

UN ready to pin down Afghanistan on sanctions ma

Our Political Bureau
NEW DELHI 30 NOVEMBER

THE GROUND is being prepared to impose crippling sanctions on the Taliban as the UN Security Council gears up to pass a resolution on Afghanistan in the next couple of days.

This was discussed by the visiting UN special representative on Afghanistan, Francesc Vendrell, with the Indian leadership over the past couple of days.

The resolution will propose fuel, trade and financial sanctions against the Taliban and restrict travel of its officials overseas except for humanitarian and religious purposes. The UN would also order the closure of Taliban camps outside Afghanistan.

In addition, UN would ask countries to reduce staff at Taliban

missions, restrict offices of the Taliban-run airline outside Afghanistan and ban the sale of acetic anhydride, used to make heroin, within Afghanistan.

Russia and the US have agreed to co-sponsor this resolution, while India has lent outside diplomatic support since its not a member of the Security Council.

The only dissenting voice seems to have come from China which is traditionally opposed to sanctions.

Mr Vendrell's visit is aimed at securing India's support for the international initiative. A ministry of economic affairs (MEA) spokesman said through his visit the global community has acknowledged that "India had legitimate concerns and role in the Afghan situation."

The proposed sanctions would be in addition to the ones imposed



Osama bin Laden: Most wanted

last year, when Taliban assets were frozen worldwide while the Afghan airline was barred from flying outside the country.

While the US wants the Taliban to turn over Osama bin Laden, Russia sees them as spon-

soring terrorism in Chechnya; for India, its a more complicated opposition to a group that, at the very least, is involved in exporting terrorism to Kashmir.

The new sanctions will badly affect Pakistan, which is the single largest supporter of the Taliban, backing it with funds, weapons and training camps. Closing down of Taliban training camps in Pakistan will create popular opposition.

Pakistan's unease was apparent when foreign minister Abdus Sattar warned India against getting involved in Afghanistan, saying India's interest was rooted in its hostility to Pakistan. Pakistan's own backing of the Taliban as the legitimate government in Kabul is also predicated on the belief that a friendly Afghanistan would increase Pakistan's

strategic depth against India. Pakistan's repeated assertion that the Taliban should be recognised has not found any res- sive echo internationally.

As a matter of fact, Vendrell, while talking reporters in Islamabad last week, categorically denied Tali recognition.

Although India has been kept out of the six-plus-tal- ks, its bilateral negotiations with Russia, US and Iran placed it back on the cen- stage vis-a-vis Afghanis- During the last joint world group meeting with Russia, two countries strongly endor increasing clamps on Taliban.

The demand comes alongside US investigation into the bomb of its naval destroyer in October which FBI investigations say, bin Laden's imprint on it.

The Economic Times

1 DEC 2000

UN to impose arms embargo on Taliban

United Nations, November 30

MOVES ARE afoot in the United Nations Security Council to impose an arms embargo on Afghanistan's ruling Taliban to force it stop supporting terrorism and handover the international terrorist Osama Bin Laden, whom the US has charged with masterminding terrorist activities against Americans, a UN report has said.

Washington links Bin Laden, among other things, with 1998 bombings of its embassies in Africa and more recently for bombing of its destroyer Cole in Aden in Yemen.

Russia, which is fighting Afghanistan-trained terrorists in Chechnya, too is expected to co-sponsor along with the US on imposing new tough sanctions. Though it was not clear when the resolution would actually be moved, some reports said it might come later this week.

New measures would come in the

wake of freezing of foreign assets of Taliban under a council's resolution last year.

Also, its airline is prohibited from flying overseas.

"If the resolution finally comes about, it would be a major setback for Pakistan,

China against curbs

CHINA ON Thursday opposed fresh attempts by the US and Russia to tighten sanctions against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and urged the two to adopt a "prudent" approach by cooperating with the UN to bring peace in the region.

PTI, Beijing

Islamabad against having militant training camps on its soil," it said.

Though Taliban controls almost 95 percent of the territory, the UN has refused to recognise it because of its encouragement to fundamentalism and violation of rights of women.

(PTI)

THE HINDU

1 DEC 2000

UN warns of West Asia war

Jerusalem, Dec. 5 (Reuters): The United Nations' West Asia envoy urged Israel and the Palestinians today to urgently restart peace talks to avert the danger of a regional war after new violence flared in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Gunbattles erupted during the night in the West Bank near Jenin, Hebron and Jerusalem, denting Prime Minister Ehud Barak's hopes of securing a peace deal with the Palestinians that might win him votes in a general election expected in May.

No one was reported killed in the clashes, but almost 300 people have died in the 10-week-old uprising by Palestinians demanding independence. Most of the dead have been Palestinians although 35

Jewish civilians and soldiers have also died.

"The situation as it is now is not tenable. It may continue the way it is right now for a few more weeks... It could deteriorate sharply, dramatically and tragically, which may produce regional spillovers so we will face a regional war," UN special envoy Terje-Roed Larsen said.

"The only way to save the situation is for the parties to return quickly to the negotiating table and make the painful compromises they have to," he said. Larsen did not say what he meant by a regional war or which other countries might be drawn in.

Israel has said it could attack Syrian troops in Lebanon if Damascus does not prevent cross-border

attacks by Hizbollah guerrillas from Lebanon.

Barak, who has frozen peace-making because of the Palestinian Intifada or uprising, last week proposed an interim deal putting off solving difficult issues such as the future of Jerusalem.

The Palestinians dismissed the proposal as an election ruse and said they would accept only a final agreement. But the chief of staff of Israel's armed forces said he still hoped peace talks could resume, making clear he believed Israel should be able to negotiate from a position of strength.

"We all hope that we will succeed in getting to the point where negotiations will be renewed in a feeling of security and a network of security that is based on the

army's power," Lt Gen. Shaul Mofaz said.

Violence picks up

Violence picked up on Sunday night after clashes in and around Betlehem, the traditional birthplace of Jesus. Shooting also flared last evening near Jerusalem.

Israeli troops unleashed heavy machinegun fire on the West Bank Palestinian town of Beit Jala in response to what it said was gunfire on an army post in the Jewish settlement of Gil'o. A hospital said two Palestinians were wounded by shrapnel. The army said gunmen opened fire during the night at Israeli troops near Jenin and shot at the Jewish settlement in the Hebron.

THE TELEGRAPH

6 DEC 2000

UN hits at transnational crime

REUTERS

PALERMO (SICILY), DEC 12

26-8 13/11

THE United Nations declared global war on transnational crime on Tuesday but with a warning that mafia groups were outstripping crime-fighters in their use of technology and the global markets.

The war without frontiers was declared by Secretary-General Kofi Annan at the opening of a signing conference for the UN's 'Convention against Transnational Organised Crime', which will become international law after 40 countries ratify it.

"If the enemies of progress of human rights seek to exploit the openness and opportunities of globalisation for their purposes, then we must exploit those very same factors to defend human rights and defeat the forces of crime, corruption and trafficking in human beings," Annan said.

"This conference is evidence of the will of the international community to answer a global challenge with a global response," he told delegates from some 150 countries. "As crime crosses all borders so must law enforcement. If the rule of law is undermined not

only in one country but in many, then those who defend it cannot limit themselves only to national means," he said.

The treaty being signed in the city once synonymous with the Mafia marks a turning point in legal, political and financial attempts to confront the dark side of globalisation, including trafficking in humans for forced labour or forced prostitution.

Signatories will be required to establish or strengthen national legislation for four criminal offences - participation in an organised criminal group, money laundering, corruption and obstruction of justice. One of the first to sign the treaty was Colombian President Hugo Banzer.

According to the text, countries which ratify the treaty would "deny safe havens to those who engage in transnational organised crime by prosecuting those crimes wherever they occur and by cooperating at the international level".

To combat money laundering, it calls for countries to further regulate financial institutions, lift bank secrecy laws which prevent investigation of crimes and outlaw anonymous bank accounts.

INDIAN EXPRESS

13 DEC 2000

UN withdraws staff from Afghanistan

KABUL: The U.N. has withdrawn all foreign staff from Afghanistan amid concern over potentially violent protests against tough new sanctions likely to be announced this week, officials said on Tuesday.

The last six senior U.N. officials in the country, from a total foreign staff of about 60, were seen leaving the rocket-scarred airport here early on Tuesday on their way to neighbouring Pakistan.

Their departure comes in expectation that the U.N. Security Council will adopt a resolution imposing broader sanctions against the ruling Taliban militia for its alleged support to terrorism. Aviation and financial curbs imposed in November last year triggered a wave of violent protests in which U.N. offices around the country were ransacked.

"We are just leaving as a precautionary measure and hope to come back as soon as possible. The sanctions might be announced tonight," said one top official, asking not to be named, as she boarded a U.N. flight. "We have not felt threatened," she said, adding "We need to come back and we need to go to work."

Spokeswoman for the U.N. coor-

dinator's office Stephanie Bunker said the U.N. had received fresh assurances from Taliban foreign minister Wakil Ahmad Mutawakel that U.N. operations would be protected.

But Mr Mutawakel has said spontaneous protests could still erupt against the sanctions, which have been condemned by Taliban officials as likely to cause a "humanitarian catastrophe".

Foreign relief workers, many of whom have also left in recent days, have said any disruption to their operations would have grave consequences for the hundreds of thousands of Afghans who depend on aid to survive.

Russia and the U.S. earlier this month jointly tabled the new sanctions with the Security Council, which was expected to take a decision later on Tuesday in New York.

"I want to make absolutely clear that these proposed U.N. sanctions are targeted only at the Taliban leadership. They are designed specifically to avoid harming the Afghan people," U.S. assistant secretary of state for South Asian affairs Karl Inderfurth said last week in Washington. (AFP)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

20 DEC 2000

Tussle over adoption of draft UN declaration

Apratim Mukarji
New Delhi, December 25

ADETERMINED tussle is underway between nation-states and their indigenous people (aborigines) in the United Nations over the adoption of a draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.

In a move that is fraught with major implications for India, the indigenous people's movements in various parts of the world have begun to press for an early adoption of the draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.

The intensification of the pressure follows the obvious frustration that the movements experienced at the Sixth session of the Inter-Sessional Working Group on the draft Declaration held recently in Geneva.

Their frustration emanates from their feeling that major member-states like the US, Canada and Australia will continue to obstruct the adoption of the draft declaration, espe-

cially its Articles relating to the indigenous people's right to self-determination, land and its resources.

A representative of the Chakmas of the Chittagong Hill Tract, Bangladesh and General Secretary, Peace Campaign Group, Rev. Prajmalankar Bhikku, who was a delegate to the Working Group session, told *The Hindustan Times*, that "the process of the Working Group is gradually moving towards a deadlock-like situation. A way has to be found out to prevent

Rights of Indigenous People

an actual deadlock."

The near-impasse in the Working Group has resulted from the uncompromising attitude adopted by both sides -- the member-states, with substantive indigenous people population, and the indigenous people's movements fighting for self-determination.

Member-states with a long and bloody history of indige-

nous people's struggles are naturally apprehensive of the adoption of the draft declaration with reference to the right to self-determination which culminates in a right to secede from the mother country.

India, with its substantial populations of indigenous people and fairly strong movements, cannot be too happy with the implications of the draft declaration either.

But Rev. Prajmalankar Bhikku feels, "It is not an impossible task to work out a new formula to remove stumbling blocks."

"The practical way out would be for the nation-states to recognise the indigenous people's right to internal self-determination, land, resources etc.

"In other words, indigenous people should be recognised as people minus their right to secession from the nation-state."

An obvious contradiction, certainly not the kind of compromise the indigenous people's movements have been fighting for centuries, but is there any other way out?

Two Congressmen quit Estrada's party

MANILA, NOV. 2. Two key Congressmen have resigned from the Philippine President, Mr. Joseph Estrada's LAMP party and predicted more members would quit soon over allegations Mr. Estrada accepted millions of dollars from illegal gambling operators.

The two included Mr. Neptali Gonzales II, Deputy Majority leader and acting head of the House committee on justice, which is scheduled to begin considering an impeachment complaint against Mr. Estrada on Monday. The other, Mr. Ralph Recto, has been chairman of the House committee on economic affairs. Four of Mr. Estrada's senior economic advisers also plan to resign tomorrow, officials said, in a further blow to rapidly eroding business confidence in his Government.

Allegations by a provincial Governor that Mr. Estrada pocketed millions of dollars from illegal gambling operators and from tobacco taxes have touched off widespread demands for his resignation or impeachment. — AP

Yugoslavia admitted to U.N.

UNITED NATIONS, NOV. 2. Ending eight years of isolation, the new democratic but truncated Yugoslavia has been admitted into the United Nations by acclamation with its new red, white and blue flag being hoisted in place of that of the former socialist federal republic of Yugoslavia.

Immediately after the General Assembly president, Mr. Harri Holkeri announced last evening that it had been admitted, the Yugoslav delegation was escorted to its seat in the Assembly hall. Yugoslavia, which was among the founding members of the U.N., had lost its membership of the world body after the Security Council had determined in 1992 that it had ceased to exist after four republics broke away. Speaking at the flag-raising ceremony, the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan called the event a "milestone in the long and difficult passage of the Balkans towards becoming a truly free and democratic region".

The future of the federal republic of Yugoslavia was "profoundly tied" to the freedom, prosperity and human rights of its neighbours,

Mr. Annan said. The ceremony was watched by Yugoslavia's special Presidential envoy who described the event as "bright moment in history." The new Yugoslav President, Mr. Vojislav Kostunica, had last week applied for the membership in a letter sent to Mr. Annan in which he affirmed that his country accepted "obligations contained in the charter of the U.N. and undertakes to fulfil them".

110-17 5/11
Belgrade had to apply for the membership afresh as a 1992 Assembly resolution, following break-up of the socialist federal republic of Yugoslavia, had ruled that the new country, comprising Serbia and Montenegro, could not automatically continue the membership of the former Yugoslavia. Mr. Milosevic refused to do so, and as a result, Yugoslavia could not participate in the proceedings for eight years. Earlier that year, three constituent parts of the former Yugoslavia — Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Slovenia had broken away and become members of the U.N. in their own right. — PTI

THE HINDU

3 NOV 2000

The UN must rise above regional politics in its peacekeeping

Pulling out of skulduggery

J.N. DIXIT

Our chief of army staff, Ved Malik, inaugurated a seminar on the United Nations peacekeeping operations on September 13, organized by the United Service Institution of India, a think tank of the armed forces of India which has been in existence for nearly 120 years. General Malik's keynote address made some important points about the manner in which the credibility and the efficiency of the UN peacekeeping operations can be maintained within the framework of the UN charter. One of the most important points which he made in this speech was that he was opposed to the UN peacekeeping operations being undertaken by regional forces within their own region, because such operations become subject to the political motivations and power play of the countries of the region which affects the integrity and credibility of peacekeeping operations.

The recent decision by the government of India to withdraw the Indian peacekeeping force from Sierra Leone because of pressures generated by west African countries, particularly Nigeria, on the UN, seems to prove that General Malik was clairvoyant in the assessment of regional involvement which he made in his keynote address at the above seminar. The government of India announced the withdrawal of the Indian contingent in the UN peacekeeping force in Sierra Leone in the third week of September after it had served there for just a little less than a year.

The Indian contingent was one of the largest contingents in the UN peacekeeping force, with a strength of over a brigade, including air force and armoured elements, amongst the 32 countries which have contributed military units to the Sierra Leone peacekeeping force. The other Asian countries which contributed military units to this force are Bangladesh, China, Indonesia, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan and Thailand.

The official explanation for the withdrawal of the Indian contingent by the Indian government is that this was an exercise in rotation of troops after they had served abroad for a certain period and that the government of India has decided not to replace it. The real reason, however, is quite different. The commander of the Sierra Leone peacekeeping force was Major General V.K. Jetley, a seasoned commander who has served both in the Northeast and Jammu and Kashmir. He was unimpeachably impartial, refused to get involved in the power politics of Sierra Leone or the Economic Commission Of West African States, and was forthright and candid in giving critical assessments of the evolving security and political situation in Sierra Leone. The African troops under his command were profoundly subject to pressures from their parent governments.

The author is former foreign secretary of India

Jetley's deputy as well as political advisers were from Nigeria, who found his impartiality and his frankness unacceptable and unpalatable. They consistently tried to subvert his command and his operational plans, the culmination of which was the Revolutionary United Front, led by Foday Sanko, taking 21 In-

edly bringing all this to the notice of the concerned people at the UN headquarters. His public announcement about the skulduggery going on in Sierra Leone which affected peacekeeping operations was not in conformity with the obfuscatory politeness and diplomatic courtesy which permeate discussions and negoti-



It is time for India to curb its misplaced enthusiasm to be part of such an exercise

dian soldiers hostage and disarming them at Padumbu late this summer. Compounding the event was the cadre of this front surrounding 245 Indian soldiers at Kailahum.

Jetley was not given the necessary support from the UN secretariat in the initial stage of this crisis. Nor was he allowed in the beginning to take decisive military action to safeguard the Indian soldiers. Ultimately, good sense prevailed and Jetley was allowed to launch a military operation to rescue the Indian soldiers which was successful.

The government of Liberia was politically supportive while Nigeria and other members of the ECOWAS played ambiguous games. The UN secretary general himself was opaquely critical of General Jetley in the beginning, but backtracked when strongly protested against his unwarranted criticism. Matters, however, did not end there. The discipline, cohesion and efficiency of the UN peacekeeping force continued to be disrupted by the political motivations of the west African states involved in Sierra Leone and equally importantly by the attraction of the large depository of diamonds in that country.

Military commanders of African countries and political figures involved with the peacekeeping operations, according to General Jetley, were getting directly involved in diamond trade and diamond smuggling. He made a public statement about this in August, report-

ations at the UN.

Nigerian officials whom he accused were of course up in arms. Their government generated pressure on the UN, and Jetley was asked to come on leave to defuse the tension. Once he reached India, the UN secretariat conveyed a message to the government of India that they do not want him back as commander of the peacekeeping force. As a sop they suggested that Jetley should be replaced by a lieutenant general of the Indian army, an officer of the higher rank and more experienced.

This is an undeniable insult to the integrity and credibility of India's record as a contributor to UN peacekeeping forces since the Korean war and the conflicts in Gaza in the early Fifties. The government of India has taken the right decision in withdrawing the entire Indian contingent from Sierra Leone. Indian soldiers and commanders need not continue in a thankless job where their integrity, efficiency and impartiality is questioned by arguments rooted in pernicious trends of regional politics.

The withdrawal of our troops from

Sierra Leone was a large scale event, so it attracts more attention. But over the last decade, this kind of development has become a pattern. Indian peacekeeping troops in Somalia, though they were more effective and popular in Somalia in early 1990, had to be withdrawn because of the violence to which they were subjected, the violence which was rooted in regional politics. Similarly, the Indian commanding general of the UN peacekeeping operations in Yugoslavia in 1992-93 resigned because his impartiality and efficiency did not suit the politics of certain European countries which persuaded the UN secretary general to dilute his command by foisting political advisers from pliable countries on him. He resigned though he still had a long tenure to complete.

All this leads to the inescapable conclusion that the post-Cold War UN peacekeeping operations have lost the characteristics of impartiality, strict adherence to the UN charter and the capacity to play a role rising above local and regional politics. The secretariat has become subjected to strategic motivations of important world and regional powers and the narrower political and regional influence of countries in areas of crises.

The secretariat is apparently conscious of its critical predicament and therefore appointed an independent panel to reform the UN peacekeeping operations under the chairmanship of the ambassador, Lakhdar Brahimi, former foreign minister of Algeria and UN undersecretary general. The other nine members of the panel were from the United States, Trinidad and Tobago, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, the Russian federation, Zimbabwe and Switzerland. Their report was published on August 23 and it was submitted to the millennium summit in September.

This addresses the problems, but with excessive politeness, ambiguity and in traditional UN jargon. One hopes that some of its recommendations would be accepted by the UN general assembly and the security council and they would be implemented by the UN secretariat. It is pertinent, however, to point out that apart from Japan, no country from Asia was represented on this panel, and only Trinidad and Tobago and Zimbabwe, two developing countries were represented on the panel. Not a single country which was a major contributor to UN peacekeeping operations (in operational terms) was represented in this panel. So much for remediation being rooted in actual experience.

The important lesson for us is that regardless of the economic advantages of participating in UN peacekeeping operations, it is time for India to curb its misplaced enthusiasm to be part of such an exercise. Our armed forces have enough concerns to deal with at home. There is no need for Indian soldiers to die or be embarrassed when none of India's vital interests is involved.

israeli settlements illegal, says UN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

UNHQ, Oct. 21. — The UN General Assembly has termed as "illegal and obstacle to peace" Israeli settlement in the occupied Palestinian territories including Jerusalem, and condemned with overwhelming majority excessive use of force by Israel against Palestinians.

A resolution adopted by the 189-member House yesterday by 92 votes to six with 46 abstentions, also called for immediate cessation of hostilities between the two sides and resumption of peace talks.

India was among the member states that voted in favour of the Palestinian-drafted resolution which was opposed by the USA, Israel and four others.

The resolution condemned violence that took place at Al-Haram Al-Sharif and other holy places in Jerusalem as well as other areas of "occupied" Palestinian territories and held Israel responsible for excessive use of force against Palestinian civilians.

The resolution, while stressing the need for implementation of understandings reached recently at the Sharm El-Sheikh summit, supported establishment of US-led inquiry into the recent violence in the Palestinian territories that claimed over 100 lives, mostly of Arabs.

The vote was taken after an eight-hour special emergency session which began on



Israeli soldiers stand near the body of a man killed while trying to infiltrate the Israel-Lebanon border on Saturday. — AP/PTI

Wednesday and was adjourned for two days.

The session was called at the request of the Palestinian observer to the UN, Mr Nasser Al-Kidwa.

Earlier, the UN Secretary General, Mr Kofi Annan, appealed to the Israelis and Palestinians to look beyond violence to resolve the West Asia crisis.

"Peace remains the only strategic option for Israelis and Palestinians," Mr Annan told the delegates, adding "one of the lessons of the past few days

is that there can be no lasting security without lasting peace."

"That is why we need to look... to a future in which Israelis and Palestinians can live in lasting peace," he said.

AFP adds from Jerusalem: Israel rejected as one-sided the resolution condemning the Jewish state's excessive use of force against Palestinian civilians, the foreign ministry said.

The Israeli foreign ministry said the one-sided decision had not taken into account numerous incidents of Palestinian violence like the lynching of

Israeli soldiers in Ramallah and the desecration of Jewish holy sites like Joseph's tomb.

The ministry statement reiterated Israel's commitment to a ceasefire in the Palestinian territories, and said it expected the Palestinian authority to do the same.

