepers need to make their presence felt ... and be prepared to silence broadcasts that incite or provide directions for violence. ...

The UN Security Council is considering a resolution on Ivory Coast. ... Charged ... 'to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence,' the UN peacekeepers need to

protect vulnerable civilians in Ivory Coast ...”

Corinne Dufka, "Crisis in Ivory Coast: Now, protect Ivoirian civilians", International Herald Tribune, **November 16, 2004**.

[Note: Ms. Dufka is the West Africa researcher for Human Rights Watch.]

“Jean-Marie Guehenno, head of United Nations peacekeeping, has called for a system-wide overhaul of staff discipline amid mounting revelations of sexual abuse by peacekeepers in the Democratic Republic of Congo. ...

The UN's internal oversight arm shortly will release findings of widespread sexual abuse by peacekeepers in the town of Bunia. And the UN is sending a countrywide assessment team to examine reports of other incidents.

[Mr. Guehenno says] 'That problem has been there for many years, but as we stir up the pot, we see things coming up which give a sense of the real dimension' ...

He adds: "To say that these are just a few very isolated cases would not be right. This is something that requires an effort to be uprooted in a very systematic way.'

Mr. Guehenno's public call ... breaks with a system that traditionally prefers to deal quietly with such matters.

But over recent years the UN has publicly committed itself to take better account of women in conflict ...

There are also fears that taking insufficient action could come to haunt the UN. [It] has already been rocked by a series of sexual abuse scandals in West Africa and the Balkans.”

Mark Turner, "Call to act over sexual abuse by UN peacekeepers", Financial Times (UK), **November 18, 2004**.

Note: Discussion of this topic, and a list of useful sources, continues in the subsection on Peacekeeping II.