

SIX-DECADE OVERVIEW

Introductory quotes

"WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS DETERMINED to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom, ...

Article 97.

The Secretariat shall comprise a Secretary-General and such staff as the Organization may require. ... The Secretary-General ... shall be the chief administrative officer of the Organization.

Article 100.

1. In the performance of their duties the Secretary-General and the staff shall not seek or receive instructions from any government or from any other authority external to the Organization. They shall refrain from any action which might reflect on their position as international officials responsible only to the Organization.

2. Each Member of the United Nations undertakes to respect the exclusively international character of the responsibilities of the Secretary-General and the staff and not to seek to influence them in the discharge of their responsibilities.

Article 101.

1. The staff shall be appointed by the Secretary-General under regulations established by the General Assembly. ...

3. The paramount consideration in the employment of the staff and in the determination of the conditions of service shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity. Due regard shall be paid to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible."

Charter of the United Nations, 1945, initial phrases, and Articles 97, 100, and 101. [emphasis added]

"At an early stage in ... [my] study, the late Sir Robert Jackson remarked to me that of course I should never understand the United Nations, in the sense that insiders who have spent many years in its service understand it. And the insiders, he said, would join forces to reject an alien's perspective. Certainly any outsider must defer to such experience and knowledge as Jackson's, a man who had made a systematic effort to think through the problems and possibilities of the UN institutions with a view to their better functioning. But the thought necessarily follows: if the UN is only intelligible from within, how can it be useful, let alone accountable, to those it was created to serve? No organization sealed off from informed scrutiny can claim to be representative. Closed cultures are not dynamic. And an evaluation of the

effectiveness of the global organizations must in any case be set within a larger perspective, one that considers the problems with which they are intended to deal."

Rosemary Righter, Utopia lost: The United Nations and world order, Twentieth Century Fund, New York, **1995**, p. ix.

Chronological quotes

"In the Secretariat there is no unifying directive on the functions of management. The need to keep subordinates informed of what is going on; the need to convey just praise and blame; the need for the impartial award of privilege and promotion; the need for discipline; the need to avoid unnecessary impositions on the time and energy of subordinates; the need to set a personal example do not seem to be appreciated as well as they should be.

These major shortcomings are accompanied by the less important but nevertheless tiresome defects in working conditions perennial irritants that would be tolerated if morale were high, but which count for much when it is low. Add to this the insecurity implicit in staff reductions and in the adjustments required to achieve proper geographic distribution and a balanced budget and you have a most unhappy conglomeration of forces making for discomfiture of the staff.

The staff feels the need for a lead from the top to combat these disrupting factors."

A confidential analysis in **April 1947** of the UN Secretariat's morale, as quoted in Stephen Baldwin, "Good management in the United Nations", Secretariat News (New York), January 31, 1986, pp. 11-12.

"[In 1950] ... the General Assembly stressed the need for careful programme reviews to effectively use available resources. Subsequently in 1953, the Secretary-General made a comprehensive review of the work and structure of the Secretariat. This 'evaluation process' and the subsequent reform actions sought to concentrate efforts and resources on the priority programmes which an international organization could 'perform efficiently and effectively,' avoid a 'dangerous' dispersion of these resources over a widespread 'miscellany' of projects, and launch 'a continuing self-criticism as to the way in which various tasks are carried out.'"

"Concentration of effort and resources," General Assembly resolution 413 (V) of **1 December 1950**,

"Organization of the Secretariat: Report of the Secretary-General," UN document A/2554 of **12 November 1953**, para. 5, and

"Annual report of the Secretary-General on the work of the organization 1 July 1953-30 June 1954," UN document A/2663, **1954**, pp. xiv-xv,

all as discussed in Joint Inspection Unit, "Reporting on the performance and results of United Nations programmes: Monitoring, evaluation, and management review components", UN document A/43/124, 1988, Annex I, para. 2.

"Confronted in 1965 with a financial crisis caused by disputed peacekeeping operations, the General Assembly established another group of experts (known as the "Committee of 14") to examine the financial situation and procedures for preparing, approving, and overseeing the implementation of budgets. ... The Committee stressed the need for programme planning and

budgeting to provide a clear picture of objectives and strategies for using the organizations' limited resources. It also urged a corresponding effort to strengthen evaluation processes and internal reviews of operations, with timely reporting every year to governing bodies and Member States on progress made and results obtained."

"Second report of the Ad Hoc Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies," UN document A/6343 of **19 July 1966**, paras. 1, 68-79.

as discussed in Joint Inspection Unit, "Reporting on the performance and results of United Nations programmes: Monitoring, evaluation, and management review components", UN document A/43/124, 1988, Annex I, para. 5.