India worried

India has expressed "very deep concern and consternation" over the eruption of violence in West Asia, and called for continued dialogue between

Gaza gravediggers have no rest

STEPHEN FARRELL
THE TIMES, LONDON

GAZA, Oct. 21. — The gravediggers of Gaza have run out of cement. They are unlikely to run out of bodies. Two bags of powder is all they have left, a tired Ahmed Baroud grumbles as he pulls himself upright beside his first tomb of the day and points at the brown sacks standing beside the horse-drawn hearse.

Until four months ago, Ahmed, 27, was a tailor. Then, he says, cloth stopped coming through the Israeli-controlled Erez border crossing, putting him out of work. It may be true, it may not, but it gives him another reason as if he needed one to hate the Israelis. Now he is one of 15 gravediggers at the Muslim 'martyr's cemetery' at Toffah in north Gaza, moving in after the mechanical digger has scooped out a row of 81 ready-made holes to lay the stone blocks and slab and smooth the sand, by hand, over the grave's surface.

Helping to complete up to 14 graves a day, he works for nothing but is hoping to gain salvation by laying to rest the victims of the al-Aqsa intifada. "I will get a reward from God, 'inshallah' (God willing), when I help to bury the mar-

Palestinians and Israelis to find just, comprehensive and lasting settlement.

"For the people of Israel and Palestine, designed to live as neighbours, peace is not an option: but there no alternative to it," the Indian representative, Mr Madan Lal Khurana, MP, told the UN General Assembly.

Speaking about "spiral of violence" which has vitiated the atmosphere between the

tyrs," he says, wiping sand from his torn blue T-shirt and trousers of an indescribable hue.

"I feel sadness with each person we bury. Young or old, they are all the same, all human beings. Each of us says farewell to the others. God is now providing for my family, we have nothing else. We were hoping Mr Arafat would bring our rights back from Sharm-el-Sheikh but he didn't."

This morning's tomb is that of an elderly man who died of natural causes. He is one of the last in the row and lies almost beneath the evenly-spaced palm trees lining the road down which the hearse brought him. How many more they will be able to lay to rest in decent tombs once the cement runs out, Mr Ahmed does not know. "We spent two days looking for this bag. Now it cost us 25 shekels (pounds 4), when only two weeks ago it was 17 shekels. We spent two days looking for this bag. It is the last we have."

A few hours' drive across the border with Jordan, the very cement he seeks has become a bone of contention. Arab businessmen say they are willing to sell cement to Gaza and the West Bank for less than the Israelis, but claim their tenders are ignored by Mr Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority.

rights that have occurred and to learn lesson for future.

He said the events of last few days should not be allowed to retard or delay the pace process for which Palestinian and Israelis have striven hard.

"Together, over the years, they have come a long way on the road to peace — a one-way journey from which there cannot and should not be going back," Mr Khurana said.

THE STATESMAN

22 OCT 2000



The Palestinian Chairman, Mr. Yasser Arafat (right) speaks with the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad al-Thani, moments before the start of an Arab League emergency meeting in Cairo on Saturday. — Reuters



Israeli soldiers stand near the remains of a man killed while attempting to infiltrate northern border with Lebanon on Saturday. According to the Israeli army spokesman, the army derailed an infiltration attempt in a heavy exchange of fire west of the disputed Chebaa farms, the area where Hezbollah forces stormed across the fence and captured three Israeli soldiers on October 7. — AP

U.N. condemns Israeli action

UNITED NATIONS, Oct. 21. In a major diplomatic blow to Israel, the U.N. General Assembly termed as "illegal and obstacle to peace" Israeli settlement in the Palestinian territories and condemned with overwhelming majority the "excessive use of force" by the Jewish state against Palestinians.

A resolution adopted by the House on Friday by 92 votes to six with 46 abstentions, called for immediate cessation of hostilities between the two sides and resumption of talks. India was among the member states that voted in favour of the Palestinian-drafted resolution which was opposed by the U.S., Israel and four others.

The Egyptian ambassador, Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, said the root of the problem was Israel's failure to withdraw from the territories it has occupied since the 1967 war. "Only then may Israel have the legitimacy it deserves and aspire to. And only then will our peoples know an end to a conflict that has ripped our region apart for the last half century". But the Israeli ambassador, Mr. Yehuda Lancy, said: "The occupation did not fall

from the sky," but was the result of a war against Israel by its Arab neighbours. He called the resolution "useless" and one-sided, saying it failed to address the "savage" lynching of two Israeli soldiers by a Palestinian mob in the West Bank town of Ramallah or the destruction of Joseph's Tomb in Nablus.

This was the third condemnation of Israel by the U.N. since the violence erupted on September 28 following Israeli right wing leader, Mr. Ariel Sharon's visit to a shrine.

On October 7, the Security Council had condemned the excessive use of force against Palestinians without naming Israel, and on Thursday the Geneva-based U.R. Human Rights Commission voted to condemn Israel for "widespread, systematic and gross violations of human rights" and set up an international inquiry into violence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Condemning violence that took place at Al-Haram el-Sharif and other places in Jerusalem and areas under "occupied" Palestinian territories, the General Assembly

held Israel responsible for excessive use of force. The resolution stressed the need for implementation of the deal reached recently at the Sharm el-Sheikh summit and backed establishment of a U.S.-led inquiry into the clashes that claimed over 100 lives, most of Arabs.

The session was called at the request of the Palestinian observer to the U.N.

Earlier, the U.N. Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Annan, appealed to Israelis and Palestinians to look beyond violence to resolve the crisis.

"Peace remains the only strategic option for Israelis and Palestinians," he told the delegates, adding "one of the lessons of the past few days is that there can be no lasting security without lasting peace."

Israel rejected as "one-sided" the U.N. resolution, the Israeli Foreign Ministry said. The Ministry said the resolution had not taken into account numerous incidents of Palestinian violence like the lynching of Israeli soldiers and the desecration of Joseph's Tomb. — PFI, Reuters, AFP

Many die as Colombian rebels launch attack

BOGOTA (COLOMBIA), Oct. 21. Fifty-four soldiers and two police officers have died in three days of fighting with leftist rebels in a small northern town, Colombian military officials said Friday.

Among them, 22 soldiers died when their Black Hawk helicopter crashed as a ground battle raged. The fighting, the heaviest between Government troops and rebels in months, began on Wednesday when 500 troops from the largest guerrilla army began an attack on Dabeiba, a town along a strategic corridor through which guns and supplies arrive from Panama, 160 km away.

Thirty-two soldiers and two police officers were killed on the ground when the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, attacked the town of 50,000 people. On Thursday, in the midst of the fighting, the helicopter, transporting reinforcements, crashed, killing all 22 aboard. The Government did not estimate how many guerrillas died. The rear rotor of the copter "apparently touched the mountain-side and produced the accident," Gen. Eduardo Herrera said here. The military acknowledged that the rebels had fired at the helicopter.

The loss of life was seen as a blow to the military. But the President, Mr. Andres Pastrana, told an audience at the University of the Rosario here on Friday, "My conviction is that the pursuit of peace has never faltered and that, in contrast, violence always fails."

Brig. Gen. Gabriel Eduardo Contreras, commander of the 1st Division of the Colombian military, called the 40-hour battle in Dabeiba a victory for his forces. But as troops of the Fourth Brigade fought five rebel fronts in Dabeiba, another guerrilla force overran Bagado, a small river community in Choco Province. Seventeen police officers stationed at the barracks there when the assault began on Wednesday were missing on Thursday, and were presumed to have been killed or taken hostage. — New York Times

THE HINDU
29 11 2002

U.N. Council restores some unity on Iraq

UNITED NATIONS, SEPT. 28. Recovering some of its battered unity over Iraqi sanctions, the Security Council agreed to reduce the percentage of Iraq's oil revenues paid into the Gulf War compensation fund.

As part of a compromise, the Security Council yesterday also endorsed a record \$15.9 billion claim for damages against Iraq by the Kuwait Petroleum Company (KPC).

But the Council — in particular its five permanent members — remained divided over the legality of unauthorised flights to Iraq, which has been subject to comprehensive sanctions since it invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

The French Ambassador to the United Nations, Mr. Jean-David Levitte, told reporters that France had suggested a compromise over compensation payments because "it is important to restore the unity of the Council."

France, China and Russia waived reservations about the claim by KPC, the largest so far brought to the U.N. Compensation Commission (UNCC) in Geneva. In exchange, Britain and the United States agreed to cut the level of Iraqi oil revenues going into the compensation fund, from 30 per cent to 25 per cent.

The new rate will come into effect in the next 180-day phase of the U.N.-administered Iraqi oil-for-food programme, which starts on December 10. With the price of oil around \$31 a barrel, this will make about an extra \$1 billion a year available to import food, medicine and other necessities under the programme.

"This means everybody wins," the Deputy U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Mr. James Cunningham, told reporters.

But there was still room for some disagreement. Mr. Cunningham insisted that there was "more than enough" money already available for humanitarian imports. The United States would like to see the extra money go "more directly" to those in need, he said. For his part, Mr. Levitte said there would be "no change" in the way the funds were disbursed through the oil-for-food programme. He said France would continue to press for the compensation fund allocation to be cut to 20 per cent in subsequent phases of the programme.

Mr. Levitte said the time was right to review the compensation payments because "we are starting a new phase" in the work of the UNCC. Individual claims had all been settled, he said, and the commission was now adjudicating "claims over \$1 billion."

Tensions within the Security Council over what to do with Iraq's swelling oil revenues have been exacerbated by a row which peaked when a French plane flew to Baghdad on Saturday. Mr. Cunningham said the U.S. view was still that "all flights need to be approved by the sanctions committee." Two Russian planes have also reached the Iraqi capital, and a Jordanian flight arrived there yesterday. — AP

MONTREAL: Sri Chinmoy's peace concert: Sri Chinmoy offered a peace concert of his musical compositions before an audience of nearly 20,000 people in Montreal, Canada, recently. The three-hour programme was one of nearly 600 such concerts Sri Chinmoy has offered at most of the world's major concert halls since 1984. Sri Chinmoy dedicated the peace concert to Raisa Maximovna Gorbachev, who died one year ago.

Looking Within to Resolve Conflicts

By KARAN SINGH

QUEST for the Divine has been a major dimension in all great civilisations. The divine has been accessed in different ways, described in different words and portrayed in different forms around the world. The essential truth is expressed in the *Rigveda: Ekam sad vipraha bahudha vadanti* — the truth is one, the wise call it by many names.

It is incontrovertible that much that is great in human civilisation — art and architecture, law and literature, dance and music, moral codes and religious texts — can be traced back to one or other of the great religions of the world. It is therefore ironical that large numbers of people have been killed and tortured, persecuted and ill-treated in the name of religion.

Even today, fierce battles are raging around the world in the name of religion. This inter-faith meeting of religious and spiritual leaders at the UN presents a unique opportunity to transcend barriers of hatred and exclusivism, fanaticism and fundamentalism, and move towards a new era in which we will respect all the great religious traditions of the world. We are free to hold that our own path to the Divine is the best, but it is not acceptable that we should perpetrate violence or discrimination against others who are following a different path. This should be our first commitment to move towards a culture of peace and conflict resolution.

Our second endeavour is to involve the alleviation and ultimate abolition of poverty and deprivation, of hunger and malnutrition from the face of our planet. If all the great religious organisations of the world were to divert a substantial portion of their funds towards poverty alleviation, it would help remove today's grave disparities that can become a source of conflict and tension. Those of us from developing countries who are here come from an oasis of well-being in a vast desert of poverty and deprivation. We must share the gifts that the Divine has showered upon us with our less fortunate fellow humans, particularly women and children, the more vulnerable section of our societies. A massive multi-religious movement for the abolition of poverty must, therefore, be one of our major commitments and this is in harmony with the teachings of all world religions.

Thirdly, our educational systems today seldom teach religious harmony. In fact, in many societies there is

indoctrination in favour of one and against other religious traditions, so that millions of young people are growing up convinced that their highest destiny is to destroy other people belonging to different religious traditions. A UNESCO report titled *Learning: The treasure within* talks about educational programmes not only for formal systems but also for non-formal methodologies using information technology, and how it should be directed towards introducing an element of interfaith awareness, globally.

Fourthly, we must reiterate our commitment to safeguarding the natural environment, which is a divine gift to the human race. This was spelt out in the Assisi Declarations on man and nature in 1986. Whether we look upon nature as a creation of the divine, or a manifestation of the divine, we must treat it as a resource which belongs to entire humanity and which must be preserved and protected for future generations.

Degradation and depredation of our natural environment has been one of the most tragic features of the 20th century. The havoc caused by deforestation, desertification and pressure of population growth is causing widespread distress as is ruthless exploitation of non-renewable energy resources by developed nations. Global warming is melting glaciers and within the next two decades several island countries are in serious danger of disappearing from the map of the world. The protective ozone layer is depleting. It is therefore essential that religious and spiritual leaders commit themselves to the preservation and enhancement of the natural environment by spreading the environmental message among their followers.

Finally, religious and spiritual leaders must draw the attention of humankind to the inner core; the light that is within all human beings, regardless of race, religion, sex or nationality. The human psyche today is fractured and fragmented, and can be healed only by the inner processes of meditation, prayer and introspection. Let us recognise this fundamental truth enshrined deep within our consciousness — we will then enable ourselves to propagate the ideals and principles to which this historic millennium summit is irrevocably committed.

(The writer was member of the Advisory Board, Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders, UN).



THE TIMES OF INDIA

SEP 2 2000

UN Council reforms at centre of meeting

United Nations, August 31

THE SECURITY Council, which UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has urged member states to reform "without delay," has decided to dramatise its importance at next week's Millennium Summit.

Annan's recommendation came in a landmark report which he sent to the United Nations General Assembly in April in a bid to set the agenda for the three-day summit starting on September 6.

"The United Nations must adapt itself to the changing times," he said, and "one critical area" was reform of the Security Council. Some of the 150 heads of state and government attending the summit may take up Annan's challenge in the four plenary sessions and in the four private round-table meetings they are due to hold.

But the Council itself, and its five permanent members in particular, have underscored their centrality to the work of the world body by

scheduling meetings of their own. The full council is to meet at the level of heads of state and government for 90 minutes, on September 7.

The meeting will take place in public and has been timed not to conflict with any plenary or round-table. The council, chaired by president of Alpha Oumar Konare of Mali, is expected to pass a resolution endorsing a new report calling

Millennium Summit

for radical reforms of the United Nations methods of peacekeeping.

The millennium summit will be the United States President Bill Clinton's farewell to the United Nations and a debut for his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, while certain world leaders will be conspicuously absent.

At the summit, more than 160 kings, presidents and prime ministers will speak and meet in three compact days to chart a course for the United Nations in the 21st century.

(Agencies)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

Millennium Summit to focus on U.N. funds

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

UNITED NATIONS, SEPT. 4. The much-awaited Millennium Summit of the United Nations is round the corner. For three days starting September 6, 150 heads of state and Government will gather for what is being billed as a historic event that will see a host of themes being discussed not only in the formal speeches but also in the hundreds of bilateral meetings that have been scheduled.

Thus far, the Summit has been without any controversy for the simple reason that it has been so organised that no nation would feel slighted or left out. The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, will have the same amount of time as will have the President of Equatorial Guinea. But this does not mean that the two will have similar views on how the U.N. should function in the 21st century or on globalisation.

The Summit is organised not on any single theme; rather it would weave around several issues such as peace, security, disarmament and development. At the end of

the meeting, the leaders will adopt a declaration, the last stages of negotiations on this document being currently under way. According to one diplomat, it will be a "forward looking" one unlikely to offend any nation.

The real thrust of the proceedings is not going to be in the speeches but in the content of what takes place in individual or group discussions among the leaders. The Summit comes at a time when the U.N. is under pressure from a number of fronts and even seen as being marginalised in recent years.

Sceptics say that the Summit is nothing more than an extravagant show with little substance, but the optimists are seeing at least a psychological boost to the member states, particularly the smaller and the less powerful nations which are apprehensive of the implications of recent changes in the international system.

At the one end of the spectrum are those nations that are pushing for tighter mechanisms especially as they pertain to international le-

gal and human rights. And at the other end there is the genuine apprehension in the developing world over their implication for them. While some talk of the need to come to grips with globalisation, there are the smaller and not-so-fortunate nations looking at the downsides of globalisation.

Leaders attending the event are expected to devote time to a number of issues facing the U.N. and the challenges it has to face in the 21st Century. What is increasingly being stressed is that the U.N., over the last five decades, has taken on tremendous responsibilities that go far beyond responding to territorial and boundary problems.

The realisation has been that for all its shortcomings, the U.N. has really expanded its functioning both in breadth and depth.

Foremost among the challenges facing the world body, and one that leaders can be expected to pay some attention to, is the problem of funds. It is not merely a question of finding resources for development needs and peace-

keeping operations but adequately allocating money for development, fighting hunger and disease.

The irony has been that while nations and individuals have been quick to blame the U.N. for not responding to situations promptly, there has been great reluctance to make the annual payments to the world body.

The heads of state and Government have been given five minutes each for their speeches and organisers hope that this time limit will be adhered to. And then there are Four Round Tables that will see the participation of heads of state for about three minutes.

In view of the changed schedule, the Indian Prime Minister, Mr. A. B. Vajpayee, will not be present for the inaugural of the Summit which will be Presided over by the Presidents of Namibia and Finland. Mr. Vajpayee will make his address on September 8 and is expected to touch on some of India's core concerns such as nuclear disarmament, terrorism and developmental imperatives.

THE HINDU

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19-10 Peacekeeping Perils 679

During World War II, British citizens complained that American GIs stationed in the UK were "overbearing, over-paid, over-sexed and over here". It is different with the UN's peacekeeping forces, according to a special 10-nation commission's report. It found that many of the UN's 35,000 blue-helmeted troops in 14 nations "are under-trained, under-equipped, under-financed and under fire". The UN panel warns that the UN would remain impotent, lose all credibility among nations and the peace efforts fail (as in the past decade), "unless more moneys and major reforms are provided". Next week's Millennium Summit of world leaders is to discuss reforms at the UN. Political correctness is all right, as an American panelist put it, but it is self-defeating if UN peacekeepers send a message to the aggressive elements that United Nations is nothing to be feared. Thomas Hardy lamented, "War makes good history, while peace provides poor reading". He also said "After a thousand years of Mass/ We have come up to poison gas". The Bible preached peace, urging nations to beat swords into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks. UNESCO stated "since wars begin in the minds men, it is in these minds that the defences of peace must be built". Peace may have its victories, no less renowned than war, but despite everyone wanting it, is in short supply. The Americans have no qualms calling a nuclear weapon 'the peacemaker'. The US air force proclaims 'Peace is our profession'. The world has enjoyed peace for barely 292 years in its 5,600-year-old history since 3600 BC, say historians. There have been as many as 14,500 major wars, in which over four billion people have been killed which is 80 per cent of today's world population. Some people associate being peaceful with being passive and dull, lacking the excitement and drive that wars provide. But as UN peacekeepers are finding out, under-development and armed conflict are often linked. Sustaining a culture of peace is so difficult when societies are unable to meet citizens' needs and there is a breakdown. Sadly, these conflicts do lasting damage to their political, social and economic fabric. No wonder, peace demands the same earnest planning, dedication, organisation, and imagination that people and nations devote to waging wars.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

7 6 SEP 2000

Talkathon begins today in New York

S. Rajagopalan
Washington, September 5

UN HT-1

IN THE biggest-ever gathering of world leaders, some 160-odd kings, Presidents, Prime Ministers and military rulers are assembling in New York for the long-awaited UN Millennium Summit, beginning tomorrow. The three-day event, starting tomorrow, promises to be as much a talkathon, on the way the world should proceed in the new millennium, as a forum for some nations to rake up disputes of their immediate neighbourhood.

Pakistan, for one, has served notice that it is going to prominently raise the Kashmir issue as part of its continuing bid to seek international intervention. Ahead of military ruler Gen. Pervez Musharraf's address, his Information Minister Javed Jabbar is busy holding forth on his leader's bid to "create trust and mutual respect", and India's "very negative" attitude.

Indian circles have indicated that any bid by Islamabad to rake up the Kashmir issue will be met with a fitting rejoinder. Since Prime Minister Vajpayee will speak on the closing day, he will get the opportunity to see how far Gen. Musharraf goes and then decide on his own response.

Gen. Musharraf speaks on the opening day itself.

The General Assembly session will turn the spotlight on the United Nation's own role in global affairs and the long-pending moves to restructure its institutions to make them more representative and responsive. India's quest for a permanent seat in an expanded Security Council is one of the many interventions sought by respective member States.

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Secretary General Kofi Annan has sought to set the agenda on this with a report to the General Assembly last April. In that report, while calling for the UN to adapt itself to the changing times, Annan has identified the reform of the Security Council as a critical area.

The assemblage of such a galaxy of world leaders (said to be much bigger than the 118 who turned up at the UN's 50th anniversary celebrations in 1995) will also make for a spate of bilateral interactions on the sidelines. Owing to Mr Vajpayee's delayed arrival, the Indian diplomats are reworking some of his scheduled bilateral meetings.

Much attention is also being focussed on President Clinton's fresh bid to broker a peace accord in the Middle East after the failure of his protracted efforts in Camp David in July. He is slated to confer with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak.

Within the UN General Assembly itself, attention will be focussed as much on the trouble spots and lingering disputes as on such durable issues as poverty, debt burden, disparities, development and environment. With well over a billion people living on less than \$1 a day, the Third World leaders will once again issue a call for measures to mitigate their debt burden.

Given the phenomenal number of speakers, the heads of State will have to act within a tight frame to have their say. The UN authorities have prescribed a five-minute limit. However, the heads will have ample time for bilateral meetings.

According to one count, over 700 such one-to-one meetings will be held by leaders of the various countries.

UN Millennium Summit

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

• 6 SEP 2001

Annan for Security Council reforms

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

UNHQ, Sept. 5. — The UN Secretary General has stressed the urgency to reform the Security Council to enable the world body to carry out its responsibilities more effectively.

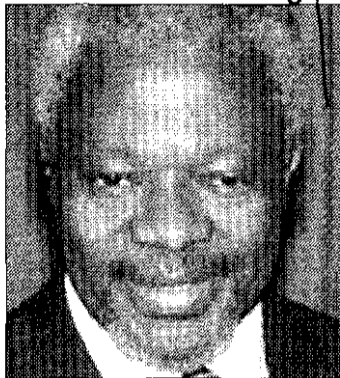
India has been pressing its case for a permanent seat in the Security Council which has five permanent members — the USA, UK, Russia, France and China.

Mr Kofi Annan said the reforms would help the UN in gaining greater legitimacy in the eyes of all the world's peoples.

He also urged the world leaders to consider possibility of convening a major international conference to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers.

"The states must act together to maintain international peace and security in accordance with UN charter and management of risks and threats," he said.

Mr Annan's report containing recommendations for the world leaders would be presented to



Mr Kofi Annan

them when they gather here tomorrow for the three-day Millennium Summit.

More than 150 world leaders are expected to address the General Assembly in the summit.

Kings, generals, presidents and prime ministers are assembling in New York with the lofty goal of turning the 21st century into an epoch free of war, poverty, ignorance and disease, adds AP.

But they are also using the summit — the largest gather-

ing of world leaders in history — as a soapbox for issues in their homelands.

Tight security around the United Nations inconvenienced New Yorkers and netted several arrests over the weekend. At least 91 demonstrations are planned during the gathering, which runs from tomorrow through Friday.

At the summit's conclusion, world leaders are expected to adopt the so-called Millennium Declaration, which commits them to meeting tough targets in eradicating poverty, promoting education and reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Noting that more than 5 million people have lost their lives in wars during the last decade, the document says: "We will spare no effort to free our peoples from the scourge of war".

A nine-page draft circulated yesterday also vows to promote democracy and strengthen respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, "including the right to development" — a key demand by Third World countries.

THE STATESMAN

6 SEP 2000

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In farewell address, US President urges nations to pay up for peacekeeping

Clinton calls for stronger UN

FROM DEBORAH CHARLES

United Nations, Sept. 6 (Reuters): The largest gathering of world leaders in history opened today with more than 150 kings, Presidents and Prime Ministers assembled at the United Nations to discuss reducing poverty and keeping global peace in the 21st century.

President Bill Clinton urged international backing for a strengthened UN peacekeeping force in what amounted to a farewell address to world leaders gathered for the UN Millennium Summit.

Clinton, speaking as President for the last time at the podium of the United Nations, said bloodshed in West Timor and Sierra Leone proved the need for a better UN peacekeeping force. "In both cases, the UN did not have the tools to finish the job. We must provide those tools, with peacekeepers that can be rapidly deployed with the right training and equipment, missions well-defined

and well-led, with the necessary civilian police," he said.

Clinton's call for more money for UN peacekeeping may have been hard to swallow for some leaders because the United States owes the United Nations \$1.7 billion, most of it for peacekeeping.

"All these things come with a price tag, and all nations, including the United States, must pay it," Clinton said.

"These prices must be fairly apportioned and the UN structure of finances must be fairly reformed so the organisation can do its job."

Addressing UN critics, however, he said: "But those in my country or elsewhere who believe we can do without the UN, or impose our will upon it, misread history and misunderstand the future."

Clinton, in the last months of an eight-year presidency, said he had learned during his tenure that nations need to find ways to compromise in their disputes because "whether we like it or not, we are growing more interdependent."

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"We must look for more solutions in which all sides can claim a measure of victory and move away from choices in which someone is required to accept complete defeat," he said.

"That will require us to develop greater sensitivity to our diverse political, cultural and religious claims. But it will require us to develop even greater respect for our common humanity," he said.

Clinton today also pleaded for Israel and the Palestinians to clinch a final peace deal, telling the summit time was running out and "there is not a moment to lose."

Speaking before planned separate meetings with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, Clinton said: "To those who have supported the right of Israel to live in security and peace, to those who have championed the Palestinian cause these many years, let me say to all of you: they need your support now more than ever to take the hard risks for peace."

Russian President Vladimir Putin offered today to host an international conference next year on preventing the militarisation of space.

Putin, who has frequently spoken against US proposals to develop new missile systems, at the summit that proposals to use space for military purposes were "particularly alarming."

Moscow, he said, would be a natural choice to discuss such issues 40 years after Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin became the first man in space on April 12, 1961.

"We are suggesting the organisation on that date under the aegis of the United Nations of an international conference on the prevention of the militarisation of outer space," Putin said. "If you, distinguished colleagues, agree, then the place for holding that conference could be Moscow."

US President Bill Clinton last week announced that he was leaving his successor to decide on a national missile defence system.

New Yorkers buckle in for a week of gridlock

FROM BRINLEY BRUTON

New York, Sept. 6 (Reuters): New Yorkers gritted their teeth in gridlock caused by convoys of world leaders attending the UN Millennium Summit today, one calling it "like pushing water through a funnel with a very small hole."

Black sedans, sport utility vehicles and police vehicles dominated First Avenue outside United Nations headquarters, at least three police officers were stationed at every street corner for block after block and blue barricades slowed pedestrians and dog-walkers.

"It ties up the whole area," said master mechanic Tom Roemer, 63, at the construction site of Trump World Tower, the world's tallest residential building near the United Nations. "It's like pushing water through a funnel with a very small hole," Roemer said.

Another construction worker said trucks were being prevented from delivering materials at the main entrance to the site and alternative routes were taking twice as long.

Traffic police created a lane of orange cones down the centre of 42nd Street for motorcades of cars and police motorcyclists escorting heads of state, Prime Ministers, kings and generals to and from the largest gathering in history of world leaders today till Friday.

"The traffic is just terrible, but this is bound to happen," said Michael Lardi, 41, a taxi driver originally from Ghana. He said a fare across Manhattan today that normally would take about 20 minutes, lasted one hour and 15 minutes.

Bus rides were even slower. Albert Orjuela, 25, systems analyst at Memorial Sloan Kettering Hospital said an eight-to-10 minute ride took one hour and 20 minutes.

Taxi driver Lardi, however, faced it all in good humour, saying the global meeting to set the course for United Nations programmes in the 21st century "is very important" and he hoped "the problems in the Third World are addressed, war in Africa and AIDS."

Police were prepared for at least 170 motorcades — involving some 1,300 vehicles — for the visiting leaders and their aides.

Last week New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani pleaded with New Yorkers to use the subway or walk to destinations on the East Side of Manhattan.

THE TELEGRAPH

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N. Korea quits over Frankfurt frisking

S. Rajagopalan

United Nations, September 6

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IN A rather inauspicious run-up to the UN Millennium Summit, North Korea on Tuesday pulled out of the event in a fit of rage against the "US-inspired" body searches on members of its high-power delegation at the Frankfurt airport.

The airport incident provoked the delegation, led by North Korea's no. 2 leader and titular head Kim Yong Nam, to fly back to Pyongyang instead of New York. In one stroke, it seemed to end the first tentative signs of a review of the frosty relations with the US.

The US administration regretted the Frankfurt happening, but distanced itself from the searches conducted by security officers of the American Airlines. US officials also spoke of a "misunderstanding" caused by North Korea's failure to inform the State Department

about its delegation's "changed" travel plans.

Here at the UN, the arrival of the North Korean delegation was keenly awaited against the backdrop of the path-breaking summit meeting between the two Koreas in June.

President Clinton had invited the delegation leader for a reception on Thursday night.

Mr Li Hyong Chol, North Korea's

UN Millennium Summit

Ambassador to the UN, said the shocking incident had only intensified his country's "hatred towards the United States". By such a provocative action, the US was only showing its "true colour as a destroyer of peace and stability in the Korean peninsula".

A North Korean statement said the US air security officials opened the luggage of every member of the presidential entourage, forced

them to take off clothes and shoes "and searched even sensitive parts of the body".

The American Airlines, while expressing its own regret for the "inconvenience" caused to the delegation, said that it was obliged under the Federal Aviation Administration regulations to carry out stringent procedures for all passengers travelling on its international flights.

These checks are more pronounced in the case of passengers from countries that have been branded by the US as sponsors of terrorism. The US has named seven countries thus and North Korea is one of them.

White House spokesman Joe Lockhardt, regretting the "unfortunate incident", said: "It was a combination of unfamiliarity with our procedures and, I think, some unfamiliarity on the part there with the delegation coming through." UN Secretary General Kofi Annan voiced his disappointment over the absence of the North Koreans.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

SEP 20 1999

U.N. MEET / PROTEST AT SECURITY CHECK

N. Korean team boycotts meet

UNITED NATIONS, SEPT. 6. North Korea today accused the United States of instigating an airport search of North Korean diplomats, including the country's number 2 leader, who angrily called off participation in the U.N. Millennium Summit and a New York meeting with the President of South Korea.

The incident on Monday at the airport in Frankfurt, Germany, will hurt U.S.-North Korean ties as well as slow the reconciliation between the two Koreas, the North Korean ambassador to the United Nations, Mr. Li Hyong Chol, said at a news conference on Tuesday.

The decision of Mr. Kim Yong Nam, leader of the Communist country's Parliament, to cancel his trip to New York was one of the first setbacks to recent efforts by North and South Korea to do away with decades of antagonism.

But there was no indication if the Pyongyang Government planned to halt its overall reconciliation policy. Also, Seoul officials view plans for North Korean leader, Mr. Kim Jong-Il to visit the South Korea President, Mr. Kim Dae-Jung, in Seoul as far more important than the aborted New York meeting.

No date has been set for that visit, which would be a followup to a June summit between the two leaders.

The airport dispute was reminiscent of other accusations by North Korea that were apparently aimed at disrupting the close ties between Seoul and its long-

time ally, Washington, which keeps 37,000 troops in South Korea.

"It's certainly an unfortunate incident we regret," the White House spokesman, Mr. Joe Lockhart, said. "It was a combination of unfamiliarity with our procedures and I think some unfamiliarity on the part there with the delegation coming through."

Mr. Lockhart said the officials were not strip-searched. "There was no strip-searching," said the spokesman. "There was a general search — patting down and, you know, looking through bags. There was no strip search as far as I have been able to ascertain."

North Korea has begun a diplomatic initiative in recent months to try to ease its isolation from the outside world. Mr. Lockhart said the U.S. hoped the incident would not undermine U.S.-North Korean talks on a series of issues, notably discussions on Pyongyang's missile programme.

Meanwhile, Japan expressed disappointment at the incident, which deprived it of a valuable chance to make contact with North Korea, the only country in the region with which it has no diplomatic relations.

"This incident has nothing to do with North-South (Korea) relations. North-South relations will move ahead, separate from North Korea-U.S. relations," the Vice-North Korean Foreign Minister, Mr. Choi Su Hon, said at a hastily called news conference before leaving Frankfurt. — AP

THE HINDU

- 7 SEP 1997

UN HD-13 **U.S. may draw flak at summit** 219

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

UNITED NATIONS, SEPT. 6. World leaders attending the Millennium Summit of the United Nations would be addressing, for most part, the changing role of the U.N. in the 21st century, or how best the world body needs to equip itself in the face of increasing and complex challenges. Internally, there has been question of how the U.N. should reform itself in structure and functioning.

Several leaders would not only be putting forth views on the role of the U.N. but are expected to strongly criticise the United States for its foreign policy and domination of world affairs. Already, North Korea has denounced the U.S. as a "rogue" state, saying that Washington was responsible for a "strip search" of its delegation transitting in Germany. Pyongyang has said that Washington will have a price to pay for this incident even as the State Department has regretted the incident.

After a break of five years, the Cuban President, Mr. Fidel Castro, will be at the U.N., and is widely expected to use his five minutes to sharply question the United States' domination of world affairs. Havana has said in recent days that a small group of powerful countries have had a tendency to violate the U.N. Charter and intervene militarily in other countries without a mandate from the Security Council — a clear reference to what had taken place in Yugoslavia.

It is not clear at this time if the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, will be making contact with the Cuban leader at a reception tomorrow. It is said here that leaders from Russia and China will be trying to mobilise international support against the proposed National Missile Defence System of the U.S. Last week, Mr. Clinton deferred a decision but left the option open to his successor in

A slew of protests

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

UNITED NATIONS, SEPT. 6. Hundreds of protesters representing various causes and issues have taken to the streets of downtown Manhattan hoping to get their messages across to about 150 heads of state and Government attending the U.N. Millennium Summit.

Anti-Iran activists are protesting the presence of Iran's President, Mohammad Khatami; scores of supporters of Falun Gong are demanding that the Chinese authorities release members of the sect now in prison; and prominent New York politicians stood outside the Iranian mission calling upon Teheran to release Jews imprisoned there.

Opposite the U.N. headquarters — which has been barred to visitors during the summit — activists were calling for membership for Taiwan, something that Beijing adamantly opposes. And there are those calling for justice from repression in some African countries.

The protests, peaceful in nature, were only expected. According to one count 300 different rallies are scheduled during the summit. Security is extremely tight in and around the U.N. and where the heads of state are staying. The authorities have generally been appealing to people to stay out of Manhattan for the next several days if they had no particular reason to be there.

the White House next year. While the Democratic nominee, Mr. Albert Gore, has been ambivalent to the proposal, the Republican candidate, Mr. George W. Bush, is quite firm on a "robust" missile shield that would protect not only all of the U.S. but its allies as well.

The Chinese President, Mr. Jiang Zemin, in his meeting with Mr. Clinton will call for the total scrapping of the missile defence plan, it is said.

'Dialogue of Civilisations'

As part of the summit, several leaders and senior officials attended a 'Dialogue of Civilisations' round table presided by the President of Iran, Mr. Mohammad Khatami; and as an indication of thawing of relations between Washington and Teheran, the U.S. Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, was present. There was no formal meet-

ing between Mr. Khatami and Ms. Albright though. The Minister of External Affairs, Mr. Jaswant Singh, also participated in the proceedings.

Pakistan's Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, is in New York and will be addressing the summit in the afternoon on the opening day. In his address at the U.N., in his meeting with Mr. Kofi Annan, and in his bilaterals, Gen. Musharraf is expected to make the point that Kashmir is the core issue between India and Pakistan and will be calling on the world body to intensify efforts to solve this problem.

The summit would conclude on Friday with the adoption of a declaration which, among other things, is expected to call for an all-out effort to reduce poverty and disease. But the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, has said that if the leaders failed to imple-

ment the declaration, nothing will change. "We do have the capacity to tackle these issues, if we can only muster the will," he observed.

Annan pleads against sanctions

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

UNITED NATIONS, SEPT. 6. On the eve of the Millennial Summit of the United Nations, the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, has urged the Security Council to find ways of punishing so-called rogue nations without resorting to sanctions. "The costs of sanctions have too often to be borne by ordinary people, not by the authoritarian governments against which they were directed," Mr. Annan has remarked in a report.

The remarks were not merely directed at the continuing sanctions against Iraq, which according to many versions are hurting the children or that country. The Security Council has sanctions in place on at least nine countries including Afghanistan where the assets of the Taliban have been frozen.

The Secretary-General's argument has been that sanctions would have to be improved in a manner that maximised the chance of inducing compliance from the targeted country and at the same time minimising the effect on the civilian population.

Mr. Annan's observations run counter to the United States' position that it was Mr. Saddam Hussain's policies and not the embargo that was hurting the people of Iraq. Baghdad has been under U.N. sanctions since 1990.

Beyond a broad exchange of ideas and putting forth the known and the stated positions on international affairs, not much by way of substance is expected out of the Millennium Summit.

THE HINDU

7 SEP 2001

ANNAN'S CALL FOR AGENDA AGAINST POVERTY

HO-1
719

Choose compromise over confrontation, says Clinton

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

UNITED NATIONS, SEPT. 6. Opening the United Nations Millennium Summit this morning, the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, challenged world leaders to protect their people from misery and to develop an agenda that would get rid of poverty and disease and forge peace.

"They look to you to protect them from the great dangers of our time; and to ensure that all of

them can share in its great achievements... Let us not disappoint them," Mr. Annan told the largest ever gathering of world leaders.

In his remarks at the opening session, the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, spoke of the dawn of a new era where globalisation and information technology are bringing people closer, and of the kind of challenges and responsibility that laid ahead of the U.N.

The President mentioned

South Asia in the context of leaders in different parts of the world facing a choice between confrontation and compromise. Mr. Clinton referred to the fact that the U.N. was formed 55 years ago to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war; but the reality was that while there were fewer wars between nations, there were more wars within them, often driven by ethnic and religious differences.

"But most conflicts and disputes are not so clear-cut. Legitimate grievances and aspirations pile high on both sides. Here, there is no alternative to principled compromise and giving up old grudges in order to get on with life. Right now, from the Middle East to Burundi, to the Congo to South Asia, leaders are facing this kind of choice between confrontation and compromise," Mr. Clinton observed.

He took the opportunity to remind the Israeli and the Palestinian leaders that they need to resolve their final differences. "They have the chance to do it, but like all life's chances, it is fleeting and about to pass. There is not a moment to lose," he reminded Mr. Ehud Barak and Mr. Yasser Arafat.

Making his last address at the world body, Mr. Clinton underscored the need to provide the U.N. with adequate tools for peacekeeping operations; and that the institution must work to fight poverty, disease, narcotics and illegal trade in precious stones. "All



these things come with a price-tag, and all nations, including the U.S., must pay it. These prices must be fairly apportioned and the U.N. structure of finances must be fairly reformed."

The U.N. Secretary-General argued that people understood that challenges cannot be met in one country alone or by Governments. "Change cannot be held back by frontiers," Mr. Annan said, going on to say that human progress had always come from individual and local initiatives and that the job of leaders was to encourage such initiatives.

"Your peoples look to you for a common effort to solve their problems. They expect you to work together, as Governments. And they expect you to work with all the other institutions — profit and non-profit, public and private — where human beings can join hands to promote their ideas or their interests."

U.S. may draw flak: Page 13

THE HINDU

SEP 2000

GIVE UP COLD WAR MENTALITY: JIANG ✓

Let us stop militarisation of outer space, says Putin

HD-1
8/9
By Sridhar Krishnaswami

UNITED NATIONS, SEPT. 7. Leaders from several continents took to the podium on Wednesday after the inaugural of the Millennium Summit, speaking on a range of challenges before the United Nations in the 21st Century and in the process reminding the world body itself that there would have to be internal changes as well if its role was to be defined in realistic and meaningful fashion.

The opening day was not just left to the leaders of the developed world but to several smaller and less developed nations, each focussing on as many themes as possible — from strategic issues to economic, developmental, societal and cultural. And there was civility in the proceedings too, with leaders choosing not to attack other nations personally.

The Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, criticised the militarisation of outer space and offered to host an international conference, on preventing the militarisation of space, on April 12, 2001, — the day being the 40th anniversary of the first Russian, Yuri Gagarin, to reach space.

"We are suggesting the organisation, on that date under the aegis of the United Nations, of an international conference on the prevention of the militarisation of outer space. If you, distinguished colleagues agree, then the place for holding that conference could be Moscow," Mr. Putin told the gathering.

For his part, the U.S. President,



The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, and his Russian counterpart, Mr. Vladimir Putin, sign the Strategic Stability Cooperation Initiative in New York on Wednesday. Also seen are the Russian Foreign Minister, Mr. Igor Ivanov, (left) and the U.S. Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright. — AP

Mr. Bill Clinton, who had a summit meeting with his Russian counterpart on the sidelines of the Millennium Meeting, apparently told the Russian leader that he hoped his decision to defer the deployment of the National Missile Defence system would give the two countries time to resolve their differences.

Mr. Clinton's decision to put off the NMD might have been political, intended to help Mr. Albert Gore, the Democratic nominee for the November 7 Presidential election, but the response from

Moscow was generally favourable.

The U.S. President's meeting with Mr. Putin is said to have covered a wide range of issues. It was the third meeting between the two leaders and the topics of discussion reportedly included the recent explosion and sinking of a Russian nuclear powered submarine in the Barents Seas. The two Presidents initialled a Joint Declaration on Strategic Stability, among other things, pledging to uphold disarmament pacts.

The Chinese President, Mr.

Jiang Zemin, called for the promotion of a "multi-polar international configuration" with a view to promoting peace and regional development. Without naming the United States directly, Mr. Jiang said, "... people in many countries are still suffering from the scourge of wars and turmoil. Hegemonism and power politics still exist."

China and Russia are adamantly opposed to NMD and although on the opening day of the Millennium Summit, Mr. Jiang made no explicit references, the issue is expected to come up during his summit meeting with Mr. Clinton on Friday. "The Cold War mentality must be abandoned once and for all," the Chinese leader told the United Nations making the point that developing nations too must be involved in security talks.

A lot of media attention was there on the Cuban President, Mr. Fidel Castro, who took the occasion to lash out at the developed and wealthy nations who, in his view, monopolised economic, political and technological power. "... to make us poorer, exploited and more dependent," Mr. Castro also did not mention the United States by name.

Known for his ability to give speeches that run into hours but faced with a five-minute deadline, Mr. Castro got a hearty laugh from the delegates when he went to the podium, took his handkerchief and placed it on the light that gave a signal when the time was up. He spoke for about eight minutes.

Clinton makes a strong pitch for global peace

S. Rajagopalan
United Nations, September 7, 1999

THE UN Millennium Summit to advance global peace got off to a rather sombre start yesterday with the killing of three UN aid workers in distant West Timor and a North Korean boycott of the summit in protest against an unedifying incident in which it saw the US' hand.

The slaying of the aid workers, coming after recent attacks on peacekeepers in Sierra Leone, was a grim reminder of the challenges facing the UN forces in the cause of furthering peace, bemoaned Secretary-General Kofi Annan in his opening remarks.

The summit's inaugural session, representing the largest-ever gathering of world leaders, heard US President Bill Clinton make a strong pitch for world peace, though his primary focus was the Middle East.

Ahead of his meeting with the Israeli and Palestinian leaders, Mr Clinton made a renewed call for clinching a peace deal. He did not make an explicit reference to Indo-Pak relations, but very much covered the subject in a broad sweep. As he put it: "Right now, from Burundi to the Middle East to the Congo to South Asia, leaders are facing this kind of choice between confrontation and compromise."

Some 60 of the 160-odd heads of State or Government were slated to speak on the opening day of the three-day summit, which threatened to throw life out of gear in parts of Manhattan. Those slated to speak later in the day included Russian leader Vladimir Putin, Chinese President Jiang Zemin, French President Jacques Chirac, British Prime Minister Tony Blair and Cuban leader Fidel Castro.

Mr Clinton, who lays down office next January, said that



Heads of delegations at the UN Millennium Summit in New York on Wednesday. Photo: AFP

his eight-year tenure had taught him that nations needed to find ways to compromise in their disputes "because whether we like it or not, we are growing more inter-dependent."

"We must look for more solutions in which all sides can claim a measure of victory and move away from choices in which someone is required to accept complete defeat," Mr

Clinton said adding: "That will require us to develop greater sensitivity to our diverse political, cultural and religious claims. But it will require us to develop even greater respect for our common humanity."

Seeking to come strongly to the aid of the UN, Mr Clinton commented: "Those in my country or elsewhere who believe we can do without the UN, or impose our will upon it, misread history and misunderstand the future."

As for support to the UN's activities, which have been hit hard by a financial squeeze, Mr Clinton commented: "All things come with a price tag, and all nations, including the United States, must pay it. These prices must be fairly apportioned and the UN structure of finances must be fairly reformed so the organisation can do its job."