"The CPC [Committee for Programme and Coordination] reported in 1969 that the rapid proliferation of United Nations system programmes would encounter increasing criticism from Member Governments and increasing public disillusionment, unless greater efforts were made through effective review and evaluation to ensure that these programmes met Member State needs and provided concrete benefits. The Committee stressed the need for intergovernmental programming bodies to provide detailed and systematic review and evaluation ..."

"Enlarged Committee for Programme and Coordination: Final report," UNB document E/4748 of 2 October **1969**, paras. 5-19,

as discussed in Joint Inspection Unit, "Reporting on the performance and results of United Nations programmes: Monitoring, evaluation, and management review components", UN document A/43/124, 1988, Annex I, para. 7.

" ... concern with capacity and performance [in the United Nations system] reaches its highest peak when draft programmes and budgets are discussed and seems to evaporate when reports on the execution of the approved programmes are reviewed. ... This dichotomy [between budgetary concentration and performance neglect] is in itself one of the major causes of the shortfalls of the performance of the system."

Mahdi Elmandjra, The United Nations System: An Analysis, Faber and Faber, London, **1973**, pp. 228-229.

"[In 1975] A group of 25 experts ... recommended strengthening CPC ... and the establishment of a mechanism for continuing supervision and evaluation of programme implementation. These experts observed that

'An essential element of programme budgeting is effective monitoring of programme implementation and appraisal of programme accomplishments, since policy-making bodies need such data in order to be able to make informed and intelligent decisions ...

As things stand now, new activities keep being added to existing ones ... To a great extent, this state of affairs may be attributed to the fact that 'work on evaluating the results achieved ... still lies within the realm of theory, and that ... no real check is kept on the secretariats.'"

"A new United Nations structure for global economic co-operation: Report of the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System, UN document E/AC.62/9 of **28 May 1975**, para. 131,

as discussed in Joint Inspection Unit, "Reporting on the performance and results of United Nations programmes: Monitoring, evaluation, and management review components", UN document A/43/124, 1988, Annex I, para. 13.

"There was general agreement that the United Nations system is facing a major challenge ...

The executive heads of organizations which are responsible for operational activities emphasized that while improvements can always be made, their activities have a proved record of effectiveness and efficiency. While many of the charges of waste, inefficiency, duplication, etc., are not accurate, it will be necessary to refute these charges by clear evidence to the contrary.

... The ACC [Administrative Committee on Coordination] also recognizes its responsibility to improve the image of the United Nations so as to reassure Governments and the general public that it is an efficient and effective mechanism for dealing with the important issues of concern to the international community."

"International co-operation and co-ordination within the United Nations system: Annual overview report of the ACC for 1981/82," UN document E/1982/4 of **18 May 1982**, paras. 16, 18, and 72.

"[In 1981] the General Assembly ... requested the Secretary-General to propose official regulations and rules to govern the entire programme planning system, taking into account its many prior resolutions on an integrated planning, programming and evaluation system. During the next two years, the Secretary-General made proposals which were extensively discussed, and ... [In 1984] the Regulations and Rules were ... adopted by the General Assembly and issued. [They] state as their very first aim:

'(a) to subject all programmes of the Organization to periodic and thorough reviews,' [and also]

'(h) to establish an independent and effective system for monitoring implementation and verifying the effectiveness of the work actually done; ...

(i) to evaluate periodically the results achieved ...'

[In 1985] the third JIU reports on the status of evaluation [in the UN system] ... found that most organizations had made considerable progress in systematically using ... evaluation. ... The JIU concluded, however, that the United Nations was still locked into the initial stages of evaluation system development, had fallen even further behind the other organizations than it was in 1981, and had not achieved 'integrated management' because results were not being assessed in order to improve future programmes and decision-making."

"Programme planning," General Assembly resolution 36/228 of **18 December 1981**,

"Regulations and rules governing programme planning, the programme aspects of the budget, the monitoring of implementation and the methods of evaluation," UN document ST/SGB/204 of **14 June 1984**,

Joint Inspection Unit, "Third report on evaluation in the United Nations system: Integration and use," Joint Inspection Unit, UN document A/41/202, and "Status of internal evaluation in organizations of the United Nations system," UN document A/41/201, both of **1986**, paras. 21-22, 29-30,

all as discussed in Joint Inspection Unit, "Reporting on the performance and results of United Nations programmes: Monitoring, evaluation, and management review components", UN document A/43/124, 1988, Annex I, paras. 18-19, 23.