Notwithstanding Mr Clinton's assertions, the US happens to be one of the major defaulters, currently owing the UN some \$ 1.7 billion for various activities, including peace-keeping.

In his inaugural address, Mr Kofi Annan dwelt on the many challenges facing the world in the sphere of peace and development, which is the theme of the summit.

Though the problems are gigantic, mankind today has the means to tackle them. What was needed was the will to deal with them, Mr Annan said.

Turning to the assembled world leaders, Mr Annan said: "They (the people) look to you to protect them from the great dangers of our time; and to ensure that all of them can share in its great achievements. Let us not disappoint them."

Mr Annan urged them to set the priorities and enable the UN system to do what people across the world expect it to do in the sphere of peace and development.

Clinton, Putin agree to preserve ABM Treaty

United Nations, September 7
PRESIDENT BILL Clinton and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin reaffirmed their commitment to the cornerstone 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM).

The ABM agreement has been at the heart of a raging debate about controversial US plans to develop a nuclear defence shield.

Such a programme would overstep the ABM, which allows both countries to build only one small missile defence system under the premise that fear of "mutually assured destruction" was the safest mechanism to avert a nuclear war.

Yesterday's agreement and previous similar initiatives establish a constructive basis for progress in further reducing nuclear weapons arsenals, preserving and strengthening the ABM Treaty, and confronting new challenges to international security," the joint statement signed by Putin and Clinton says.

The US and Russia reaffirm their commitment to the ABM Treaty as a cornerstone of strategic stability," it said.

However, the statement stressed that both sides have been holding

intensive talks on ABM "with a view to initiate negotiations expeditiously." The wording suggested that the US had not abandoned hope that Russia would eventually agree to some ABM changes.

(AFP)

Poverty, peace

Castro wants end to US fiddlestick

PTI & REUTERS

UNHQ, Sept. 7. — Cuban leader Mr Fidel Castro struck a humorous note at the Millennium Summit here, but went on to blast wealthy nations blaming their greed for global ills and demanded an end to US domination of international affairs.

The ageing revolutionary was dressed in a dapper blue suit and tie and received warm applause from the delegates.

As Mr Castro, known for speeches running to over eight hours, came up to the dais to address the un summit of world leaders, he covered with his handkerchief the light which warns speakers of their time limit provoking a round of laughter.

But in a quick switch of mood, he began charging colonial powers of plundering countries that are now poor, and said it was now their moral obligation to compensate "our nations for

the damage caused throughout the centuries".

"Three dozen developed and wealthy nations that monopolise economic, political and technological power have joined us in this gathering to offer more of the same recipes that have only served to make us poorer, more exploited and more dependent," he said.

Mounting an attack on the USA, Mr Castro said: "principles of sovereignty cannot be sacrificed to an abusive and unfair order that a hegemonic superpower uses to decide everything by itself. Cuba will never accept that."

Equally vehement was his attack on the distribution of power in the Security Council and the "anti-democratic right to veto" enjoyed by five permanent members.

Mr Castro drew more cheers at the end of his speech as he removed his handkerchief from the light before walking away.

USA APOLOGISES TO NORTH KOREA

SEOUL, Sept. 7. — The USA today sent a letter to North Korea apologising for airline security checks which led Pyongyang to withdraw from the UN Millennium Summit, South Korea's foreign minister, Mr Lee Jung-Binn said.

"A letter from a senior US official was delivered to North Korea today," Mr Lee told journalists.

"In the letter, the USA expresses regret at the "mistake" by American Airlines and hoped that the incident would not have any negative impact on the development of USA-North Korea ties," he said.

North Korea withdrew from the UN summit, saying its delegation members were told that they would be subject to a strip search before being allowed to board an American Airlines flight from Frankfurt to New York. — AFP

Millennium Summit

No breakthrough in W Asia talks

Putin, Clinton agree on weapons treaty

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE

UNHQ, Sept. 7. — The US President, Mr Bill Clinton, and his Russian counterpart, Mr Vladimir Putin, reaffirmed their commitment to the cornerstone 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty.

The ABM agreement has been at the heart of a raging debate about controversial US plans to develop a nation-wide nuclear defence shield.

Such a programme would overstep the ABM, which allows both countries to build only one small missile defence system under the premise that fear of "mutually assured destruction" was the safest mechanism for averting a nuclear war.

The USA has been lobbying Russia to amend, but still preserve, the ABM Treaty.

However, those negotiations have made little headway. With Putin earlier this year threatening to abandon all nuclear agreements should Washington encroach on the ABM Treaty.

Yesterday's agreement and previous similar initiatives establish a constructive basis for progress in further reducing nuclear weapons arsenals, preserving and strengthening the ABM treaty, and confronting new challenges to international security," the joint statement signed by Mr Putin and Mr Clinton says.

"The USA and Russia reaffirm their commitment to the ABM Treaty as a cornerstone of strategic stability," it said.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

UNHQ, Sept. 7. — The West Asia peace process lurched toward an uncertain future after the US President, Mr Bill Clinton, failed to produce a breakthrough in meetings with the Israeli and Palestinian leaders on the sidelines of the UN Millennium Summit.

Mr Clinton's back-to-back sessions yesterday with the Israeli Prime Minister, Mr Ehud Barak and the Palestinian leader, Mr Yasser Arafat, were widely seen as perhaps the last chance for the three leaders to secure a deal, though the White House said peace efforts would continue.

"We did not expect today to be a breakthrough day in the process," said the White House spokesman, Mr Joe Lockhart. "That is true, but the process has not broken down."

Despite dimming prospects, the Clinton administration kept up its diplomatic effort. The secretary of state, Ms Madeleine Albright, went from a dinner with the Russian foreign minister, Mr Igor Ivanov, to Mr Barak's hotel for an unscheduled meeting with the Israeli leader just before midnight.

Yesterday's inconclusive meetings came just a week before the 13 September deadline for a final Israeli-Palestinian peace treaty.

Mr Arafat has reserved the right to proclaim statehood, even without Israel's blessing, on that day, but has said a final decision is up to the PLO's top policy-making body, which is to convene on Saturday. Mr Arafat has hinted that the PLO council was likely to delay a statehood proclamation until later this year.

Mr Lockhart dismissed 13 September as "an artificial date."

THE STATESMAN

UN may rework plan for peacekeeping in Africa

REUTERS
UNITED NATIONS, SEPT 7

FACING a multiple series of civil wars, Africa is getting special attention at the UN Millennium Summit where peacekeeping ventures come under scrutiny on Thursday. The 15 Security Council members are holding a summit within a summit to agree on broad peacekeeping principles, with special emphasis on Africa. They also promise to "consider" recommendations in a recent UN-commissioned report calling for a new structure ready to organise operations quickly. British

Prime Minister Tony Blair has offered to host a staff training college for UN peacekeepers. US President Bill Clinton advocates reforms of UN peacekeeping machinery to provide better training, equipment and command so international troops can be deployed more quickly and effectively in crises.

But the resolution to be adopted by 15 presidents and Prime Ministers, whose countries have seats on the council, is short on specifics, including how an overhauled UN peacekeeping operation would be financed. The United States owes the world body \$1.7 billion, most of it for past and current peacekeeping operations. At issue is an understaffed and under

financed UN peacekeeping department, which in the last year has had difficulties recruiting, directing and supplying basic equipment for troops and police in Sierra Leone, East Timor, the Congo or Eritrea-Ethiopia.

An expert panel, in an August report, recommended the creation of a new peacekeeping structure, including more commanders in New York ready to organise operations quickly, and troops prepared to move into action. It also proposed an information-gathering and analyses office within the UN to create databases and operate similarly to a defence department in National governments.

INDIAN EXPRESS

INDIAN EXPRESS

8 SEP 2000

Future of the UN ¹¹⁻¹⁰

IT'S AN occasion for which the heads of States and Governments must be grateful, for it provides an excellent opportunity to get away from the humdrum routines of their everyday life and deliver homilies with a serious face which will be telecast live all over the world and consume acres of newsprint the next day. The orations will be even more pretentious this time since it is the UN's millennium summit. However, perhaps for that very reason, it has not got off to a smooth start. For one thing, the Dalai Lama was kept away from a very special occasion — a meeting of religious leaders — at which one would have thought he would be one of the most honoured of guests. And, for another, the reason given by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan for his exclusion — pressure from China — did not show either Mr Annan or the organisation in a favourable light.

Now the North Koreans have decided to stay away because, just as the Chinese do not think much of the Dalai Lama, the Americans harbour a feeling of dislike for the denizens of what they regard as a rogue State. Hence, they were subjected to more intrusive frisking than what other individuals and groups have to experience and regarded it as a humiliation. As if to drive home the point that all is not well with the organisation, four UN employees were killed in West Timor where they were functioning as members of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. The tragedy has taken place even though Timor is one of the places where the UN operation has been relatively successful in bringing freedom to a divided country, just as the UN also played a similar helpful role in Cambodia some years ago.

But such successes have been few and far between. Otherwise, the UN's story, especially in places like Rwanda earlier and now in Sierra Leone, has been one of abdication and failure. For all the declarations of good intent by the leaders of the world, it is obvious that the post-Cold War period has seen the UN lose much of its earlier prestige. The reason is that Russia's marginalisation and China's disinterest in everything except what affects it directly have left the organisation virtually in the grip of the Western powers led by the US, which make it act — or not act — in ways which only they deem fit. Clearly, if the UN is to play a more meaningful role, the nature of its composition, especially of the Security Council, which was determined by a half-a-century old event which has now become irrelevant, has to be made more reflective of the present-day realities.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

20 SEP 2000

Millennium vow to fight poverty, AIDS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

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UNHQ, Sept. 8. — The largest gathering of world leaders in history is due to end today with a commitment to modernise the 55-year-old United Nations to fight new scourges of global warming and AIDS, as well as the traditional ills of poverty and war.

The Millennium Declaration, which describes the UN as "the indispensable common house of the entire human family", is the closing act of a three-day summit attended by all but four of the organisation's 189

sf-5 99
states. Of those, 147 were represented by their head of state or government.

The document says leaders will "spare no efforts" to free mankind from the scourge of war, extreme poverty, and the threat of environmental disaster, and to promote democracy and the rule of law.

It resolves by the year 2015 to halve the proportion of world's population without access to safe drinking water, ensure that all children complete primary education and reduce maternal mortality by three-quarters and infant mortality

by two-thirds.

It also resolves to halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other major diseases, and provide special assistance to AIDS orphans.

UN Secretary General, Mr Kofi Annan, had earlier said that with modern technology, these goals were realisable.

Opening the summit on Tuesday, he said, "In an age when human beings have learnt the code of human life, and can transmit their knowledge in seconds from one continent to another, no mother can

understand why her child should be left to die, of malnutrition or preventable disease.

These were two areas where, according to Mr Annan, people were most critical of their governments.

The Declaration pledges to "combat all forms of violence against women and to implement the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women."

This was one of 25 core international legal instruments which dozens of heads of state and government signed or ratified during the Summit.

THE STATESMAN

9 SEP 2000

Mugabe seeks help in Harlem



Mr Robert Mugabe

DAMIAN WHITWORTH
THE TIMES, LONDON

UNHQ, Sept. 8. — Mr Robert Mugabe, not perhaps the most popular of the world leaders gathered for the UN summit, went looking for a warmer welcome in Harlem last night.

Zimbabwe's President, mired in the international row over a land resettlement programme that has frequently erupted into violence and has cost the lives of at least three White farmers, was speaking at a church that has hosted other controversial Black leaders, including Louis Farrakhan,

the Nation of Islam leader.

American supporters of Mr Mugabe were estimating a crowd of up to 1,500 at Mount Olivet Baptist Church. But the reaction to the arrival of the veteran ruler was more one of bemusement than anything else. Very few African Americans seemed to have a clue as to who he was.

Behind the counter at Louise's Family Restaurant, a few doors from the church on Malcolm X Boulevard, Marvin Wilson said that he was going to hear Mr Mugabe speak despite being unsure of his identity. "He's the President of ... of ... Oh, man! I was just reading about him in the paper," he said.

"He's the man!" said Jim King, but despite his chuckling, couldn't say which man he was. "It says on the posters he returns home to Harlem," said Loreta Smith. "But I don't see how it's that. Nobody really knows who he is."

Musharraf, Putin meet 'warmly'



Gen Pervez Musharraf

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

UNHQ, Sept. 8. — General Pervez Musharraf and President Vladimir Putin had an unscheduled meeting here today, during which they are understood to have discussed bilateral and global issues. A Pakistani spokesman said the meeting was cordial and warm.

It seems the leaders, seated a short distance apart in the General Assembly hall, silently acknowledged each other during the deliberations, and later met in a secluded corner.

The only other person present was a Russian interpreter. Pakistan's foreign minister, Mr Abdul Sattar, joined later.

Spokesman for the Pakistani delegation, Mr Riaz Mohammed Khan, said the President and the General expressed a desire to strengthen bilateral ties and cooperation.

He described the meeting as a significant development, providing a fillip to diplomatic engagement between the two sides to build on the shared desire of both leaders to strengthen relations.

Moscow often accuses Islamabad of backing Chechnya's Muslim separatists, but the spokesman said the issue was not raised. He recalled the recent visit of the ISI chief, Lt Gen. Mahmood, to Moscow had tried to allay Russian concerns.

Besides Mr Putin, Gen. Musharraf met leaders of Italy, Turkey, Jordan, Qatar and Algeria.

THE STATESMAN

SEP 9 2001

Vajpayee takes battle against Pak to summit

UN. (111) 571 9/9
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE & PTI

UNHQ, Sept. 8. — Lashing out at Pakistan's military regime for its vicious terrorist campaign against India and double talk, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee today dismissed its new initiative for a dialogue with a blunt response that "terrorism and dialogue do not go together."

In a hard-hitting address to the UN Millennium Summit, he responded to Gen Pervez Musharraf's diatribe against India in his speech two days ago, without even once referring to him by name.

Terming the General's speech as "an Orwellian mockery", Mr Vajpayee accused him of stifling democracy at home, engaging in clandestine acquisition of nuclear weapons and delivery systems, authoring a terrorist campaign that has claimed over 30,000 innocent lives in India, and sabotaging the Lahore peace initiative.

Ruling out a dialogue without an end to cross-border terrorism, he told the summit: "The acid test of sincerity of purpose is not words, but deeds. Terrorism and dialogue do not go together."

He had made last-minute changes to the text of his address to respond to Gen Musharraf's attacks on India, but his reference to Pakistan

PM SIGNS TREATY

UNHQ, Sept. 8. — Underlining India's commitment to fight terrorism, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee today signed the International Convention for Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, which makes it obligatory on the signatories to identify, detect, freeze and seize funds collected for terrorism.

He signed the 28-article convention, initiated by France, at the UN headquarters shortly before addressing the Millennium Summit. India is the 13th country to sign the convention. — PTI

constituted only five paragraphs in a 12-page speech.

He also touched on the issues of economic inequality between and within nations, and the need for economic multilateralism in the time of globalisation.

Earlier, in a Asia Society speech, the Prime Minister charged Pakistan with committing "terrible crimes against humanity". But he made no direct reference to Gen Musharraf's offer to talk to India on Kashmir "at any level, at any time and anywhere".

With his arrival here delayed by two days because of health problems, Mr Vajpayee lost no

time in hitting back at the General, who has mounted a diplomatic blitz against India in the USA. Even today, he urged the UN and the USA to take "stronger measures" to resolve Kashmir and offered to have proportionate reduction of forces between Pakistan and India.

At his Asia Society speech, Mr Vajpayee accused Pakistan of using the cloak of jihad to disguise its aggression on India's civil society.

Carrying on in the same vein at the summit, he said: "Those who have stifled democracy at home, speak of freedom from this forum. Those who have engaged in the clandestine acquisition of nuclear weapons and delivery systems talk of ridding South Asia of these. Those who have repudiated solemn covenants talk of new agreements to prevent war. The authors of a vicious terrorist campaign are now offering new initiatives for a dialogue."

He also criticised non-tariff barriers and asked the international community to generate resources for AIDS.

As he had done the first time in 1978 as minister of external affairs, Mr Vajpayee today spoke at the UN in Hindi.

■ More reports on page 5

THE STATESMAN

9 SEP 2000

70-13 9/9

U.N. declaration pledges to fight war, poverty

UNITED NATIONS, SEPT. 8. The largest gathering of world leaders in history today with a commitment to modernise the 55-year-old United Nations to fight new scourges of global warming and AIDS, as well as the traditional ills of poverty and war.

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code of human life, and can transmit their knowledge in seconds from one continent to another, no mother can understand why her child should be left to die, of malnutrition or preventable disease."

These were two areas in which, according to Mr. Annan, people were most critical of their Governments.

It pledged to "combat all forms of violence against women and to implement the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women." This was one of the 25 core international legal instruments which dozens of heads of State and Government signed or ratified during the summit. Also during the summit, the U.N. Security Council met at the level of heads of State and Government on Thursday and endorsed a report calling for far-reaching reforms to strengthen U.N. peace-keeping.

Mr. Annan commissioned the report after soul-searching inquiries last year into two of the U.N.'s greatest disasters, its failure to prevent the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and the 1995 massacre of 7,000 Muslim men and boys in the U.N.-designated safe area of Srebrenica, Bosnia.

The millennium declaration pledged to meet the special needs of Africa, by supporting emerging democracies and helping regional organisations to prevent conflict.—AFP

THE NEW YORK TIMES

SEP 2000

Summit ends with action call

Annan warns of credibility crisis

MES BONE
THE TIMES, LONDON

NEW YORK, Sept. 9. — The largest gathering of world leaders in history drew to a close with the 146 kings, Mini-

Mr Lakhdar Brahimi, the former Algerian foreign minister. But none took up his suggestion that UN members band together to form brigade-sized units for UN duty.

Behind the scenes, the talk was about money. President Bill Clinton told the televised must do more to what we

Summit ends with action call

Annan warns of credibility crisis

JAMES BONE
THE TIMES, LONDON

NEW YORK, Sept. 9. — The largest gathering of world leaders in history drew to a close last night with the 146 kings, Presidents and Prime Ministers committing themselves to addressing the root causes of conflict and revamping United Nations peacekeeping.

The Secretary-General, who is likely to be elected for a second five-year term next year, has been quietly pushing what has become known as the "Kofi doctrine", which would allow international intervention to save lives.

Mr Kofi Annan warned the leaders of the 15 Security Council nations on Thursday that they faced a "crisis of credibility" after recent setbacks in Sierra Leone and East Timor. "Many in the present generation are losing confidence in the ability of the UN to make a difference between war and peace," the UN chief said. "No amount of resolutions or statements can change this reality; only action can," he added.

Meeting for only the second time at the highest level, the 15-nation council voted on a resolution committing its members to provide better planning and equipment for UN missions.

Mr Tony Blair told the meeting that peacekeeping was now "a lot tougher than it ever was before" and needed an approach that encompassed dealing with the root causes of conflict, such as poverty, debt, and infectious diseases.

Most speakers endorsed the recent reform recommendations of a UN panel chaired by

Mr Lakhdar Brahimi, the former Algerian foreign minister. But none took up his suggestion that UN members band together to form brigade-sized units for UN duty.

Behind the scenes, the talk was about money. President Bill Clinton told the televised session: "We must do more to equip the UN to do what we ask it to do." But the USA, which owes the UN about \$1 billion, used a private meeting of the council's five veto-bearing permanent members to seek a 5 per cent reduction of its 30 per cent share of the UN peacekeeping budget.

After the meeting, the Presidents of China, France, Russia and the USA and Mr Blair issued a statement recognising "the need to adjust the existing peacekeeping scale of assessments" and committing themselves to "creating a more stable and equitable financial foundation for current and future UN operations".

Britain, which pays 6.2 per cent, is the fifth largest contributor to the peacekeeping after the USA. With thousands more UN troops due to be deployed to Sierra Leone and possibly the Congo, the peacekeeping budget may approach \$2 billion this year.

Britain, which was forced to deploy its own troops to Sierra Leone when the UN force arrived ill-equipped, has proposed the creation of a peacekeeping staff college to train officers for UN duty. Mr Annan has welcomed the idea, but some delegates expressed scepticism when they learned that the proposed college in Britain would be UN-funded.

THE STATESMAN

10 SEP 2001

Summit echoes India's cry on terrorism

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UNHQ, Sept. 9. — The historic UN Millennium Summit has pledged concerted action against international terrorism, strive for the elimination of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction and expansion of the Security Council, thus endorsing India's views on these issues.

The eight-page Millennium Declaration, which India helped extensively to draft, was adopted by over 150 leaders hours after Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee called for a strong global action to fight international terrorism and advocated early adoption of a convention against it.

India's efforts defeated attempts to dilute the definition of sovereignty, with the leaders reaffirming equality of all states and the principle of territorial integrity. "We re-dedicate ourselves to support all efforts to uphold the sovereign equality of all states, respect for their territorial integrity and political independence," the declaration at the end of the three-day summit said.

World leaders decided to "keep all options open", including convening an international conference to identify ways of eliminating nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, resolved to "take concerted action against international terrorism and small arms trafficking", intensify the fight against transnational crime and redouble efforts to counter the global drug problem.

Pledging to "spare no effort to promote democracy and strengthen the rule of law", the summit resolved to combat all

TOUGH TALK

NEW YORK, Sept. 9. — Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee has said his government would not hesitate to take harsh decisions on nuclear and other international issues if the country's interests so demanded. Speaking at a reception hosted in his honour by India's Ambassador Mr Naresh Chandra here last night, he gave an upbeat message to the Indian community, pointing out that there was new respect for India following its emergence as a major IT power. — PTI

■ Photographs, more reports on pages 10 & 11
■ Editorial: Millennium summit, page 8

forms of violence and discrimination against women. It also resolved to initiate concerted action by 2015 to eliminate poverty and check the spread of AIDS, malaria and other major diseases.

To eliminate poverty, the leaders promised to halve 20 per cent of the world's population without access to safe drinking water and 22 per cent living on less than one dollar a day. They also agreed to take steps to ensure that all children complete primary education, reduce maternal mortality by three quarters and infant mortality by two-thirds.

On UN, the declaration resolved to "intensify effort to achieve a comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects" and strengthen the International Court of

Justice at the Hague.

It called for resolution of all disputes by peaceful means and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, and reaffirmed the right to self-determination of peoples who remain under colonial domination and foreign occupations. The reference to foreign occupation especially pleased Arab and Palestinians who saw in it support to their efforts to make Israel vacate their territories.

The declaration also pledged to work for respect of human rights, fundamental freedoms, equal rights of all without distinction to race, sex, language or religion and international cooperation on economic, social and humanitarian problems.

But though the summit has set specific goals, it has no mechanism to monitor whether the member states are implementing these, the onus being solely on the members.

Jaswant stand: External affairs minister Mr Jaswant Singh said India was not "upping the ante" in its relationship with Islamabad and that it was just setting the benchmark which Islamabad would have to meet for a dialogue.

"We refuse to accept jihad as an instrument of foreign policy," he said. Rejecting Pakistan's stand that Kashmir is the core issue between the two countries, he said: "Kashmir is at the core of our nationhood."

On Gen Musharraf's drawing of a parallel between East Timor and Kashmir, he said: "East Timor is an occupied territory, J&K is an integral part of India. The occupied territory is that part of J&K that is occupied by Pakistan."

THE STATESMAN

10 SEP 2000

Unambiguous at the UN

But the vision thing was missing from the PM's speech

HERE were no surprises in Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's speech at the UN Millennium Summit. It was a careful reiteration of known positions on most issues, from terrorism and the perfidy of its promoters, to the CTBT and India's case for a seat in the Security Council. What was new, however, was the tone of controlled yet unambiguous anger that had laced his words, both in his address to the Asia Society on Thursday and his five-minute speech at the UN on Friday morning. Although he did not deign to name the object of his wrath at the UN, only the very uninformed could have missed the direct allusions to Pakistan, or failed to have seen in it a response to Pakistan CEO General Pervez Musharraf's statements, made at the same venue a couple of days earlier. The message sought to be conveyed to the heads of the world's nations was simple and rang true: India was a nation wronged; a democratic, stable, liberal one, whose sincere overtures of friendship were deliberately spurned; one which has had to witness the killing of 30,000 of its citizens in senseless acts of terrorism actively promoted by its neighbour and which could no longer regard this nation's peace posturing with any degree of trust.

Much of this had to be said. Musharraf's attempts to paint India as a neighbourhood bully needed to be exposed and the world alerted to the bankruptcy of his offer of a dialogue with India at "any level, at any time and anywhere". India's commitment to fight international terrorism also re-

quired to be demonstrated in unmistakable terms. But, having said this, there is also a sense of disappointment that a millennial message to the world—a moment that allows for acknowledging the possibilities of future change and hope—should have been so mired in the tensions and hatreds of the past, so locked in an impossible hostility. In the process, the prospect of a subcontinental thaw never seemed more distant, more unrealisable, more impossible. In the process, Vajpayee himself lost out on an opportunity to rise above Musharrafian doublespeak and appear a world statesman with a millennial people-centred agenda rather than as a tired and disappointed leader pushed into a regional quagmire. This, after all, was a unique event that brought the heads of 170 nations of the world together and which was meant to showcase a forward-looking vision for the international community.

While the Prime Minister dwelt on many issues, somehow the long shadow of its obstreperous neighbour never seemed far away, whether it was in the reasons cited for India's nuclearisation, or its support of the Convention on the Suppression of Financing of Terrorism, that was sponsored by France. More pity this, given India's strong case for a seat in the Security Council. Vajpayee did, indeed, present the argument for Security Council representation with conviction. He pointed to the need to expand and reform the UN Security Council to "reflect the realities of the 21st century" and explained why this country being the "world's largest democracy" should rightfully take its place within it.

At the beginning of this year, Thailand was host to the first UN multilateral conference of the century — the UN Conference on Trade and Development X. Coming soon after the debacle of the World Trade Organisation meeting in Seattle and the recent East Asian crisis, the 10th session of Unctad provided an opportunity to reflect on contemporary issues of importance to the development process.

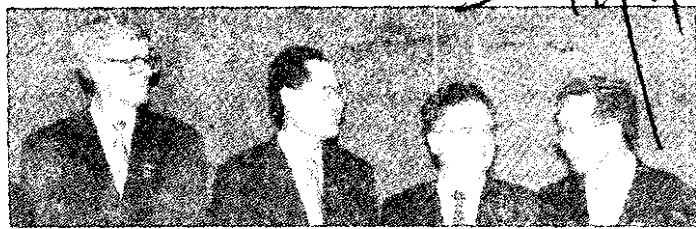
Despite 50 years of post World War II economic development and the optimism generated by the rapid growth of some developing countries, we have failed to solve the problems of poverty and inequalities within and between countries.

There is a growing consensus that these problems have intensified as a result of globalisation. The Unctad conference in Bangkok addressed these issues and the possible national and international responses.

The talks among development partners were an ideal preparatory process for the key issues addressed at the Millennium Summit. It helped highlight the growing convergence of ideas in the areas of development and the impact of globalisation.

Most developing countries talked about the difficulty of managing the development process, in a rapidly globalising international economic environment. Although some countries have benefited from liberalisation and globalisation, these processes have increased uncertainty in the world economy, thereby undermining social

50th It's time UN members rolle



NEW GLOBAL ORDER NEED OF THE HOUR: From left, finance ministers of Russia, Sergei Ignatiev, Singapore's Lim Hng Kiang, Taiwan's Jia-Dong Shea and Thailand's Tarrin Nimmanahaeminda. — AP/PTI

cohesion, traditional values and cultural diversity.

The emerging consensus is that for globalisation to be better managed in the future, a new global order is required to correct the effects of market failures and minimise the dangers of marginalisation of weaker economies.

As we enter a new century and a new millennium, the basic policy challenge in developing countries remains how to realise a sustained rate of economic growth and manage the problems associated with structural and institutional

constraints. Sound and stable macro-economic policy, targeted incentives to stimulate domestic savings and substantial investment in infrastructure and institution building are important components of the domestic policy measures required to generate growth. These policies are a prerequisite for resolving the problems of income inequality, mass unemployment and incidence of poverty.

But to realise the benefits from sound domestic policies, an enabling global economic environment is necessary. The international community cannot afford to ignore the consequences of extreme poverty and economic regress in developing countries, nor can it afford to delay effective action until this trend degenerates into an uncontrollable humanitarian crisis.

Evidence shows that in the last 20 years, economic growth and development have proved elusive for many least developed countries. Many of them experienced regress as indicated by the deterioration of some of the economic and social progress achieved in the post-Independence period.

An important lesson from the new millennium is that development objectives should be placed at the core of the globalisation process and future multilateral trade negotiations. This will ensure that the multilateral decision-making process takes better account of the concerns of developing countries, many of which are increasingly marginalised from the international

economic system. There is concern among developing countries that global policies in finance and the reform of the financial architecture have been designed primarily to discipline the debtors rather than creditors, denying the former

Advanced industrial countries should understand the economic problems facing developing countries and recognise that these cannot be solved with a standardised package, writes KOBSAK CHUTIKUL

basic rights recognised under national bankruptcy procedures or lender-of-last-resort financing arrangements.

In trade, the biases and asymmetries are even more visible with the small club of rich countries resisting open markets in areas of interest to developing countries, such as agriculture and labour-intensive goods, while aggressively pursuing openness in the areas, such as high-technology goods and financial services, where their own producers are ready to make significant gains.

In technical terms, policies needed to remove such biases and asymmetries are not difficult to imagine. Capital controls are a tested technique for dealing with unstable capital flows.

An independent panel whose rulings would have legal force in national courts could administer debt standstill procedures. Special treatment for developing countries, as a means of guaranteeing adequate policy flexibility, could be made part of the contractual obligations of the rule-based trading system.

But constructive policy advice in these areas tends to clash with the constraints of power and conflicting interest in the international system. More transparency is needed in many of the institutions that manage world economy.

But a much greater understanding is needed from the advanced industrial countries of the distinct economic problems facing developing countries and a recognition that these cannot be solved through a standard package of policy measures imposed on countries regardless of their level of development and institutional histories.

In the end, only fair shares for all, in the costs and the benefits of globalisation, can defuse the backlash, which might put the gains of global economic integration at risk. The major interna-

tional economic policy issue in the new millennium is global governance, including the reform of the existing multilateral institutions, so as to improve the influence of the poorer and weaker countries.

A global partnership for peace and prosperity can only emerge if the concerns of all members of the community of nations are listened to and respected. This is not just a North-South issue, but the problem of hegemony.

THE ST

rolled up their sleeves

a small number of major economic powers. To remain viable, the UN must step into the breach. It must tackle the core problem of global economic governance in a globalising world. This task should not be left only to sectoral organisations such as the IMF, the World Bank or the WTO. The UN must come to grips with the root causes of economic underdevelopment and disparities, and not only deal with symptoms and side effects

through feel-good get-togethers.

The Millennium Summit could have been a historical turning point if it were to be the last such world summit ever held. Pomp, rhetoric, and protocol should have taken a back seat to policy, substance, and genuine commitment. In future, leaders should come with their sleeves rolled up ready to get down to serious work rather than appear in expensive suits for five-minute set speeches.

New mechanisms with teeth need to be created to allow the UN to discharge its proper role in global governance. Perhaps an Economic Security Council should be established with the presence of the five permanent Security Council members plus Japan, Germany, India and a revolving representation from the G-77 bureau.

(The author is Director-General for economic affairs of Thailand's ministry of foreign affairs.)

— The Nation/Asia News Network

a spokesman...
Hindus at a meeting organised by the sadhus. His speech, peppered with communal overtones, is an attack on the Constitution's secular character."

The Samajwadi Party spokesman, Mr Amar Singh, said Mr Vajpayee's speech had clarified that the Ayodhya issue, Article 370 and the uniform civil code were certainly not in the NDA government's cold storage as it is made out to be.

...had turned up to collect the material in Badgam, Anantnag and Kupwara districts. "We are yet to receive exact information from the Kashmir valley, especially Srinagar," an official said. The director of census has been summoned for information.

A reporter who visited the census directorate and other areas in the city found that out

BEYOND THE SUMMIT'S SYMBOLISM

ADMIRABLE BUT IMPRACTICAL. This must be the verdict on the declaration from the historic three-day millennium summit at the United Nations which concluded during the weekend. The summit will certainly be remembered for its symbolism, for bringing together a formidable array of Presidents, Prime Ministers and other government leaders. Humanity will hail the declaration, which promises to send every child to school, deliver millions from destitution in 15 years and free the world from the scourge of war, extreme poverty and debilitating disease and the threat of environmental disaster. The eight-page declaration, which is but a catalogue of the world's problems, is a tribute to the perseverance of man and his determination to dream. "As leaders we have a duty to all the world's people, especially the most vulnerable and in particular the children to whom the future belongs," the leaders said in their declaration. They pledged themselves to go home and work to fulfil the dream by that tantalisingly close deadline of 2015.

If there was little else in the declaration in the form of substance there would be no disappointment around the world. This was one summit which evoked little excitement or optimism except among the participants. In the world of summitry, it has become customary to pour cold water on such gatherings in advance, and the practice has helped to cushion the disappointment afterwards at the absence of concrete results or workable plans of action. The world has over the years become wearily familiar with the old conundrum: the U.N. excels itself in framing and formulating idealistic conventions and goals but is helpless in getting these translated into reality. A charge that can be levelled again: the summit, which has set the goals for 2015, is deafeningly silent on ways to find the enormous funds needed to help member-nations achieve the targets by the set deadline. In a different but related context, the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, told a meeting of the Security Council that there was a crisis of credibility.

The pious declarations that issued forth from the leaders on poverty alleviation, conflict resolution, sustainable development and what not once again brought the focus on the vexed relationship between ideals and hard realities.

There was one reality that no one was ready to face: the U.N. in the new millennium needs to be empowered to fulfil its expanding role in two vital areas in the post-Cold War world where it is free from the machinations of the power blocs that dominated the global scene in the second half of the last century. As it continues to play its pioneering role in the fields of health and medicare, education, child welfare and humanitarian relief operations, the U.N. has to assume greater responsibilities in the evolution of a just world order and in organising and maintaining global peace. Attempts to provide the world body with muscle in economic matters have been systematically blocked. Mr. Annan served a reminder to the richer nations with his comment: Globalisation, highly beneficial to some, will be potentially beneficial to all only if states work together to put its benefits within reach of all their people. As for the other area, the U.N.'s role as a peacekeeper, the world received a grim reminder of the reality from West Timor even as the leaders were convening in New York. In a response, the Security Council has endorsed changes aimed at strengthening the training of the U.N.'s peacekeepers and provision of appropriate equipment to them and increasing the commitment of troops by member-nations. The miserable failure of peacekeeping in Rwanda, Bosnia and now Sierra Leone has elicited the promise that future missions will have clearly defined, credible, achievable and appropriate mandates. Lacking still is the political will to empower the organisation to raise its own independent peacekeeping arm, which can be activated to respond to crises before they escalate. The main obstacle is the American fear that such empowerment can turn the U.N. into a rival superpower. Meanwhile, humanity will sustain itself on idealistic visions.

SECURITY COUNCIL?

5/2 Effective power with G-8 1/1/0

THE structure and functioning of the Security Council is just one aspect of the overall relationship the world body has with its members, and it is in question insofar as the relationship itself is in question. The Security Council no longer represents the balance of power it did during the Cold War. What it does represent is the will of what was known during the Gulf War as the Western Alliance, with most of whose interests Russia and China wish to ally themselves. In other words, the strength of the Security Council is, now, vested in institutions built by the United States and its allies. We saw this during the Nato action in Kosovo when the US and Britain bypassed the authority of an ineffectual UN. Russia made feeble noises. It is part of the G-8, depends heavily on it for investments and credit. This de facto hegemony of the Western allies is also reflected in the fact pointed out by General Romeo Dallaire, head of the peacekeeping operations in Rwanda: they intervene massively only when their own interests are directly threatened. Kosovo is the only area where the UN has been able to establish an administration. Would that have been possible without Nato? Look at what is happening in East Timor. National sovereignty is not a big problem either, wherever the right conjunction of factors occurs — see the US action against bin Laden in Afghanistan.

The facts that interest the future of the United Nations are as follows: 14.3 per cent of the population in developing countries are not expected to survive beyond the age of 40, over half of them have no access to sanitation whereas the portion of the population earning less than a dollar a day varies from 20 per cent in Uruguay to 86 per cent in Zambia. The bulk of the poor live in sub-Saharan Africa and, unfortunately, South Asia. International financial institutions are controlled by the donor countries — again the G-8 — and FDI flows cannot eliminate massive poverty. Therefore, when President Clinton talks about reinforcing the UN's peacekeeping role, the concept of hegemony, comes into play very strongly, even though the peacekeepers themselves are often drawn from developing countries. In Sierra Leone, it is the British presence which stopped the RUF and not the 11,000 peacekeepers who had been around for over a year. The United Nations will, therefore, continue to reflect this disbalance of wealth and technology generated by the unequal patterns of global trade. New players will emerge in function of their importance in the global trading and strategic systems. The Security Council may undergo a new definition and new permanent membership may be created to include countries such as India. But we are talking about effective power here. This may have shifted away from the United Nations which may be left with only moral power. Important but not enough.

THE STATESMAN

14 SEP 2000

It is the small countries that cannot do without the UN

The point of the party

SUNANDA K. DATTA-RAY

When the Canadian diplomat, Arnold Smith, was appointed first secretary-general of the commonwealth amidst fears that the organization would founder on the wreckage of empire and the jagged rocks of ethnic and ideological conflict, a wise old owl in the British foreign and commonwealth office told me that no one need fear any longer for its survival. "If there's one thing that the bureaucracy does well", he said, "it's to perpetuate its own life".

Reading about the United Nations millennium bash — which was clearly Kofi Annan's show — I was reminded of that observation. The impression projected was of a dynamic rebirth at a crucial juncture of history. Yet, September 2000 is no more significant than January 1992 when, too, an attempt was made to re-invent the world body. Or October 1995 when 178 national representatives addressed the general assembly's 50th birthday celebrations. But the world needs a symbol, and the vast bureaucracy of the UN — which dazzlingly dwarfs the modest secretariat in London's Marlborough House — must justify its existence.

This is not to dismiss the UN as irrelevant. Its usefulness is that of a parliament which, as E.M. Forster noted, "is often sneered at because it is a talking shop". Forster believed in it precisely because it talked shop, because some speakers made a nuisance of themselves, and because if it did not publicize criticism, there were bound to be hushed up scandals. Undoubtedly, many minor disputes are dissolved through discussion on the floor of the general assembly or in the ante-rooms. Additionally, there is the sound service of many specialized agencies and, more and more lately, of peacekeeping operations.

What the UN is not and never can be is world government in embryo. How long that original hope survived I cannot tell, but even in 1945 Albert Einstein was quite adamant that the secret of the atom bomb should not be shared with the UN. He was prepared to divulge it only to a world government founded by what were the superpowers of the day — the United States, Britain and the Soviet Union. By deduction, he did not expect a world order to emerge out of a UN that cannot, by definition, exceed the sum total of the irreducible minimum that its members represent. Periodic attempts at finding a more positive *raison d'être* reflect the urges, not of the general assembly, but of the Big Five, representing the winning hand at the end of World War II.

In the circumstances, it would be folly to pin much hope on either the eight-page Millennium Declaration or the Security Council's pledge to make the UN more effective "in addressing conflict at all stages from prevention to settlement to post-conflict peace-building". Conflict resolution is certainly high on the list of priorities, but the end product must always disappoint because there is no unanimity of expectation. What Germany wants is not what Tuvalu wants. If the world could agree on what the UN should be and how it should conduct itself, there would be no



More than a talking shop

reason at all for a UN.

Flushed with the success of Operation Desert Storm, George Bush made a bold bid to reshape the UN to serve the US's purposes in a unipolar world. Unsurprisingly, John Major supported the initiative by calling the first ever Security Council — Britain was chairman that month — summit, and, surprisingly, François Mitterand supported it with the offer of a division of French troops as a permanent global force. P.V. Narasimha Rao, who attended the summit (India was then a non-permanent member of the Security Council) demurred. He felt that military action would infringe on the sovereignty of individual members unless it enjoyed general assembly sanction. For the same reason he firmly opposed intrusive action in defence of human rights.

The plan petered out not because India and China resisted it but because the exist-

ing charter could not allow the UN to act quickly and decisively in defence of what the Americans called good governance, democracy, human rights and the free market — all subjective matters that could easily have been used to extend and consolidate *Pax Americana*. Though the founding fathers did predict the need to revise and adjust the charter, which could not be called "a final or a perfect instrument", as Harry Truman put it — this was too much the sole superpower's agenda to win universal approval. No one could forget either that the US had treated the UN with scant respect during the Cold War years. It was Daniel Patrick Moynihan's "theatre of the absurd" and exercised what Gerald Ford called the "tyranny of the majority". It was "an inconsequential talk shop, the more so because the talk is usually directed against the US".

No such complaint was voiced in the

Fifties when the West and its allies dominated the general assembly. Objectives were heard only after 1960, the year of colonization, when 17 new members and a major resolution against colonialism turned the tide. Two-thirds of the members were then "new or underdeveloped nations", meaning they were Asian or African. Western dismissiveness of the world body after that was not without racial overtones. Jeane Kirkpatrick, Ronald Reagan's UN representative, was not the only high-powered American to think that the yardstick of a country's political morality was whether or not it voted with the US at the UN. That arrogant presumptuousness dies hard. For all Bill Clinton's fine rhetoric at the millennium summit, the US is still interested in the UN, only to the extent that the world body serves American global aims.

It followed its own independent course in Somalia and Bosnia, disregarded the general assembly on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and still balks at the discipline of the Convention on the Law of the Sea which came into effect in 1994. Perhaps the most blatant example of American insistence on being more equal than others was evident in its attitude to the international criminal court.

When Clinton referred to the "UN structure of finances", therefore, he cannot have forgotten that his country owes \$1.7 billion. His strong advocacy of peacekeeping overlooked American ambivalence. The authors of the call on the wealthy to cancel the official debts of the poorest countries seem to have forgotten that the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit's plea for aid to the tune of 0.7 per cent of the gross domestic product of the rich countries is nowhere near realization.

It might be unfair to single out the US. Every five-minute address to the millennium summit was just as self-serving, with Vladimir Putin taking advantage of the opportunity to campaign against "militarization of outer space". The UN has always been up for grabs. That becomes an affront only when a junket such as the world witnessed last week pretends to more than exist. The UN is a hard rialto where demands, expectations, contributions and lobbying must be balanced to yield some benefit that can be called universal. Yes, the money and power of the rich do sustain the hopes of the poor.

Dawa Tsering, Bhutan's former and long-serving foreign minister, told the *New York Times* during the 50th birthday ceremonies that "the big nations of the world could do without the UN. But without the UN, Bhutan would have no voice". It did not matter that his speech was 171st in a list of 178, and that the hall was nearly empty by then. "Bhutan today exists on the razor's edge," he said. "Our culture is at risk. We could disappear. The speech is serious". It had to be made to record that Bhutan, with few resources, is. That paradox suggests that Annan's glittering party might have had a point after all. The UN cannot do without the major powers. But it is the small countries that cannot do without the UN.

REBE DEBORAH

PHOTO: AP/WIDEWORLD

Leaders make scant progress on issues

By PAUL TAYLOR
WATER
PA

United Nations, Sept. 9: Three days, four round-tables and more than 150 speeches later, what did the UN Millennium Summit achieve?

A lofty but unwieldy exercise in raising consciousness about the scourges of war, poverty and disease, the largest gathering of world leaders in history pledged to make peacekeeping more effective in the 21st century.

Arguably the most striking outcome was the failure to make progress towards resolving key regional conflicts in West Asia, the Balkans, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zimbabwe, or between China and Taiwan or the two Koreas. There were few if any bridges built over troubled waters. That may partly reflect US President Bill Clinton's waning influence in his last four months in office as leader of the world's sole remaining superpower. But it also highlights the limits of the international community's ability, even when it is united and has the

will, to impose order on chaos. Ironically, the one handshake that might have been historic — between Mr. Clinton and Cuban President Fidel Castro — turned out to be an accident which White House officials said was devoid of political substance. Reconciliation between Washington and its Caribbean communist nemesis remains a distant prospect given the political elitism of Cuban exiles in a US presidential election year. The grandiose global summit was the brainchild of UN Sec-etary-General Kofi Annan. More than 150 monarchs, presidents and government leaders set ambitious targets for reducing poverty and HIV/AIDS and spreading education for all children by 2015.

They committed themselves to a vision of benevolent globalisation in which economic and technological progress should unite rather than divide humanity. The 15-nation Security Council agreed in principle to a major overhaul of UN peacekeeping opera-

tions to provide more robust, better trained and equipped troops more quickly and with more effective command arrangements to tackle crises and prevent massacres.

However Mr. Annan, who pressed for the shake-up, told leaders that they faced a credibility gap after recent problems in finding forces for Sierra Leone, Congo, East Timor and the Eritrea-Ethiopia border. But neither the peacekeeping reforms nor the poverty reduction goals were accompanied by any financial commitments, and the wealthiest UN member, the United States, remains \$1.7 billion in arrears to the world organisation.