"On the occasion of the 40th anniversary, the Secretary-General suggested a critique 'of the weaknesses of the Organization and their cause or causes.'

The shortcomings [are broadly two: those] of a predominantly political or structural nature [which are beyond the Secretary-General's control] [and those which are] the result of a

chronic mismanagement of the Secretariat [which] the Secretary-General can put right.

[As the latter shortcomings have increased], the patience of Member States began to wear thin [prompting several States] to serve notices of withdrawal on [certain UN system organizations].

This malaise is due to a wide range of causes, which include: the Secretariat's submissiveness towards influential governments; the failure to [properly] balance the principles of merit and geographic distribution; extremely poor personnel management; passive and defective recruitment policies; politicization of selection, appointment and promotion of staff; lack of a career development plan; etc.

Acknowledging the Secretariat's shortcomings -- and the breathtaking deterioration of both performance and the public image of the UN -- would be the first step toward finding answers ... [But] the attitude of many top [UN] officials is still characterized by indifference"

Houshang Ameri, "Shortcomings of the United Nations", Secretariat News (New York), **October 16, 1985**, pp.22-23.

"Member States have ... stressed the need to be told, more clearly and more extensively what has been the programmatic performance of the Secretariat, which outputs have been delivered, and with which result....

Let us strengthen the monitoring and evaluation functions ...

Let us say clearly and dispassionately what has been done and with which result, and equally what has not been done and why....

Let us produce more analytical performance reports

I find the essential problem one of better and more transparent information, thus permitting better decisions."

"Statement", by UN Under-Secretary-General for Management Patricio Ruedas **12 November 1985**, as quoted in Joint Inspection Unit, "Reporting on the Performance and Results of United Nations Programmes: Monitoring, evaluation and management review components", UN document A/43/124, 1988, p. 5.

" any respect for the institution of management within the UN has largely disappeared. [Unavoidable staff cynicism] thankfully does not affect their belief in the value of what the organization does, [but] centers on the perception that there is little or no relationship between the value of the work one performs and the rewards, psychic or tangible, likely to be received

Cynicism is a corrosive quality. it ultimately becomes very difficult indeed to maintain an increasingly abstract pride in an Organization's ideals and purposes when you despise many of its nominal leaders, and most of its standards for selecting those leaders.

As was the case ... 40 years ago the U.N. has no 'unifying directive on the functions of management. All it would take is the implementation of a meritocratic standard for advancement at all levels of staff employment. Do this and virtually all other problems would fade away Make quality leadership and good management qualities the hallmarks for praise and promotion, and at the very least we will have, finally, a mature United Nations with a proud, strong, unified staff to do the work."

Stephen Baldwin, "Good management in the United Nations", Secretariat News (New York), **January 31, 1986**, pp. 11-12.

[Note" see also the April 1947 analysis above on management inadequacies which was quoted in this same article.]

"Accountability, that source of institutional health, had been excluded from United Nations experience; and, along with it, indivisibly, the stimulus of direct public engagement and response. 'It is not a United Nations Organization', Aleksander Solzhenitsyn was to say, in his Nobel address of 1970, 'but a United Governments Organization.' In offering itself as the mere creature of its member governments, the United Nations system entered a state of arrested moral development, marked by the habitual emblems of immaturity: demands for approval, and incapacity for individual or collective self-questioning."

Shirley Hazzard, "Breaking Faith: I", The New Yorker, **September 25, 1989**, pp. 63-99, [76].

[Note: Ms. Hazzard worked at the UN for ten years, resigning in 1962 to become a very successful full-time writer.]

"... the four main [UN internal] oversight units ... are foundering:

- internal audit needs "urgent strengthening", again;
- internal evaluation is an acknowledged "somewhat sickly child";
- monitoring spews out only a flood of tepid numbers;
- management advisory efforts fall far short of stated objectives.

The various other accountability, control, and oversight processes in the Secretariat fare little better:

- on-site inspection work scarcely touches operating units;
- fraud and abuse investigations are too little, too late;
- "hotlines" are considered to be too much trouble;
- information systems work is tied up in one big project;
- financial control discipline is questioned in many areas;
- management training will begin, but very late in the day;
- management improvement potential is scarcely being tapped;
- many other "assessment reports" often have little to say;
- management consultants are reserved for internal use;
- reorganizations have brought confusion as well as streamlining;
- needed programming tools have not developed as expected; and
- effective personal accountability does not exist."

Joint Inspection Unit, "Accountability and oversight in the United Nations Secretariat", UN document A/48/420 of **12 October 1993**, pp. 2 and 25, and Add. 1 of **22 November 1993**.

"The General Assembly ...

4. Endorses the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on the establishment of a transparent and effective system of accountability and responsibility no later than 1 January 1995 ...;

5. Requests the Secretary-General to include in the system of accountability and responsibility the following elements, taking into account relevant experience within and outside the United Nations system;

(a) The establishment of clear responsibility for programme delivery, including performance indicators as a measure of quality control;

(b) A mechanism ensuring that programme managers are accountable for the effective management of the personnel and financial resources allocated to them;

(c) Performance evaluation for all officials, including senior officials, with objectives and performance indicators;

(d) Effective training of staff in financial and management responsibilities."

"Review of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations", General Assembly resolution 48/218 A, **23 December 1993**, paras. I.E. 2-5. [emphasis added.]

["The fact that the [above] ... very sound and well-recognized management principles seem to have been 'discovered' by the UN [some fifty] years after its creation, and then only implemented in part in 1994, is a candid admission that, in the past, senior UN managers have either not been aware of, or have not been seriously concerned with, the basic need for a strong management base for the Organization's programmes and operations."

Yves Beigbeder, commenting on the above accountability system requirements, in The internal management of United Nations Organizations: The Long Quest for Reform, Macmillan, London, St. Martins, New York, **1997**, p. 127.]

"[This report] outlines a strategy to modernize and re-energize human resources management in the [UN Secretariat] ...

[While the UN's role and mandates have expanded], commensurate changes and modernization in human resources management have not occurred. As a result, [such] management has been fragmented, bureaucratic and incapable of dealing expeditiously with ever-changing demands ... The Office of Human Resources Management [OHRM] ... has been largely unable to address properly [its essential] planning and management functions. ... [This in turn has] partially contributed to the slow deployment of field missions, inadequate people management, low staff morale, and insufficient mobility. Thus, the time is overdue ... to introduce changes to maximize the contribution of [UN] human resources."

"A strategy for the management of the human resources of the Organization: Revised estimates ...: Report of the Secretary-General ", UN document A/C.5/49/5 of **21 October 1994**, paras. 1 and 23.

"The [UN] Secretariat's current personnel procedures are inconsistent with the development of the competent meritocracy that is required to deal with the important problems faced by the United Nations. As a consequence of years of improvised, backward, and careless personnel practices, staff morale has been severely damaged.

Numerous deficiencies are apparent in the personnel practice of the Secretariat. For instance, it lacks a worthwhile staff-evaluation system ... Moreover, promotion within the Secretariat is not competitive nor is it based on merit, and staff discipline is very low in some departments. In addition, the policies for recruiting new Secretariat personnel are unclear, and professional training is almost nonexistent. Collusion between staff members and state delegations seeking to justify the continued employment of their nationals is quite common, and often leads to 'requests' by the General Assembly for prolonged studies and reports that have no purpose and will never be read."

Ronald I. Spiers, "Reforming the United Nations," in Roger A. Coate, ed., U.S. policy and the future of the United Nations, Twentieth Century Fund, New York, **1994**, pp. 25-26.

[Note: Mr. Spiers served as a UN Under-Secretary-General in New York in the early 1990s]

" ... there appear to be three broad categories of quality among the vague group of 'programme managers' in the United Nations Secretariat. First, there are managers who would be successful in almost any public or private organization. ...

A second group, quite possibly the largest, is composed of unprepared managers. [The] most distinctive finding [of a 1993 consultant survey], relative to other organizations, was the frequency with which untrained people were placed in managerial positions in the ... Secretariat.

A number of managers interviewed were 'entirely unfamiliar' with contemporary management experience. ...

Far from concentrating on programme performance, ... and developing, supporting, and leading staff, [a third category, of bad managers has] ... adapted to, and often exploited, the disorganized and undisciplined [UN] managerial climate ... They operated in a dictatorial and sovereign style, insisting on their right to delegate all assignments with no personal involvement themselves, to interpret the rules as they saw fit, and in too many cases to treat staff distantly, capriciously, and abusively. They prided themselves on their ability to 'get things done' administratively by backstage maneuvering ... but had little interest in results or the fulfillment of objectives.

One hopes the 'sovereign manager' mentality is fading away. ..."

Joint Inspection Unit, "Management in the United Nations: Work in progress", UN document A/50/507, 1995, Chapter III, "Who are the managers?," paras. 108-109, 113-116.

"Sins of member states:

Secretariat staff resent ... member state interference in ... their daily work ... [their micromanagement of] the hiring and promotion of Secretariat personnel. [and of] Secretariat budgeting, too often ... seeking to control the minor details of spending allocations.