In his farewell speech at the United Nations, Mr. Clinton acknowledged that Washington should pay its bills and told his domestic critics that the United States could neither do without the UN nor impose its will on it. While such summits rarely achieve immediate results, they often provide a meeting-place for to resolve regional

problems. In that respect the report card on the Millennium Summit is particularly thin. With time fast running out for a deal, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat made no progress, in separate talks with Mr. Clinton, on crucial differences over Jerusalem, and did not even meet. US officials acknowledged that in some areas, the two sides have slid back from advances made at the unsuccessful Camp David summit in July.

Elsewhere in West Asia, there was no progress towards easing the crippling decade-old UN economic embargo on Iraq, which refuses to readmit international weapons inspectors, and only glacial movement to ease the 20-year-old standoff between Iran and the United States.

Those problems will almost certainly have to await Mr. Clinton's successor.

In Africa, the obduracy of the governments in Kinshasa and Rwanda frustrated UN efforts to end the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo and deploy peacekeepers to secure peace. (Reuters)

UN MILLENNIUM SUMMIT

THE ASIAN AGE

1.0 SEP 2000

Peace was never easy to keep

By K. V. Krishnaswamy

DAG HAMMARSKJÖLD, whose death under suspicious circumstances, if you will, during a peace mission in the Congo four decades ago must still be haunting the corridors of the United Nations, once remarked that the organisation he headed was created "not in order to bring us to heaven but in order to save us from hell." He was in fact on one such fire-fighting mission which the organisation was called upon to perform a short while after its inception. In 50 years, the world body has travelled far. From that unambitious role the U.N. assumed without controversy during the early years before the Cold War took a firm grip on world affairs, there was a pendulum swing to the type of intervention witnessed in Somalia and Bosnia.

Today, the U.N.'s peacekeeping role is at the crossroads. It has the opportunity to resume its activist role to organise and enforce peace or it can turn its face and go back to the negativism of the earlier decades. The mixed experiences of the past half a century provide no guide, nor does the geopolitical scenario. Will the member-nations rise above narrow considerations or will agreement continue to elude them on the role and nature of a permanent peace force under the U.N. flag? Will the West, particularly a Republican-driven, isolationist Washington or Capitol Hill, still oppose a presumed rival superpower that has the power to act independently? Will Third World nations continue to harbour the fear of unilateral intervention by the U.N. at the behest of some powers and so oppose a peace force?

Surprisingly, the Charter had no reference to the concept of "peacekeeping", which evolved more by geopolitical accident than design. In the decades since the U.N. rose from the ashes of Hitler's war, not often was the organisation allowed to serve even the modest goal of "saving humanity from hell". Caught in the vicious reality of the Cold War, the first four decades were spent in a state of shameful paralysis. It was a period when the world body, at that time as now the only hope of humanity, was unable to move forward and become the instrument to organise

and maintain global peace. The end of the ideological war a decade ago stirred hope among internationalists that at last the U.N. could take on its rightful role and play its part in bringing conflicts swiftly to an end. The 1990s saw the organisation emerge from the sidelines. It had never had it so good; you were emboldened to entertain visions of an international peace force, armed appropriate to the occasion, that would bring order to the chaotic world.

There was a sudden outburst of positive thinking after the tensions of the Cold War. Just two years earlier, in 1988 to be precise, the U.N.'s peacekeeping effort

indeed brought unprecedented enthusiasm into the peacekeeping effort. A sea change in the fortunes of the U.N. as the peacemaker coincided also with an unexpected surge in ethnic and nationalist conflicts in the post-Cold War era.

The Nobel prize in 1988 certainly proved a turning point. In the decade since then a total of 36 peacekeeping operations were entrusted to the U.N., compared to 13 during the preceding 43 years. The nature of the missions also changed profoundly. During the prize-winning year, for example, four of the five peacekeeping operations involved inter-state conflicts between recognised Govern-

It will be unfortunate if a perceived American isolationism combines with interested nations to thwart a serious attempt to upgrade the U.N.'s peacekeeping department.

ments, with regular armies and defined borders. Many of these missions also entailed not just monitoring of ceasefires but undertaking of humanitarian relief operations in difficult civil war conditions, conduct of negotiations between warring groups and protection of victims and creation of safe havens for them.

A golden era of peacekeeping operations by the U.N. came to an abrupt, bloody end in the desert land of Somalia in 1995. A peace force of a staggering 37,000 men entered the land with a noble purpose: save Somalia from its nightmarish clan warfare that had resulted in mass starvation. For two years, the U.N. force attempted to establish a secure environment for humanitarian relief and reconstruction of the ravaged country. The mission impossible ended in humiliating defeat when the soldiers attempted to disarm the clans and got engulfed in the crossfire. The U.N. forces retreated from the shores of the Somali capital of Mogadishu during a pre-dawn operation that will go down as another turning point in peacekeeping.

The Somali disaster taught the world the limits of such collective peacekeeping. The victims included 30 American soldiers who died a horrible death at the

hands of the clans, having been dragged around the streets of Mogadishu. Fallen victim was also the promise and future of U.N. peacekeeping. Never was Washington to allow such a spectacle to be repeated. In the future, even if an administration is willing, it will be deterred by an American Congress, which has set its face against such commitments. Conservative elements in the American political establishment have never been well disposed to a U.N. peace force outside the control of the U.S.

It will be unfortunate if a perceived American isolationism combines with interested nations to thwart a serious attempt to upgrade the U.N.'s peacekeeping department. For there have been at least two instances of mass killings that the U.N. could well have averted. The first was Rwanda in Central Africa where up to 8,00,000 innocent people perished in genocidal attacks on the minority Tutsi population in 1994 — lives that could have been saved but for American opposition to the deployment of an effective peacekeeping operation.

A second and more recent instance is again in Africa where this summer in Sierra Leone more than 500 peacekeepers, poorly trained and poorly armed, were taken hostage by rebels fighting Government forces and the U.N. was helpless in intervening to save them. The response to the Secretary-General's appeal for assistance was pathetically lukewarm. A desperate situation that arose solely because the powerful nations were no more willing to commit their men to battle under such hostile conditions and the U.N.'s peacekeeping arm did not have the people to do the job by itself or have a roster of ready professionals who can be called to duty at short notice.

An experts team has recommended a series of practical measures that can turn the world body into a truly peacekeeping force. The suggestions call for a committed, readily available force of professionals, speeding up response time so that a simple operation can be launched in 30 days rather than the present several months and despatch of expert advance teams to areas where complex military and political situations prevail.

UN NEEDS COOPERATION AND CONSENSUS

By SERGEI LAVROV

THE UN is now no less important than it used to be after the end of the Second World War. The UN has started tackling various problems more resolutely, as it discards all those old-time endless discussions. International terrorism is seen as an equally pressing issue by the United States and Russia. Besides, one should not overlook all sorts of bloody regional conflicts, drug trafficking, natural calamities, "man-made" and industrial disasters, as well as hurricanes and typhoons.

Russia continues to defend the multi-polar world concept. I get the impression that the US is also coming to understand that a unipolar world (where everything depends on the whims of just one state) constitutes an unstable entity, which may come tumbling down any time. Small wonder, it is precisely the United States, which has been advocating more substantial intra-UN cooperation. Washington is once again trying to convince the UN Security Council to re-examine two "cases", i.e., the Iraqi "case" and the Yugoslav "case", in the wake of its unilateral operations against Iraq and Yugoslavia. The United States, which advocates an end to that carnage, nonetheless doesn't want to send its soldiers there. Effective measures can only be approved on the basis of cooperation, consensus and reasonable compromise.

Speaking about the peacekeepers in Sierra Leone, I think that our peacekeepers should take part in such operations. As of today, the UN conducts 17 peacekeeping operations in various parts of the world. For its own part, Russia is involved in eight such operations. Our pilots now serving in Sierra Leone instil hope in UN peacekeepers. The latter do hope that the Russians are going to save them from local murderers and cannibals. Our political advisers and military experts are present in other hotspots as well.

FINANCES

For instance, our policemen have served in Haiti. True, both Sierra Leone and Haiti are located far away from Russia. However, the very involvement of our peacekeepers enables them to acquire that really unique UN peacekeeping experience, to master the culture of peacekeeping processes and to deal with their foreign colleagues. It is also important for peacekeeping operations within the CIS framework. In my opinion, the Tajik peacekeeping operation, which involved UN observers, can be called quite successful.

At present the OSCE is discussing possible peacekeeping operations in the Dniestr area. The relevant experience as regards the restoration of peaceful life without the use of force will prove invaluable for Chechnya, too. As far as financial implications are concerned, the involvement of our soldiers in UN peacekeeping operations also seems to be quite useful. Such operations are financed by the UN, which partially reimburses Russia for its annual UN payments.

Speaking of money, Russia has repaid all its debts within the framework of the regular UN budget. Nor do we owe any money in connection with current peacekeeping operations. We have so far failed to repay our debts in the wake of that

peacekeeping operation, which had cost nearly \$1 billion. Russia still owes approximately \$70 million to the UN. However, this isn't something catastrophic. The former USSR had to pay really mind-boggling sums at a time when the rouble had been artificially adjusted against the dollar. At the time, Russia's quota had accounted for 10 per cent of the entire UN budget. Meanwhile, our present-day quota stands at just about 1.4 per cent, what with the rouble's real exchange rate matching the overall market situation.

MODALITIES

One particular expert recommendation suggests dividing the parties to any armed conflict into aggressors and their victims. This is a rather complicated issue. Classic peacekeeping operations stipulate neutrality. Attempts to violate this principle have often resulted in tragedy. We've got to search for specific formulas, which would combine the UN's presence as a stabilising factor and the involvement of regional corps against all those resisting specific UN resolutions. However, we are still groping for the right solutions here. In some cases, it's well-nigh impossible to divide the belligerents into culprits and their innocent victims. Despite the fact that the West had tried to blame the Serbs alone, the Bosnia and Kosovo examples serve as convincing proof of this.

The parties sometimes fail to attain consensus, while discussing certain issues, which are seen as extremely important by Russia. I left the UNSC conference hall as a sign of protest two months ago, during the discussion of the Kosovo issue. My decision to leave the UNSC session was motivated by the fact that the Yugoslav representative was not allowed to take the floor in the course of the discussion.

Meanwhile, there exists a special resolution, which states expressly that, despite its autonomous status, Kosovo is, nevertheless, part and parcel of Yugoslavia. Mind you, no one forbids Yugoslavia, which is not allowed to vote at General Assembly sessions, to address the UNSC. Shutting one's mouth doesn't seem to be the best trouble-shooting option. We also decided that it made no sense discussing the Kosovo issue without the Yugoslav delegate. Still my walkout didn't amount to a boycott. I merely left the conference hall, failing to use my right to speak at the session. However, one of our diplomats stayed on.

The UN has been discussing the need for an enlarged UN Security Council for quite a while now. In fact, the UNSC has now been working rather intensively, what with its members meeting virtually every day. However, a much larger UNSC would inevitably entail additional discussions. This would be detrimental to the most important aspect, i.e., the UNSC's ability to make fast-paced decisions. We advocate the UNSC's minimal enlargement, while admitting that various calls to admit additional members are quite justified.

All obviously eligible members, i.e., Germany, Japan, India and Brazil, seem to be rather strong candidates. Barring unforeseen developments, the prerogatives of the UNSC's five permanent mem-

THE STATESMAN

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2000

SPURNING A GLOBAL ROLE

A 'DEMOCRACY CAUCUS' at the United Nations is no regressive proposal infused with the divisive logic of the bygone Cold War era of political blocs. The new Community of Democracies, insofar as it has taken shape in recent months, is an amorphous forum with no attributes of a tactical or strategic alliance as definable in the Cold War paradigm of perceptions. This in itself should enthuse India, which has been flaunting for some time its richly deserved reputation as the world's largest democracy. When the U.S. Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, first invited India in July last year to join a proposed Community of Democracies, the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, announced it, after their talks on the sidelines of a multilateral conference, with a discernible appreciation of the American gesture. When the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, later visited India, he traversed new ground with the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, in propounding a Vision Statement which, among other themes, portrayed the two countries as "allies in the cause of democracy". It is, therefore, surprising that New Delhi should have more recently turned down a suggestion by the U.S. that India head a proposed 'democracy caucus' at the U.N. headquarters within the overarching framework of the Community of Democracies.

India's active participation within the overall Community must not be confusingly juxtaposed with the country's refusal to chair a caucus. Therefore, New Delhi's explanation of the incongruity between these two aspects is not really convincing. While there is no cause for disregarding the Vajpayee administration's considered view that democracy should be promoted across the world in a "non-prescriptive and non-confrontationist manner", this reasoning does not sufficiently explain New Delhi's hesitation to assume the mantle of a democracy-leader (albeit within an informal caucus). Surely

India did well to consolidate its entry into the Community by playing a significant role as a co-convenor, in conjunction with the U.S. and six other states, at a conference of the plenary forum in Warsaw in June this year. Given this, the disinclination in the context of the Warsaw meeting to cast India in the global role of a leader in a functional capacity in the cause of democracy can only be seen as a manifestation of some second thoughts on the part of New Delhi. This does not capture the momentum generated by India's earlier willingness to be a co-convenor of a meeting of the bigger forum.

The Community of Democracies is an entity imbued with an obvious political idea of governance within sovereign states. In this sense, it is distinguishable from the Non-Aligned Movement which pertains to the relationship among countries and not their internal affairs. Yet, what binds the diverse states of the non-aligned forum is the very idea which it propagates and not any (non-existent) notion of military or other tactical alliances among them. So, there is no reason why India, with its experience of leading the disparate Non-Aligned Movement at the U.N. and elsewhere, should fight shy of steering a 'democracy caucus' which will be driven by the force of an idea. A leadership role in an international democratic context can only enhance India's credentials for a permanent seat in the U.N. Security Council, whose expansion is being sought so as to make it a representative global caucus as it were. Above all, in a globalising world, India cannot avoid, even as an ordinary member of the Community of Democracies, all the tricky questions that have been officially cited to justify the rejection of a possible leadership role within this forum. The hard questions about international military action or a sanctions-oriented U.N. role in regard to the nursing of democracy within sovereign boundaries must still be addressed by India as and when they arise.

THE END

SEP 23 2000

UN relents, Dalai Lama to address peace summit

SRINJOY CHOWDHURY
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Aug. 1. — A compromise has been reached. The Dalai Lama has been persuaded to speak at the Millennium Peace Summit of Spiritual leaders being held at the United Nations from 28 August, but his keynote speech may not be delivered inside the UN compound.

The Dalai Lama's bureau here as well as his followers all over the world, including Mr Ford Roosevelt, grandson of late US president, Franklin Roosevelt, said there was Chinese pressure to exclude him from the summit.

The coordinator from the Indian sub-continent is Dr Bhupendra Modi and while he says that the Indian contingent persuaded the Dalai Lama, he doesn't want to say he will not be speaking inside the compound.

The carefully-worded statement says the Dalai Lama would be the keynote speaker at the closing session, but does not say where it will be held.

"The Dalai Lama will be speaking at the Waldorf-Astoria (a plush New York hotel)," said Ms Aditi Mody, the Modi foundation spokesperson, when asked if the speech would be inside the UN compound. Later, she called to say "the last two days of the summit would be outside the UN. The final venue is yet to be decided."

Asked if China did not want him to participate in the summit, Ms Mody said: "I can't comment. We are glad to have His Holiness." She added that UN representatives had gone to meet him.

The Dalai Lama's followers all over the world were outraged that the UN Secretary-General, Mr Kofi Annan, had not invited him. Apart from a large number of Tibetans all

over the world, one of those strongly crusading for the Dalai Lama's inclusion was Mr Ford Roosevelt, grandson of two people who helped set up the United Nations: the late President Roosevelt, four times elected President of the USA and his crusader wife, Eleanor.

"It would not have been their wish, I am certain, to exclude any leaders from such a conference, and certainly not one as esteemed in the world as His Holiness," Mr Roosevelt said.

Mr Roosevelt told The Statesman he has been a supporter of the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

"I met His Holiness with my family several years ago and he asked for our help. I will continue to aid in his cause in any way possible... The non-violent approach he practices is truly the only way we as humans can relate to each other for ultimate survival and harmony in the world.

"I also believe he and his fellow Tibetans have been dealt a grave injustice by the Chinese rulers," he said.

Mr Roosevelt has signed a petition saying that Mr Annan "should have the moral courage to stand up against Chinese pressure and inducements and should reverse his earlier decision and invite His Holiness — one of the most revered spiritual leaders on the planet as well as a Nobel Prize winning laureate — to the gathering for peace." A large number of Tibetan organisations have signed the petition.

A representative of the Dalai Lama in Delhi, Mr Tshering Tashi, said that no invitation had been issued initially.

"But there was a hue and cry and His Holiness was belatedly invited to be a keynote speaker at a religious conference being held outside the United Nations in New York at the same time," Mr Tashi said.

THE STATESMAN

• 2 AUG 2000

The U.N. chief's formulations

By Muchkund Dubey

FOR THE United Nations General Assembly's millennium summit in early September, the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, has prepared a report entitled "We the Peoples: the role of United Nations in the 21st Century". After a careful reading of the report, one cannot escape the conclusion that he has missed a historic opportunity to draw the world leaders' attention to the vast erosion in the U.N.'s role and functions in the last 20 years and make suggestions for reversing the process to help it meet the challenges of the new millennium.

There is no analysis of how the U.N. has been systematically bypassed on issues of real concern to the international community. The concrete proposals made by the Secretary-General are predicated on the *fait accompli* of the drastically reduced role of the U.N. Some of the gravest problems do not find any mention in the report. These include: the U.N. being kept constantly on the brink of financial bankruptcy, the marginalisation of its peace-making and peace-keeping role, and the transfer of its functions in the economic field to the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO.

The Secretary-General virtually declares the Charter outmoded when he says: "our post-war institutions were built for an international world, but we now live in a global world." He then asserts that "responding effectively to this shift is the core institutional challenge for world leaders today". This rhetoric cannot hid the fact that the U.N. is reduced to a pale shadow of what it was meant to be according to the Charter. The minimum that is called for is to restore to the U.N. its Charter functions. Unless this is done the organisation can serve neither an "international world" nor a "global world".

An attempt is made in the report to define the U.N.'s "core competence". In this it is put on the same footing as the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO. It is forgotten that the U.N. has a holistic over-arching role in the international system. It is, therefore, untenable to pit it against its own specialised agencies, on the basis of their respective core competence.

The report seeks to purge the U.N. of any image of a world Government. It states that the term governance applied to in-

out. This imparts an air of unreality to the targets.

The other set of proposals in the report are designed to find a technical or technological fix to problems unresolved for decades, whose causes are rooted in structural factors. It is unlikely that much will come out of these proposed initiatives. By far the largest number of proposals are of a technical assistance type. They can no doubt bring some benefits to developing countries, if they are implemented. But their impact is likely to be limited as they do not go into fundamental economic and social constraints and inequitable access to knowledge. Appeals to extra-budgetary sources for financing these projects is a reflection of the U.N.'s desperate financial situation.

Among some of the positive features of the report is the Secretary-General's recommendation to the industrialised countries "to consider granting duty-free and quota-free access for essentially all exports from the least developed countries". Given the limited export capacity of the least developed countries, it should not be difficult for more developed member-countries to endorse this recommendation. However, this concession should not be allowed to be used as a leverage for weakening the political will of the developing countries to take common positions on issues of far-reaching implications, such as the establishment of a link between trade and labour and environmental standards.

The Secretary-General has indeed raised the linkage issue and has very rightly pointed out that it can become yet another pretext for protectionism. He has also clearly shown his preference for this issue being dealt with within the organisation concerned of the U.N. system. However, his invitation to the business community to join him in a "global compact" to enact in their own corporate practices a set of core values in the areas of labour standards, environment and human rights, is a double-edged weapon. On the one hand, it can help in finessing the issue of the insertion of social and environment clauses in the WTO. But, on the other hand, it can become a basis for *de facto* linkages. (The writer is a former Foreign Secretary.)

The Secretary-General's report for the General Assembly's millennium summit contains no analysis of how the U.N. has been systematically bypassed on issues of real concern to the international community.

The analysis in the report of changes in the world situation does not bring out such adverse consequences of globalisation as accentuation of inequalities, growing marginalisation of the poorest and the disadvantaged, and increasing homogenisation of culture, consumption patterns and production structures. These lead to social tension and conflicts and pose a threat to global peace and stability.

The report has very little to say on the emerging international financial architecture, beyond suggesting that it needs to be strengthened. The authors of the report are perhaps unaware that the international financial architecture is more or less already in place, that it is of an entirely discretionary nature, that almost all the substantive suggestions for making the system effective, accountable and supportive of development that have been in the field for a long time, have been totally ignored, and that the U.N. was never seriously involved in designing this architecture. The system that is emerging is a continuation of the status quo with much greater discretion to major economic powers and much enhanced role for the IMF for the surveillance of the developing economies.

Most of the measures suggested in the report in the economic field fall squarely within the domestic domain of developing countries. This reflects the decisive shift in the U.N.'s agenda in the development field — from deliberations on the responsibilities of the international community, particularly those of developed countries, to a prescription of self-help measures to be adopted by developing countries. The report suggests several targets to be pursued in the economic and social fields during the next 15-20 years. However, the targets suggested are those of goals and not of the means to realise them. Their implications in terms of the resources to be mobilised for meeting them have not been worked

international realms "conjures up images of world Government, of centralised bureaucratic behemoths trampling on the rights of people and states". The fact is that at no stage in the history of multilateralism has anything resembling a world Government ever prevailed. Whatever little progress was made, mainly during the late 1950s and the 1960s, towards establishing a world order based on rules and regulations and rights and obligations rather than on discretion, concession and unilateralism, was rudely interrupted from the beginning of the 1980s and has, as of now, been completely halted. One of the principal devices adopted for reversing the process was to raise the spectre of a non-existent world Government.

Besides, what is wrong in the U.N. moving towards being the closest possible approximation to a world Government, as it heroically tried to do during the golden era of international cooperation? A careful reading of the statements and proposals of the visionaries who architected the international system after the Second World War clearly brings out that they were motivated by precisely the same goal. Mahatma Gandhi had also the same objective in mind when he said at the Asian Relations Conference in March, 1947: "I would not like to live in this world if it was not to be one world."

In view of the resources constraint of the U.N. and the enhanced role and financial prowess that non-state actors have come to acquire, the Secretary-General has suggested that the U.N. should not, in most cases, act on its own, but should be a catalyst for action by those who have the resources. This is contrary to the spirit of the Charter which enjoins upon the U.N. to act on its own in furtherance of its objectives. One would have expected the Secretary-General to have defined the thrust areas in which the U.N. must act on its own, and to have called upon the member-states to provide the resources for activities.

THE HINDU

29 AUG 2000

Non-violence stressed at Millennium Summit

By Ramesh Chandran
The Times of India News Service

NEW YORK: A group of prominent women dominated the proceedings on the second day of the Millennium World Peace Summit, held here at the United Nations. The group led off with an exposition of the theme 'Towards a World Movement for Non-violence'.