Secretariat staff members are also frustrated by lack of clear direction from intergovernmental bodies. Too often member states fail to agree on how best to confront global problems Moreover, mandates are frequently assigned to the Secretariat with little thought as to the resources needed for their implementation.

Sins of the Secretariat:

.... Member states contend that ineffective -- some would say nonexistent -- managerial practices throughout the Secretariat have led to inefficient use of the [UN resources] ...; a staff unaccountable for its actions and prone to delegate upwards; insufficient program coordination ...; and wasteful duplication of efforts. There has been a lack of transparency in Secretariat decision making [on] policy issues, personnel, and budget expenditures. ... much of the information that is provided is not timely or readable. ... Overall, inefficiency and lack of accountability within the Secretariat, whether perceived or real, have invited member state micromanagement. "

"Making UN reform work: Improving member state-Secretariat relations", Report of the twenty-eighth United Nations issues conference, The Stanley Foundation, **February 21-23, 1997**, pp. 2, 14-16. [emphasis added]

Note: The above analysis by an expert group of "insiders" in 1997 sought to illustrate the strained relationships between member states and the UN Secretariat, caused by a lack of communication and mistrust, which continue to hamper the UN's ability to implement reforms.]

"[The General Assembly] ...

II. Reaffirming its resolution 48/218A of 23 December 1993, in particular the request therein for a mechanism ensuring that programme managers are accountable for the effective management of human resources allocated to them, ...

2. Requests the Secretary-General to enhance managerial accountability with respect to human resources management decisions, including imposing sanctions in cases of demonstrated mismanagement of staff and willful neglect of or disregard for established rules and procedures, while safeguarding the due process rights of all staff members, including managers;

3. Also requests the Secretary-General to issue specific administrative instructions to establish clearly the responsibility and accountability of programme managers for proper use of human resources, as well as sanctions in accordance with staff rule 112.3 for any financial loss suffered by the United Nations as a result of gross negligence, including improper motivation,

willful violation of or reckless disregard for the staff Regulations and Rules and established policies regulating recruitment, placement and promotion; ...

6. Welcomes the intention of the Secretary-General to streamline administrative procedures and eliminate duplication, in relation to human resources management, through delegation of authority to programme managers, and requests him to ensure, before delegating such authority, that well-designed mechanisms of accountability, including the necessary internal monitoring and control procedures, as well as training, are put in place, ..."

"Human resources management", General Assembly resolution 51/226 of **25 April 1997**, Part II, first preambular and paras. 2-3, 6. [emphasis added]

"In a rather scathing [1998] report, the General Assembly's Advisory Committee on Administrative and Financial Questions (ACABQ) has dismissed the 'concept paper' ... submitted by the Secretariat on 'Reducing and refocusing of non-programme costs.' ... The paper was meant to show how reductions in the UN's administrative costs, estimated at 38 per cent of the regular budget, would result in savings of \$195 million, to be channeled into a proposed 'Development Account.'

The ACABQ says that the report is 'flawed by the lack of a clear concept ...'

The committee is equally disbelieving of the claims made about 'efficiency gains' and their impact. The measures described are 'not sufficiently detailed or specific enough' and no 'satisfactory explanations or performance indicators are provided' to support the target mentioned.

Rather than call for yet another report, the ACABQ suggests that a practical move at this stage might be to 'set aside a preoccupation with concept and theory ... to concentrate on ... specific new measures to increase the efficiency and confirm the results arising out of the implementation of new measures as well as those initiated prior to the current exercise.'

"Advisory Committee rejects "non-programme costs" report", International Documents Review, **16 March 1998**, page 5. [emphasis added]

" ... Staff members at all levels ... must be held accountable for delivering assigned outputs on a timely and cost-effective basis ... and for upholding the values and principles of the Organization ...

... The prime responsibility for taking action to remedy accidental and intentional performance failures will lie with supervisors and managers at all levels. ...

... In addition the Department of Management is considering the setting up of transparent accountability mechanisms ..."

"Human resources management reform: Report of the Secretary-General", UN document A/53/414 of **13 October 1998**, paras. 6-9. [emphasis added]

"IV. Delegation of authority and accountability ...

3. [The General Assembly] Also notes that no comprehensive system of accountability and responsibility has been established;

...

10. Reiterates its request to the Secretary-General [see para. II.2 of resolution 51/226 of 25 April 1997 preceding] to enhance managerial accountability with respect to human resources management decisions, including imposing sanctions in case of demonstrated mismanagement of staff and willful neglect of or disregard for established roles and procedures, while safeguarding the right of due process of all staff members, including managers."

"Human resources management," General Assembly resolution 53/221 of **23 April 1999**. [emphasis added]

"In recent years, the United Nations has had fundamental problems. In 1994 ... there was an overall failure of its human resources system to staff critical posts with the right people. ...

"[In 1997] The Secretary General proposed a reform program consisting of three [integrated] core elements: (1) restructuring U.N. leadership and operations; (2) developing a performance-based human capital system; and (3) introducing programming and budgeting processes based on results. ... [He] set the end of 1999 as the target to put the reforms in place.

...

The United Nations has substantially restructured its leadership and operations and partly implemented a merit-based and performance-oriented human capital system ... However, ... the overall objectives of the reform have not yet been achieved. Specifically, the United Nations has not yet implemented reforms to focus its programming and budgeting on managing the Secretariat's performance. These initiatives would enable Member States to hold the Secretariat accountable for results and are key to the success of the overall reform because they institutionalize a shift in the organization's focus from carrying out activities to accomplishing missions. ... the U.N. reform is an interrelated process and requires that all core elements be in place to succeed."

US General Accounting Office, "United Nations: Reforms are progressing, but overall objectives have not been achieved", GAO/NSIAD-00-169, 15 pages, of **May 10, 2000**, especially summary and pp. 2-3 and 9-15, and "United Nations: Reform initiatives have strengthened operations, but overall objectives have not been achieved", GAO/NSIAD-00-150, **May 10, 2000**, 84 pages. [emphasis added]

"The present report delineates the continuum between responsibility, authority and accountability and presents the elements of an integrated and effective system of accountability. It outlines the progress made ... highlights the recent changes introduced to enhance or supplement existing accountability mechanisms, and outlines changes in the policy and management culture of the Organization which will allow for the effective implementation of the comprehensive system of accountability now established. ...

In conclusion, the Secretary-General is confident that the comprehensive system of accountability now in place ensures that accountability mechanisms are effectively used, are seen to be used, and ensure that staff at all levels are held accountable for their actions and inaction."

The General Assembly may wish to take note of the mechanisms in place since 1994, including those discussed in the present report, which together constitute the comprehensive system of accountability for the Organization."

"Accountability and responsibility: Report of the Secretary-General", un document A/55/270 of **3 August 2000**, Summary, paras. 1-2, 47-48. [emphasis added.]

"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]. [emphasis added]

[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]

"The United Nations has been hit by an unprecedented wave of fraud, waste and corruption. Officials at its antifraud investigation unit say they are expecting to have to run more than 350 inquiries by the end of the year -- nearly twice the total for 1998, and a 50 per cent increase on last year. Thousands of staff, contractors, and consultants have been interviewed in scores of countries. ...

The revelations will embarrass Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary-General, who is to welcome national leaders ... to the 'Millenium Summit' in New York next week. ... Annan is hoping to convince skeptical heads of state that the UN has provided value for money and that its role should be expanded. ...

One senior investigator said last week that the UN investigations unit's workload was greater than ever. "We are seeing more and more frauds and abuses of authority. ...

The OIOS's annual report, due out next month, will reveal cases of sloppy management, lax enforcement, harassment and outright criminality. ... OIOS is working with dozens of interntional police forces -- including Scotland Yard -- on inquiries into the activities of UN personnel."

Jason Burke, et. al., "UN rocked by flood of fraud cases: Officials were 'addicted to luxury", The Observer International (UK), **September 3, 2000**.

[Note: Mr. Annan may or may not have been embarrassed: in any event, reporting of UN anti-corruption activities and findings has been extremely subdued ever since, as discussed in the following sections of this website]

"How do you ensure that DPI [the UN Department of Public Information] isn't seen as a propaganda tool, yet that it serves the UN's objectives?

By telling the truth! Information isn't propaganda unless you doctor it to distort reality or hide inconvenient facts. We don't do that.

I think you'll admit that under Secretary General Kofi Annan we have the most transparent United Nations imaginable ..."

Question to and answer from Shashi Tharoor, head of the DPI and "an established novelist, columnist and nonfiction author ... also a highly sought-after figure on the lecture circuit", in Pranay Gupte, "Q & A: Shashi Tharoor: 'Why information matters at the UN'", Earth Times, **May 2001**, p. 16.

"An extraordinary thing is happening this week at the United Nations. Secretary-General Kofi Annan is to be re-elected virtually by acclamation. ...

Outside [the] UN few knew much about him. But in the early 90's he had become head of the UN peacekeeping department and came to the attention of the major powers, particularly in Bosnia....

Within the UN system his reforms have been important although limited by the perennial self-interest of the members. ... The personnel system is still a disaster, which he must now tackle resolutely. ..."