As Betty Williams, the Nobel Peace laureate from Northern Ireland stated in her forthright manner, "War is essentially man's work. Now move over. Women will ensure peace." She emphasised that practising non-violence was not for the faint-hearted and required exemplary courage.

The session, which comprised five women, was presided over by Mrs Indu Jain, chairman of The Times of India Group and included, besides Ms Williams, Ela Gandhi, Mahatma Gandhi's grand-daughter, Jane Goodall, renowned primatologist, and Vashli Mckenzie from the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

In her opening remarks, Mrs Indu Jain stated that she would like to "invoke the all-pervading feminine power—the very embodiment of non-violence—to be here with us. Give women a chance and non-violence will effortlessly be the religion of the new millennium."

Congratulating the United Nations and those who had helped organise the summit, Mrs Jain pointed out that non-violence was an "independent state of consciousness" where one's physical, emotional and intellectual states "no longer limit and confine us, degrade and make us unhappy. That absence of fetters is ahimsa". Removing ignorance was the first

step towards building a non-violent society, she argued, since "true knowledge" consists of self-understanding. And non-violence was the "highest form of knowledge" since it harmonised relationships, giving freedom from the "endless drama of opposites: pleasure-pain, freedom-bondage". There are many ways to reach the truth, Mrs Jain said. She found hope in today's youth who, she said, were emerging as global citizens and added that the quality of love needed to be nurtured in youthful minds.

- Non-violence is way to world peace, Page 10
- Women take centrestage, Page 12

Meet condemns religion-sparked violence

United Nations, August 30

OVER 1500 religious and spiritual leaders from across the world at a spiritual summit here have condemned violence in the name of religion and urged religious, ethnic and national groups to respect the right of freedom of religion, seek reconciliation and engage in mutual forgiveness.

They also called for abolition of all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear, and promised to join the united nations efforts in this direction.

The commitment which the leaders signed during the ongoing millennium world peace summit binds them to resolve conflict generated by religious and ethnic differences in a non-violent manner and condemn violence committed in name of religion.

It calls for building an "unprecedented collaboration" among world's diverse faiths and traditions to cooperate in building peaceful societies.

eties.

"We, as religious leaders and spiritual leaders, pledge our commitment to work together to promote the inner and outer conditions that foster peace and the non violent management and resolution of conflicts," they said.

Spiritual Summit

"We appeal to the followers of all religious traditions and to the human community as a whole to cooperate in building peaceful societies to seek mutual understanding through dialogue where there are differences to refrain from violence, to practice compassion and to uphold the dignity of all life," they said.

The leaders have also pledged to collaborate with the united nations and "all men and women of goodwill locally and regionally and globally" in the pursuit of peace in all its dimensions.

The religious and spiritual leaders attending the four-day meet also pledged to work for improving the lives of the people, equitable distribution of wealth within and among nations, eradicating poverty and reverse the widening gap between the rich and poor.

They would also educate communities about the need to care for the earth's ecological system and all forms of life and on the need to support efforts to make environment restoration and protection integral part of all development planning activity.

In this context, they would help in developing and promoting global reforestation and urge their followers to join in the regional tree planting programmes.

Among other things, The religious and spiritual leaders would help combat commercial practices and applications of technology that degrade the environment and equality of human life.

(PTI)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

31 AUG 2000

U.N. Council fails to agree on Sierra Leone diamond ban

UNITED NATIONS, JULY 1. The Security Council has failed to agree on a resolution to impose a ban on Sierra Leone diamonds with members divided over whether to set a time limit on the ban and to name Liberia as a transit point for the illicit trade.

The Council also postponed a vote on the resolution until Wednesday.

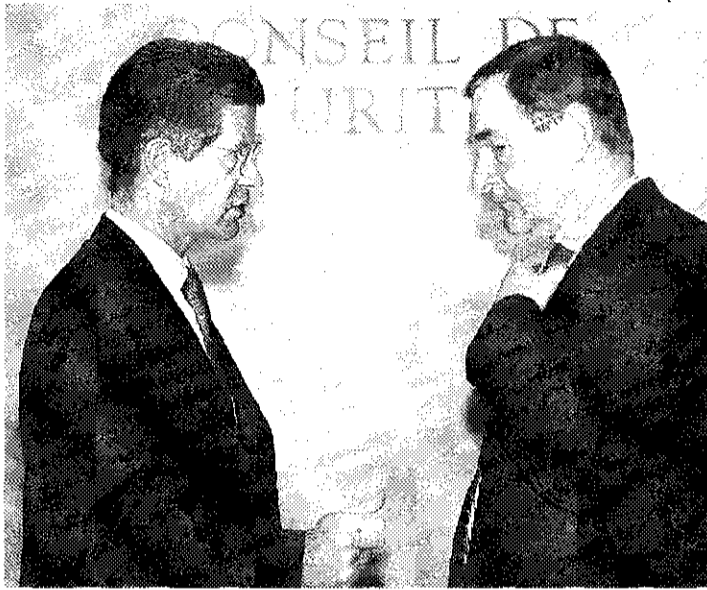
The major stumbling block was differences over whether there should be a time limit for the ban or it should be indefinite. While the United States and Britain would like the ban to be indefinite, some members proposed a 12-month and some others an 18-month time limit.

Diplomats say there was also pressure to delay the vote at least until Monday to ensure the release of 222 Indian peacekeepers and 11 observers who are surrounded by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) fighters in the Kailahun area since early May.

The resolution, drafted by Britain, seeks to impose ban on all sales of rough diamonds from Sierra Leone as also sale of arms to the rebels. The ban, it says, will remain in force until Sierra Leone government can set up a proper certification system and takes control of the mines.

The rebels at present control diamond mines and diplomats say despite the embargo, it would be impossible to stop the sale of diamond completely.

The Council is also split over



The French Ambassador to the United Nations, Mr. Jean-David Levitte (left), speaks with his British counterpart, Mr. Jeremy Greenstock, outside the Security Council chambers after a meeting on Sierra Leone on Friday. — AP

whether to name Liberia as one of the countries currently trading diamonds with the rebels.

The dispute revolves around whether the Liberian President, Mr. Charles Taylor, should be specifically mentioned as conduit for the illegal sale of diamonds by the RUF as he is the main contact with the rebels.

The U.N. Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan's special envoy in Sierra Leone, Mr. Oluyemi Adeni-

ji, too, during the briefing to the Council members yesterday proposed specific mention of Mr. Taylor saying it could complicate matters.

The British draft asks the Secretary-General to name a panel of experts for an initial period of four months to report to the Council's sanctions committee. It also wants hearing within a year on the role of diamonds in the Sierra Leone conflict. — P11

THE HINDU

2 JUL 2000

UN troops recapture key S. Leone town

Accra, July 5

UNITED NATIONS peacekeepers in Sierra Leone have recaptured the strategic Sierra Leonean town of Masiaka, 60 km east of the capital, Freetown, UN officials said.

Jordanian and Indian UN troops, using tanks and heavy artillery, played a crucial role in re-taking the town, from which rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF) fighters had pushed out pro-government forces on Monday night.

UN officials said Masiaka was completely cleared of rebels after a rapid reaction mechanised force was sent forward to halt the rebel advance, the British Broadcasting Corporation reported.

Masiaka's fall on Monday night had been seen as a heavy blow to the government forces and a sign of the effects of infighting between pro-government forces made up of the Sierra Leone army, Kamajor militias and forces loyal to former junta leader Johnny Paul Koroma.

The rebels had taken the Masiaka town after launching a multi-pronged attack and the government forces withdrew to a town called Mile 33.

(DPA)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

6 JUL 2000

U.N. bans purchase of 'blood' diamonds

UNITED NATIONS, JULY 4. The Security Council has voted to impose a worldwide ban on the purchase of rough diamonds from Sierra Leone until its Government can establish a system to certify the origin of stones being exported, and begins to assert its authority over the diamond fields.

Most of Sierra Leone's diamonds, considered to be of high quality, are under the control of rebels, who smuggle the rough stones out through Liberia to international markets. Sales of diamonds falsely labelled as Liberian provide money to buy guns and war materiel for continued fighting in Sierra Leone. The Liberian President, Mr. Charles Taylor, is close to the main rebel group in Sierra Leone, the Revolutionary United Front.

The resolution, sponsored by Britain, is experimental and intended to get at the roots of war.

The British Ambassador, Sir Jeremy Greenstock, told reporters that the international diamond industry and Governments were beginning to reach an understanding "whereby in areas of conflict, only diamonds that are certified as being authorised for sale by the proper Government

will go into the industry and be cut and sold."

"There's a lot of work still to do," Mr. Greenstock said, "and this is only the beginning of a number of steps we need to take on Sierra Leone. But it's a good beginning. We have begun a system which will immediately make it more difficult for the traders to deal in conflict diamonds — some people call them blood diamonds — from Sierra Leone, which are making the lives of the Sierra Leone people a misery."

Sierra Leone's Ambassador, Mr. Ibrahim Kamara, thanked the Council for the step. "We have always maintained that the conflict in Sierra Leone is not about ideology, tribal or regional difference," he said. "It has nothing to do with the so-called problem of marginalised youths or, as some political commentators have characterized it, an uprising by rural poor against the urban elite. The root of the conflict is and remains diamonds, diamonds and diamonds."

The U.S., while backing the resolution, opposed having a time limit, especially one so short. — *New York Times*

UN warns Sierra rebels not to oppose rescue operation

UNITED NATIONS: UN secretary-general Kofi Annan warned Sierra Leone's rebels on Saturday not to oppose an operation to rescue peacekeepers, who came under fire during a 80-km trek to safety.

Annan, in a statement, also attempted to assure the rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF) that the operation was aimed solely at gaining the security and freedom of personnel in the UN mission in Sierra Leone, known as Unamsil.

Heavily armed UN peacekeepers, backed by helicopter gunships, swept into the eastern town of Kailahun on Saturday to rescue 222 Indian soldiers and 11 officers from several countries serving as military observers. The 233 soldiers had been encircled by the RUF since May.

Annan warned the rebels "that it is in their interest not to oppose this legitimate effort" and said that he hoped that further violence could be avoided.

"The secretary-general wishes to stress that the extraction operation is aimed at ensuring the security of United Nations personnel and restoring their freedom of movement, in full accordance with Unamsil's mandate," the statement said.

A total of 40 peacekeepers, including the 11 observers, were ferried out by helicopter while the remaining 193 Indian troops were travelling by road toward the nearest United Nations base at Daru, 80 km away, a "difficult area controlled by hostile rebels," Annan said. Two Indian soldiers were wounded in the gunfire that ensued.

Annan noted that the re-supply of the encircled peacekeepers had recently been severely curtailed because of the "increasingly threatening posture adopted by the RUF and the deteriorating road conditions in the area." UN officials said the RUF refused to allow supply helicopters to land although most roads had been washed away by heavy rains. Consequently, Annan said the use of force by Unamsil to extract its personnel "had become inevitable" after "intensive diplomatic and political efforts" had failed.

The peacekeepers were sent to Sierra Leone to monitor a peace agreement and disarmament that was to have ended a civil war that began in 1991. But the RUF refused to lay down arms and took UN troops hostage when they ventured too close to the diamond mining areas they control. (Reuters)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

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MAKING PEACEKEEPING SAFE

UN

THE SHOW AND use of force to rescue the mostly-Indian peacekeeping soldiers in the western African country of Sierra Leone must augur well for the United Nations and its beleaguered, belittled and devalued peacekeeping department. The success of the daring operation in which helicopter-borne British troops also participated is a needed shot in the arm for the world body and can signal a turning point. By successfully waging peace in Sierra Leone and by initiating action to cut off the source of strength of the rebels, the U.N. is serving notice on all warlords. It is conveying the unambiguous message to the mercenaries that there will be less and less profit from waging wars, that the international community has acquired the political will to assert itself for the cause of peace. After the disasters of the past decade — the most shameful occasion was when it abdicated its responsibility and stood idly by as tens of thousands of innocent civilians were massacred in avertable clan warfare in Rwanda in 1994 — and after seeing itself hijacked by the big powers in other areas of conflict, the U.N. needed desperately to succeed in this mission, particularly for the people of Africa and for people wherever else they were threatened. Sierra Leone thus marks a milestone, a decisive period when the U.N. was restored its rightful role as the keeper of international peace. Led by its committed Secretary-General, it must begin to bolster its peacekeeping arm.

India has occasion to rejoice that its soldiers of peace, seized during the performance of an international duty, are safe. It will also have cause to rejoice at the accretion of muscle to the U.N.'s peace force, for which it has contributed substantially right from the world body's inception. New Delhi has long campaigned for an effective international peace force that will function under the command of the U.N. and its

Secretary-General. It must revive the campaign in the world body where peacekeeping will get a renewed look in two months when the General Assembly debates the issue. But the hurdles to the evolution of a genuine international force are many. The fiercest opposition comes from the U.S., where the Republican-dominated Congress views with suspicion an international army outside of American control, seeing it as a potential rival superpower. The U.S. has also been the main defaulter, owing the U.N. millions of dollars in peacekeeping arrears. If Mr. Kofi Annan and his diplomats convince the developed nations to contribute their share of funds for the peace operations, one major constraint will be removed. More funding can mean a better trained military. These and a coherent command structure, another point of dispute among the member-nations, have been identified as the three areas where agreements are hard to arrive at.

The most significant success in Sierra Leone has come in the battle against the mercenaries, with the U.N. hitting them where it hurt most. The rebels fighting the legitimate government control the diamond mining region and have sustained themselves by bartering the stones for arms in illegal trading. The Security Council's decision to impose a ban on diamond exports from the country and the international trade's ready compliance with that diktat will choke the supply of arms to the rebels and force their capitulation. If dogma and drugs were two of the weapons of clandestine war fine-tuned in the last century, diamonds have in the last decade become the new tool, their mining and sale in the international market helping to fund murderous civil wars in Africa. Through a successful strategy to counter this trend, the U.N. has acquired a new tool and may have effectively reinvented itself.

THE HINDU

19 JUL 2000

19 JUL 2000

'UN summit should reach consensus on N-free world'

Bangkok, July 28

INDIA TODAY said the forthcoming United Nations millennium summit should reach a consensus on creating a nuclear free world and a comprehensive convention to fight international terrorism.

India would like to see the UN summit in September to be goal-oriented, External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh told the Asean post-ministerial conference here, regretting the absence of such a convention.

"No framework convention to prevent organised transnational crime in general, has yet been concluded nor has there been a comprehensive convention on international terrorism," he said.

Mr Singh, who is leading a high-level delegation to the conference, said the south, which constituted the overwhelming majority in the world, must be given its "fair and proportional" share of representation in the Security Council and other UN bodies.

"Its membership must be enlarged to include more key global players and developing countries. Its working methods must be reformed so that the council's decision-making process becomes more transparent and democratic. We hope that the General Assembly working group can soon recommend viable measures to reform the council," he said. (PTI)

UN TRADE MEET / NEW VIEW OF GLOBALISATION ENVISAGED

UNCTAD to focus on Third World

By P. S. Suryanarayana

BANGKOK, FEB. 11. A relative new strategy of re-inventing globalisation as a catalyst for growth in developing countries came into focus here today on the eve of the week-long tenth meeting of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The conference, beginning here tomorrow and bringing together representatives from diverse countries around the world, will focus attention on ways of "enhancing the governance of the globalising world economy" and "making markets work for development." The idea was to add a new dimension to globalisation, which had already come to signify the pervasive influence of the developed countries across the international spectrum.

These and other prospective trends of the conference were variously hinted at by the UNCTAD Secretary-General, Mr. Rubens Ricupero, and several other key participants. The shift in emphasis within the overall framework of a sustainable globalisation was necessitated by the UNCTAD's primary goal of ensuring "the right kind of integration of developing countries into the world economy and the trading system." A view was that the "quality of integration" would be more important than its "degree" even as more developing countries presently join the global economic mainstream. A related prescription was that developing states should avail themselves of the UNCTAD's "assistance" to "negotiate" their entry into the globalising system and to make this larger entity "more responsive" to their "needs."

The U.N. Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, who will address the UNCTAD-X tomorrow, is of the view that the voice of the developing countries should actually be "listened to" by the richer nations instead of being merely "heard" by them. Towards this end, the UNCTAD, as also the World Bank and several donor countries besides the World Trade Organisation, were already trying to put the developing countries through their paces for their "negotiations" with the advanced States. A related priority was to improve the lot of the lesser developed countries (LDCs).

In an alternative view of the developed world, Mr. Kofi Annan does not tend to see it as a united, monolithic entity. In one sense, the failure of the developed countries to agree on their own collective trade priorities during

the recent Seattle talks was eclipsed by the popular perception that some form of a worldwide grassroots revolt was beginning to happen against the Western mantra of globalisation.

Given, however, the preponderant accent in Bangkok now on the concerns of the developing world, the prospective new round of the UNCTAD's deliberations here did not evoke the kind of frenzied public opposition that characterised the countdown for and the actual ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organisation held in Seattle recently. Much was made on the eve of tomorrow's meeting about the differing centres of gravity within the WTO and the UNCTAD — a tilt towards the rich states in the original format of the recent Seattle talks and a generalised bias towards the developing countries in regard to the meeting beginning here tomorrow.

In spite of the conspicuous absence of any

significant unrest on the eve of the latest UNCTAD meeting, the security authorities of the host country, Thailand, left nothing to chance in beefing up security on the streets ahead of the main event. The obvious effort was to prevent any marooning of the UNCTAD-X in the context of the unrest that punctuated the recent Seattle meeting and the subsequent World Economic Forum summit in Davos.

On a parallel track in Bangkok at this time, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Thailand National Assembly joined hands with the UNCTAD Secretariat to launch a "declaration" on the interplay of globalisation and development. With Mrs. Najma Heptullah, President of the IPU Council, playing a key role, the international "parliamentary meeting" here today called on legislators to get "more closely involved in the international negotiating process on trade, finance and development issues."



A Thai policeman awaits orders as Greenpeace protesters display a banner on Friday at the Democracy Monument in Bangkok. The group was protesting the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, holding its 10th meeting this week in Bangkok, for encouraging lesser developed countries to receive the toxic waste of richer nations. — AP

THE HINDU
12 FEB 2000

U.N. chief calls for a new global order

By P. S. Suryanarayana

BANGKOK, FEB. 12. The tenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) began here today on a thematic note of calls for a "new global deal" and a "new global order." Delivering the keynote address at the inaugural session, the U.N. Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, redefined globalisation as an order marked by freedom, development, human rights and environmental safety. The Singapore Prime Minister, Mr. Goh Chok Tong, called for "a shared responsibility for global governance," while the Malaysian Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, suggested a reshaping of the G-20 forum to suit the needs of globalisation.

The Japanese Prime Minister, Mr. Keizo Obuchi, lent a geopolitical touch to the UNCTAD session by announcing Tokyo's initiative of assessing the development agenda of the Asian countries and articulating it at the ensuing G-8 summit of industrialised countries and Russia.

Setting the tone for the week-long deliberations, the U.N. Secretary-General defined the two categories of States now engaged in the development drama. According to Mr. Annan, a developed country is one that allows all its citizens to enjoy a free and healthy life in a safe environment. "A genuinely developing country is one in which civil society is able to insist not only on material well-being but on improving standards of human rights and environmental protection as well." These new definitions of these two classifications of States should govern the new international dynamics, he indicated.

Mr. Annan turned the spotlight, too, on the new opportunities for engagement between the rich and poor countries in certain areas of talent, as exhibited by India and others. He said: "From Bangalore to Sao Paulo, we see extraordinary examples of new skills bringing about dramatic

changes. Not only is Microsoft investing billions of dollars in India but Indian software companies are buying up firms in the United States." He brought out the dilemmas of the developing countries even in this new dynamic context of optimism among countries such as India. He said that "half the world's population have never made or received a telephone call, let alone sent a computer" despite the success stories in the information technology sector.

While Mr. Annan's overall theme was that globalisation, as in evidence so far, was not an "enemy of development," the Indonesian Prime Minister, who has most recently "bucked the trend" (as pointed out by the Indonesian President, Mr. Abdurrahman Wahid), cautioned the developing countries against allowing the "dot.com companies" to reap benefits at the expense of those who might get glued to their computers in this Internet age.

Mr. Wahid, known for his unorthodox politics and conventional economics, surprised quite a few observers of the Western world by affirming that Dr. Mahathir "is not alone" in sounding a wake-up call and that "his voice is our voice also." Mr. Wahid said that people could at present "manipulate"

Indonesia because of its weak economic situation. There was, however, a global need for a "more equitable order."

The Singapore Prime Minister spoke of the need for recognising the political significance that the latest round of globalisation began only in the wake of an end to the East-West Cold War. Mr. Goh referred to the growing need to "shake off the dust of Seattle" and make renewed efforts to start a new round of global trade negotiations. He also called for a new global order for the 21st Century commensurate with the realities of de jure and de facto aspects of international relations.

Japan launched a new diplomatic charm offensive to woo the Asian countries with an assurance that Tokyo would act as their spokesman at the upcoming G-8 summit and thereafter.

Mr. Obuchi held out this assurance following a meeting with the assembled heads of State or government belonging to the ASEAN member-states.

Mr. Obuchi pointed out that Japan had already taken steps to help the crisis-hit East Asian countries tide over their recent difficulties. In addition, Tokyo would now on evince a greater interest in listening to the "voice of Asia" and echoing it at the forum of industrialised countries and Russia.

More than 1000 protesters marched to the venue demanding immediate action to share the spoils of globalisation with the developing world. Protesters carrying banners lambasting global finance institutions found their route to the venue blocked by riot police.

Several hundred were later allowed to approach the Queen Sirikit Conference Centre to stand across the road from the venue, flanked by cordons of police. Representatives then handed a letter to senior UNCTAD officials.



Mr. Awni Behnam, Secretary of the U.N. Trade and Development Board, walks towards the leader of the protesters to have a talk after some demonstrators reached the Queen Sirikit Convention Centre in Bangkok on Saturday. — AP

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Complementarity between sexes our guiding principle: Joshi

By Kalpana Sharma

NEW YORK, JUNE 6. Representatives of over 180 nations at the United Nations General Assembly were given a small lesson in Hindu philosophy today as the Union Minister for Human Resource Development, Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, expounded its relevance.

Addressing the 23rd special session of the General Assembly at what is known as Beijing Plus Five, the Minister presented India's progress in implementing the commitments made at the Beijing conference. He emphasised that according to an ancient Indian tradition, the concept of complementarity between the sexes, rather than conflict was the guiding principle. This intuition of complementarity was illustrated through the figure of Ardhanarishvara half male and half female. "Modern scientific research, which has located in the left and right sides of the brain what are commonly described as male and female characteristics, confirms a truth our ancients divined intuitively."