William Shawcross, "Another five years at the UN helm for Annan, of course,"

"Kofi Annan's election to a second and last term should normally allow him to help establish the United Nations as the centerpiece of an emerging system of global management that is efficient, just and accepted as legitimate by all peoples and nations.

Decisive action should not continue to be postponed in regaining the motivation and professional quality of the United Nations in its early years.

Enrique ter Horst, "A re-elected secretary-general can give the world the facts", International Herald Tribune, **July 6, 2001** . [emphasis added]

"Chapter V

Enhancing management

Administration and management ...

Accountability and oversight

The Office of Internal Oversight Services is working in partnership with managers at all levels to instill accountability and best management practices in the Organization. ..."

"Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization," General Assembly, Official Records, UN document A/57/1 of **2002**.

"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**.

"An independent panel investigating the bombing of the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad said today that the UN's security systems were 'dysfunctional' ...

What procedures were in place in Baghdad when the 19 August attack took 22 lives were 'sloppy' in observance, and non-compliance with regulations was 'commonplace,' according to the report of the panel led by Martti Ahtisaari, a former president of Finland [and also a former UN Under-Secretary-General for management]. ...

'The main conclusion ... is that the current security management system is dysfunctional. It provides little guarantee of security to UN staff in Iraq or other high-risk environments and needs to be reformed,' the panel said.

The panel labelled as a major deficiency a 'lack of accountability for the decisions and positions taken by UN managers with regard to the security of UN staff.'

'The United Nations', it said, 'needs a new culture of accountability in security management.' ...

In his briefing, Mr. Ahtisaari said ... "We need a much more professional approach, a professional staff ..."

"Iraqi bombing panel finds UN security systems dysfunctional, in need of reform," UN News service, **22 October 2003**.

"Samuel Gonzáles-Ruiz, a top adviser on organized crime at the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has accused management of turning a blind eye to 'a pattern of misappropriation of funds' and 'clear acts of corruption and mismanagement by staff,' the *FT* has learned. ...

In his letter of resignation ... he wrote: 'One can observe a pattern of irregularities in the issuing of contracts, petty corruption, and abuses of administrative discretion committed by staff with managerial responsibilities over projects and programs within my working domain.'

Mr. González-Ruiz, a former head of Mexico's anti-mafia unit who gained an international reputation for taking on the country's drug cartels, charged that management took no action to investigate cases of internal corruption by staff, even after they were provided with detailed evidence. He also said in his letter that whistleblowers within the agency were routinely punished and that corrupt officials enjoyed 'active and/or passive protection from top management.'

Thomas Catýn, "Adviser quits over 'corruption' at UN agency," *Financial Times*, FT.com, **November 2, 2003**.

[Note: The Baghdad bombing and UN crime office resignation incidents are discussed further in the [Recent Developments](#) section of this website under the [Other Major Problems](#) subsection.]

"For months, [US presidential candidate John Kerry] has advocated broader international oversight [in Iraq] that might open the door to additional peacekeeping contributions and generate some real support for nation-building there. Now he has begun to elaborate on how that oversight should be structured, drawing sensible lessons from successes and failures of the recent past.

Kerry recognizes that the United Nations cannot offer any magic bullet solutions for Iraq, and that working with the UN Secretary general, Kofi Annan, and his special representative Lakhdar Brahimi, cannot be a substitute for broad cooperation with all the major powers represented in the Security Council. ... Kerry also proposes designating an international high commissioner for Iraq whose office would be outside the barely functional, patronage-driven UN personnel system. That would permit the recruitment of a capable staff and create some safeguards against the kind of wholesale corruption that is alleged to have vitiated the UN's oil-for-food program in Iraq.

Kerry's ideas ... would be extremely hard to carry out now ... but they at least reflect a realistic view of what the United Nations -- and the United States -- can and cannot do."

"Kerry's vision for Iraq," *International Herald Tribune*, **May 7, 2004**.

"As the United Nations General Assembly opens, the world organization faces twin crises in its effectiveness and its legitimacy.

Ten years after the Rwanda crisis, the UN's painful inability to prevent genocide has been on display during the hand-wringing over Sudan. ...

... The UN [also] remains scarred by the war in Iraq and its bloody aftermath ... which suggests a crisis in legitimacy that questions the very idea of the United Nations as a significant actor in international peace and security. ...

The General Assembly [will be preparing] the 60th anniversary celebrations of 2005 ... [and the UN] security and development ... [agendas could be considered] together. ...

... It might be possible to [secure] ... greater cooperation from developing countries for counterterrorism and counterproliferation activities in exchange for greater development

assistance and reform of agricultural subsidies by Western countries.

It is far from clear, however, that there is an atmosphere of crisis of the kind needed to bring about change on this scale. ...

It is possible that recalling the atmosphere of crisis that accompanied the drafting of the UN Charter 60 years ago will remove the need for a comparable crisis in order to change it."

Simon Chesterman, "59th General Assembly: A battered UN needs to go back to its roots", International Herald Tribune, **September 14, 2004**.

[Note: Mr. Chesterman is executive director of the Institute for International Law and Justice at New York University School of Law.]

"[Secretary-General] Kofi Annan ... has launched an all-out campaign to rebuild the UN's dysfunctional security system, prompting a debate that could determine the organisation's capacity to operate in dangerous countries for years to come.

Over the coming days, UN budget experts will discuss a \$97 million ... appeal for a fundamental [security] overhaul ... to be paid from the UN's core budget.

'The United Nations today faces a security environment of unprecedented risk', Mr. Annan told the budget committee ...

... Political questions could prove [very] important. ...

Developed countries are seeking new ways to deal with [threats of terrorism] ... and some are pushing for the right of preemptive action as well as 'humanitarian intervention' in countries that do not protect their civilians.

... Developing countries are demanding a renewed focus on poverty. Many analysts think any reform will entail a 'grand bargain' between 'northern' security concerns and 'southern' financial worries.

... According to one official, the simple fact was that the UN could no longer fulfil its mandate in development without security. This, said the official, led to a simple decision: 'They've got to make up their minds whether they want to send us there or not.'

Mark Turner, "Annan launches drive to boost UN security", Financial Times (UK), **November 4, 2004**.

"[The UN's] ... founding principles are obsolete ... the sovereign equality of its members ... [and preventing] aggressive wars. ... no longer make sense.

The main security threats in today's world come from internal developments within states ... sovereignty carries [duties and responsibilities] ... to protect citizens against mass violence and ... prevent internal developments that affect others ... [otherwise states] should lose their sovereign right to insist on non-interference ...

The solution must [be] ... a formal Alliance of Democracies ... [with membership] limited to ... [democracies] ... so rooted that reversion to autocratic rule is unthinkable. ... Nearly five dozen countries meet this membership threshold [and more could later join] ... as the basis of a truly global institution.

[The alliance] requires a broad mandate and real responsibilities ... to promote democratization worldwide ... unite countries to confront their common security challenges ... work vigorously to advance [common values] ... become a powerful caucus at the UN and [the UN system] ... develop its own [military] capabilities ... and also be an appropriate forum for co-ordinating development and financial assistance strategies.

The failure to grasp the opportunity [is] ... a recipe for continued drift ..."

Ivo Daalder and James Lindsay, "Divided on being united", Financial Times (UK), Weekend, **November 6-7, 2004**.

[Note: Mr. Daalder is a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C., and Mr. Lindsay is a vice-president at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York.]

"The General Assembly

6. Emphasizes the importance of establishing real, effective and efficient mechanisms for responsibility and accountability;

7. **Regrets that despite previous information provided by the Secretary-General on the establishment of accountability mechanisms, including the accountability panel, such mechanisms are not in place, thereby affecting the efficient and effective functioning of the Organization;**"

"Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 48/218B and 54/244: Report of the Fifth Committee", UN document A/59/649 of **22 December 2004**, and

"Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 48/218B and 54/244", General Assembly resolution 59/272 of **23 December 2004**, paras. 6-7. [emphasis added]

"I recall the day in 1960 when the UN took charge of the Congo ... after the Belgian colonial government had hastily evacuated, triggering massacres.] Various European powers were ready to move in to restore order and save lives, but ['world opinion'] deemed that only the UN could do the job, as it was the only body with 'clean hands.'

That was 45 years ago, and the UN has been involved ever since. The fighting has continued -- flaring up and dying down, with no end in sight. It's estimated that about 5 million have died. UN secretaries-general have come and gone (one was killed in the Congo), but the UN 'mission' grinds on, expensive and totally ineffective.

The Congo is only one of scores of failed UN missions in Africa alone. These failures don't seem to be taken very seriously by top UN bureaucrats. For example ..., Boutros Boutros-Ghali, ... [mentioned in the current UN oil-for-food scandal, replied that] ... 'There are a lot things that I am responsible for that were ten times worse than this, such as the genocide in Rwanda.'

That is, when you think about it carefully, an amazing remark to make."

Paul Johnson, "The UN is for talk, not actions," Forbes (US), **March 14, 2005**.

{Note: Mr. Johnson is an "eminent British historian and author."}