The Minister also held that the expression of egocentric individualism was alien to Indian social thought. Both remarks point to one of the differences in perception that exist between countries like India and the industrialised nations. While in the West, women's groups as well as governments are pushing for a

recognition of all sexual preferences, the majority of the developing countries remain conservative in their response. The Indian Government had a problem with the reference to sexual preference, Dr. Joshi told *The Hindu* later.

This difference might appear unimportant in the overall context of women's rights. But like the issue of legalised abortion, which had held up agreement at both the Population conference in Cairo in 1994 and the Beijing women's conference in 1995, this has divided the world into liberals and conservatives, with many developing countries falling within the latter category.

The other more fundamental division, which is likely to be a slightly contentious issue at this meeting to assess progress in implementing the Platform for Action agreed upon in Beijing, is the traditional North-South divide on aid and development assistance. At every international conference, regardless of the subject being discussed, the age-old question of the percentage of GDP which developed countries should commit to aid poorer countries comes up for debate. Despite the beginning of the new millennium, this is one controversy that refuses to die down. Thus, even today in the corridors of the UN, the G-77 is ranged against the industrialised West on this issue as they discuss a declaration relating to women.

The Indian Government's public contribution to the deliberations here ended with the Minister's speech. But behind the scenes, Indian diplomats are involved in some of the committees and sub-committees where the language of the final declaration is being sorted out. India has presented a slick-looking report on the steps taken to implement the Platform for Action. Some of the data will look impressive until one comes to the chapter on violence against women. Here the National Crime Records Bureau is quoted as stating that there is a 40 per cent increase in cases of sexual harassment, 15.2 per cent in cases of dowry deaths and an alarming 87.2 per cent in the importation of girls in 1998 over 1997.

Asked how he responded to the remark made earlier in the day by the American First Lady, Ms. Hillary Clinton, that dowry deaths were an indication that women had a long way to go, Dr. Joshi was defensive and said people in the West never mentioned crimes against women in their own countries. Eleven women members of Parliament are here as part of the official Indian delegation. But many more women politicians are expected to arrive for the meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Union for which Ms. Najma Heptullah has already arrived. Two of the possible participants are Ms. Phoolan Devi and Ms. Mayawati.

THE HINDU

6 7 JUN 97

TAKE LIBERIA TOO ✓

5/6 The UN war in Sierra Leone 17/6

BRITAIN is pulling out the bulk of its 800 commandos in Sierra Leone, but has, at the same time reaffirmed its long-term commitment to restoring order in that country and also moved a resolution in the United Nations calling for an increase in the strength of the UN peacekeeping force, a revision of its mandate to include intervention and a corresponding clampdown on neighbouring Liberia where Charles Taylor is Foday Sankoh's best friend and principal colluder in the arms and diamond racket. The revision of the mandate is warranted by the fact that the Lome Accord is dead: one doesn't see how Sankoh could possibly be part of any government in Freetown after the mayhem let loose by the RUF last month. Sankoh was captured by the British and is to be put on trial and the RUF is said to have broken up into separate fighting units all with nefarious plans of their own. The Sierra Leone Army is manifestly incapable of dealing with the RUF on its own and will remain so for some time to come.

The UN peacekeeping force has been deployed in areas which hitherto had remained outside their ambit. This also exposes them to greater risks as the fate of the two Indian battalions in Kailahun laid siege to by the RUF shows. The real challenge is the penetration towards the east where the RUF has its strongholds and which it will never give up without a fight. If the Lome Accord cannot be somehow revived, maybe with another RUF leadership that can guarantee the cohesion of the organisation and the solidity of its word, then peacekeepers may have to see more action than they bargained for initially. The SLA is to be trained by both the British and the UN forces, but even regular armies have not been able to overcome determined guerrilla challenges even after several decades of fighting, as the examples of Sri Lanka and Northern Ireland have shown. Obviously, in the circumstances, it is not possible for the UN force to hang around and wait for some RUF to turn up and hand in their weapons, especially now that there is no big prize waiting for them in Freetown. If the British resolution is considered seriously, the participating countries would have to ask themselves if they are willing to shed their soldiers' blood in Sierra Leone.

THE STATESMAN

12 JUN 2000

UN commander warns RUF rebels

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, June 12

THE INDIAN reaction to the hostage crisis in Sierra Leone hardened today with Major General V K Jaitly, the commander of the United Nations Mission for Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) warning the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) of "serious consequences" if a single Indian soldier is harmed.

The RUF had taken 21 Indian peacekeepers hostage in Pendembu and kept 234 others surrounded near Kailahun town for the past six weeks.

Maj Gen Jaitly warned of "all the necessary action to safeguard the security of (his) troops and honour of UNAMSIL" in his statement issued on the fourth day after the

RUF announced that it was taking 21 Indian soldiers hostage in Pendembu. These soldiers were earlier detained like the others near Kailahun.

The UNAMSIL commander warned the RUF that the rebels would be responsible if he is compelled to use force.

UNAMSIL is here to keep peace and in doing so we have been and will continue to be absolutely impartial in the discharge of their duties. Security of all troops is my prime responsibility

Fate of soldiers

LOCAL COMMANDERS of Sierra Leonean rebels holding 21 Indian UN peacekeepers say the captives' future is out of their control, UN spokesman David Wimhurst said on Monday. "The RUF commanders inform our people that the 21 are safe and well, but their release is now beyond the control of the local commanders, it's being handled at a higher level," Mr Wimhurst said.

AFP, Freetown

ty irrespective of the nation to which these troops belong," noted his statement.

Interestingly, this is the first time that the UNAMSIL commander has spoken out in over six weeks since the crisis began. The UNAMSIL is in the civil war torn West African nation under the Security Council

resolutions 1270 (1999) and 1289 (2000). It is authorised by the Council to take all necessary action to ensure the security and freedom of movement of its personnel.

Their mandate is to "stabilise" the situation, so it has the powers to retaliate and use force.

A Ministry of External Affairs spokesman said New Delhi is in touch with UN Secretary General and governments of the region. India is counting heavily on the help reportedly promised by former Liberian Foreign Minister Museline Cooper, who is arriving in Freetown tomorrow.

The delegation of MEA and Defence Ministry officials, sent to Sierra Leone to assess the situation, is learnt to have left the country and at present is touring Daru, Lungi, Hastings and Rockberry in the civil war zone.

MEA's joint secretary (UN Affairs), Dinkar Shrivastav, will be staying back there for an indefinite period.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

13 JUN 2000

U.N. force deployment in Congo put off

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17/6

By M.S. Prabhakara

CAPE TOWN, JUNE 16. The deployment of a U.N. peace keeping force to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, expected to begin with the arrival of a South African contingent in Kisangani this weekend, has been deferred.

According to a report from the U.N., the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, had deferred the deployment of the planned force of 5,537 observers and troops because of the persistence of fighting between 'warring factions'.

The fighting in and around Kisangani, a major city deep inside the DRC, is not so much as between 'warring factions' but between the regular armies of Rwanda and Uganda. The two countries, ostensibly in the DRC with the common objective of helping rival rebel factions opposed to the DRC government, have been at war with each other on the DRC territory for months now - an astonishing state of affairs with which the 'international community', so keen to ensure peace there, has acquiesced for over nearly a year.

Cabinet approval or contributing to the U.N. peace keeping force came over four months after the Security Council authorised deployment of 5,537 troops to monitor the ceasefire agreement in the DRC. South Africa has from the beginning been expected to con-

tribute substantially to the exercise. Other countries whose troops are expected to be part of the peace keeping forces are Pakistan, Morocco and Senegal.

However, influential opinion in South Africa continues to be wary, if not critical, of its involvement in such activities. Indeed, the debate in South Africa on whether the country should take part in the U.N. peace keeping operations in the DRC, or indeed anywhere else on the continent, that has been going on well before the U.N. Security Council's decision, arises not out of any legitimate concerns about South Africa's lack of experience in taking part in such operations but out of the persistence of the 'old' mindset in influential sections of the establishment, especially those engaged in 'strategic defence thinking' that the country should not really get involved in 'the mess that is Africa'.

The sentiment is not openly expressed, since after all it flies in the face of South Africa's commitment to an 'African renaissance' over which there is an eloquent verbal consensus among those who shape policy. However, at the 'popular' level on the part of the white minority, it finds even more eloquent expression in interventions in radio talk shows and in letters to newspapers.

THE HINDU

17 JUN 2000

India's Sierra Leone experience should make it rethink its UN peace-keeping operations

Peace meal operations

BY J.N.DIXIT

THE PREDICAMENT being faced by the Indian contingent in the United Nations Peace-Keeping Force in Sierra Leone has attracted attention in India. Twenty-one Indian soldiers have been disarmed and taken hostage by the rebel forces of the Revolutionary United Front. Another 245 Indian soldiers had been surrounded by cadres of the same group. Instead of being engaged in maintaining peace, the UN peace-keeping force, especially the Indian contingent, is enmeshed in a confrontationalist mode with one of the parties engaged in the year-long civil war in Sierra Leone.

The UN Security Council has got involved in the Sierra Leone crisis since October 22, when in its 405th meeting it decided to establish a UN mission in Sierra Leone to assist the Government of Sierra Leone to disarm and demobilise the warring groups and to restore normalcy there. The resolution got the UN involved in Sierra Leone under Chapter 7 of the UN Charter (Resolution No. 1270 of 1999). By two further resolutions (No. 1289 of February 7, 2000 and No. 1299 of May 19, 2000), the tenure of the UN peace-keeping has been extended up to the beginning of November 2000.

There are at present 13,000 military personnel, 28 civilian police, 234 international civil administrators and another 104 civilian personnel from abroad deployed on behalf of the UN in Sierra Leone. Thirty-two countries have contributed military units to the Sierra Leone peace-keeping force. Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Kyrgistan, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan and Thailand are the Asian countries which have sent their military personnel there.

It is also well-known that apart from internal civil strife, West African countries like Liberia and Nigeria are involved in the domestic political imbroglio of Sierra Leone. The UN Peace-Keeping Force is commanded by an Indian General. So India has a special role to play in developments in that country at present which are not very palatable.

Sierra Leone became enmeshed in a violent civil war in 1999. The duly constituted government of Sierra Leone faced violent opposition from a group calling itself the Revolutionary United Front. The levels of violence reached thresholds where the

Sierra Leone Government asked for assistance from West African states.

The economic community of the West African states led by Nigeria tried to bring the conflict to an end but did not succeed. Consequently, the political situation was brought to the notice of the Security Council under Chapters 6 and 7 of the UN Charter related to pacific settlements of disputes in a situation where the dispute is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security in that region.

The crisis was initially sought to be managed by a West African peace-keeping force which did not succeed due to partisan and political affinities of the countries involved in the Sierra Leone crisis. Consequently, the Security Council took a decision to send a multi-national UN peace-keeping force. A little over 13,000 troops from nearly 32 countries were deployed under the command of an Indian, Major General Vijay Jaitley. This contingent of UN troops has units from a number of African countries, from the United Kingdom.

Indian forces constitute a major component of these UN troops (accounting for a little over one-fifth of the total forces deployed). India has sent nearly 2,500 personnel for this peace-keeping operation. It was the UN Secretary General who desired an Indian to be in overall command of this peace-keeping operation. It was also the considered assessment of the UN Secretariat that Indian troops should constitute a major portion of the UN peace-keeping contingent because of India's long successful record of peace-keeping operations under the UN umbrella. More importantly, India's credibility as an impartial entity whenever it has been deployed by the UN for peace-keeping in different parts of the world has been a plus point.

Unlike most previous occasions, when India sent troops for peace-keeping operations, our troops and their commander have been subjected to controver-

sy and physical pressures in Sierra Leone, due to the following reasons. Both Sierra Leone authorities and the Opposition Revolutionary United Front have resiled from their commitments regarding conditions under which the UN peace-keeping force was to operate.

The Sierra Leone Government arresting the leader of the Revolutionary United Front, Foday Sankoh, has put the fat in the fire. A direct consequence has been the rebel Revolutionary United Front's taking 21 Indian soldiers as hostages at Pedemba about three weeks ago. That apart, 245 Indian soldiers have been surrounded by Revolutionary United Front rebels at Kailahun.

While 21 Indian soldiers taken hostage have been disarmed, the larger contingent of 245 Indian soldiers are in a predicament of a tenuous stand-off with the rebels. The rebels have demanded release of their leader and their cadres in the custody of the Sierra Leone authorities as a condition to release the Indian soldiers taken hostage and to lift the siege against the larger Indian military contingent.

Parallel to this tense drama was the unwarranted controversy created by the Secretary General of the UN and West African Governments about the Indian peace-keeping force. The Secretary General made statements which were obliquely critical of the manner in which General Jaitley was performing his duties and conducting operations. The Heads of State and Government of West African countries in a resolution adopted by the ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) asserted that the Indian commander, not being familiar with West African conditions, has mismanaged the operations and that he should be replaced by a commander from the West African region.

Even more importantly, this resolution suggested that multi-national peace-keeping should be replaced by a regional West African peace-keeping force. The Secretary General has made amends to his initial criticism in face of strong protests from the

India and our military establishment. But the combined opposition of West African Governments continues. A special delegation led by the Director General Military Operations of the Indian Army, Lt. General N. C. Vij, and consisting of representatives of our defence and foreign ministries, is now in Sierra Leone and is proceeding to New York to get Indian military personnel out of their predicament. The discussions have been inconclusive so far though the UN has demanded their unconditional release and restoration of the freedom of movement to the peace-keeping force.

The stand of the West African governments is patently irrational because it was their failure to manage a regional crisis which resulted in their accepting the presence of a multi-national UN peace-keeping force. It is also clear that the UN Secretariat did not clearly define the terms of reference (leaving aside the Security Council resolution), of the peace-keeping operations. Nor did it ensure safe guarantees that the parties at dispute would abide by the obligations which they undertook to ensure smooth operation of the peace-keeping efforts by the UN Force.

Major General Jaitley has acted with consummate tact and restraint despite the Indian forces being in danger. He has sufficient coercive force at his command to take corrective action against the Revolutionary United Front. But he has chosen the rational path of negotiations. It is the responsibility of the Secretary General to ensure that the regional forces of West Africa do not question the credibility, impartiality, understanding and motivations of the Indian Commander of the peace-keeping force.

The manner in which the UN resolves the impasse in Sierra Leone will be a litmus test for the advisability and practicability of the UN peace-keeping operations to manage internal conflict situations of member states. Most importantly, despite India's long-standing commitment to be a participant in UN peace-keeping operations, our Sierra Leone experience should make us pause to re-examine the criteria and conditions under which India should participate in UN peace-keeping operations in the future — especially when no tangible interest of India is affected by situations into which India is invited.



UN condemns detention of 21 Indian peacekeepers

UNITED NATIONS: The UN Security Council has condemned the continued detention of 21 Indian peacekeepers by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels in Sierra Leone and demanded their "immediate and unconditional" release.

The Council's statement came after day-long consultations with a ministerial delegation of the Economic Community Of West African States' (ECOWAS) mediation and security committee which joined the Council members in condemning the continued restrictions on movement of UN personnel by RUF.

The statement, read out by Council president Jean-David Levitte, demanded immediate and unconditional release of all peacekeepers detained and surrounded by RUF. The ECOWAS members told newsmen they were prepared

to contribute 3,000 to 3,500 peacekeepers provided the international community extended logistic and financial support.

Though they agreed to be deployed under UN command, they were noncommittal about whether their troops would be ready to serve under Indian force commander Maj-Gen V K Jetley. "The matter will be taken up with the Secretary-General," they said when asked if they would demand charge in the force commander.

Earlier, ECOWAS officials had said they would like the force commander to be chosen from one of the West African countries.

Meanwhile, the Council is contemplating resolutions to strengthen peacekeeping operations in Sierra Leone and try rebel leader Foday Sankoh, who is now under arrest. The Council is also planning to set up a probe into the diamond trade earnings of the rebels.

After being warned that its actions were undermining efforts to restore peace in Sierra Leone, Liberia, which has been identified as a major transit point for illegal diamond exports by Sierra Leone's RUF, agreed to cooperate with any inquiry into the trade. Britain has formally proposed that the Council ban all diamond exports, which finances arms purchases by the RUF, from Sierra Leone not authorised by the government. (Agencies)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

23 JUN 2000

U.N. Council divided to debar Yugoslavia

UNITED NATIONS, JUNE 24. The U.N. Security Council witnessed scenes reminiscent of the cold war era when Russia, and later China, walked out of the 15-member Security Council as Yugoslavia was banned from participating in a debate over the Balkans.

Sharp differences erupted last evening between the NATO members of the Council led by the United States and Russia over whether Yugoslavia should be allowed to participate.

The Russian Ambassador, Mr. Sergei Lavrov, walked out when the Council decided by seven to four votes to bar Belgrade from participating in the debate, saying, "gagging people's mouths is not the best way to discuss acute international problems."

The remaining four abstained. The permanent members cannot use veto on procedural matters and hence the negative Russian vote could not kill the proposal to debar Belgrade.

"To discuss the Balkans without the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is nonsense," an angry Mr. Lavrov remarked.

From the comments of several Ambassadors, it was clear that most non-NATO members of the Council were opposed to barring Yugoslavia.

Five NATO-members and two other nations voted to bar Yugoslavia while Russia, China, Ukraine and Namibia voted to let Belgrade participate in the debate.

Belgrade's representative, Mr. Vladislav Jovanovic, told reporters the seven votes against him were from NATO members and two 'extremist' Islamic nations, Bangladesh and Malaysia, thereby giving Belgrade a 'moral victory'.

The U.S. Ambassador, Mr. Richard Holbrooke, led the challenge on the grounds that the Yugoslav leadership, including the President, Mr. Slobodan Milosevic, was under indictment by a U.N. tribunal for alleged crimes committed during last year's Kosovo conflict.

— PTI, Reuters

THE HINDU

25 JUN 2000

From Korea to Sierra Leone

By C. V. Gopalakrishnan

THE REPORTS about Indian soldiers being held hostage by rebels in Sierra Leone bring to mind India's record as a peace-keeping presence which dates back to the 1950 Korean War. The Indian troops found themselves in a similar predicament in Korea when the Chinese participants in the war had surrounded the peace-keepers headed by Gen. S. P. Thora. The General secured their release simply by chiding the Chinese captors. He asked them what kind of Chinese they were when they were so inhospitable to their guests. India headed the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission in Korea to arrange for the return of prisoners of war to the United States, the two Koreas and to China after the U.N. appointed "interrogators" assessed their preference. The Americans were none-too-friendly to the Indians and there was also an instance of their holding Indians hostage. Syngman Rhee, then President of South Korea, was openly hostile and made no secret of his suspicions that India was wholly pro-Soviet Union and pro-China.

Much later in Katanga, India's peace-keeping forces were led by Gen. K. A. S. Raja. Roy Welensky and Ian Smith, the white imperialist Prime Ministers of Northern and Southern Rhodesia, before they became independent and were rechristened Zambia and Zimbabwe, did not also like the Indian participation in the U.N. peace-keeping operations with the former making some biting comments on "the kind of fish India was trying to fry in Africa". The hopes about Katanga giving up its separatist demand depended entirely upon the U.N. forces capturing Jadotville and Kolwezi which were major industrial centres and through which passed the only rail route which linked the province to a neighbouring port in Angola. Brigadier Reggie Noronha led the Indian contingent of the U.N. forces. The advance on Jadotville was led by the fourth battalion of the Madras Regiment, the first phase of which was to secure a crossing over the Kafira River at a distance of 80 km. The late Gen. Sundarji, gives a lively account of the successful operations in Katanga

in his *Of Some Consequence: A Soldier Remembers* (HarperCollins). The Indian Army was also assigned a peace-keeping role in the Nineties in Somalia.

The democratically-elected Government of Mr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah in Sierra Leone was overthrown in May 1997 by a disgruntled coalition of army personnel of the Armed Revolutionary Council (ARC) and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) led by Maj. John Paul Koroma. Mr. Kabbah fled to Guinea. The Economic Committee of West African States Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) led by a strong Nigerian contingent undertook the supplies-

corrupt and power hungry irrespective of whether they were run by civilians or the military. An indication of its enormous wealth is given by a 1998 report about its diamond production amounting to 115 million carats which could have earned it from the world diamond market not less than \$50 billion, according to an estimate made by *The Financial Times*, London. The illegal export of diamonds through neighbouring Liberia has fattened the Lebanese, Israelis, Belgians, and Britishers as well as wicked elements of the RUF who have been virtually plundering the country.

The present unrest in Sierra Leone

The limitations of U.N. peace-keeping operations arise from a section of the people whom they are intended to benefit becoming hostile.

sion of the rebellion. Though they were initially unsuccessful, they forced the rebels to agree to a ceasefire in October 1997 with Mr. Kabbah returning as President in March 1998. His task was the restoration of order in a country with a demoralised population and a severely damaged economy. Quite a number of the leaders of the coup were executed in October 1998. But this could not stop further deterioration and by January 1999 the economy was at a standstill with hundreds of thousands of people having lost their homes and with the flare-up of bitter fighting between the AFRC/RUF and the ECOMOG troops, fuelled by huge arms imports.

India's interest in Sierra Leone arises from its having a small presence of Indians, in a total population of 5.296 million, engaged mostly in trade and industry. African tribes, Temne, Mende and others account for 90 per cent of the population while the others including the Creoles account for the remaining 10 per cent which includes Indians and Pakistanis. Life expectancy at birth remains low at about 49 per cent with infant mortality being as high as 126 per 1000 live births. Sierra Leone is a potentially rich country kept in a state of poverty by successive Governments which have been

gains, despite the seeming dissatisfaction felt by the West African States in the consolidation by the Indian troops of the Sierra Leonean Government's control of Rogbert junction which is 50 miles from Freetown, the capital. This has won praise from Brig. David Richard, Commander of the British forces, though the U.N. forces could do nothing about saving the country from the brutal killings amounting to 50,000 apart from the maiming of a large number. The impact on the rebels, however, seems to have been minimal if not wholly absent. They had humiliated the U.N. by abducting 500 peacekeepers including Indians. The confidence of the Sierra Leoneans in the ability of the U.N. forces, however, does not seem to be very high and has not risen after the withdrawal of the Ghanaians based in Bunumbu. The withdrawal of the British forces is not likely to make Gen. Jettey's task any easier.

The state of desperation into which Mr. Kabbah has sunk could be seen from his having had to give an assurance to Britain that the weapons his army had received would "not fall into the hands of child soldiers" — which amounts to a shocking revelation that the army has child soldiers.

The present scene in Sierra Leone and the earlier African scenario should leave us pondering over the very limited role of U.N.-led military operations for ending rebellions led by men who have utter contempt for lawfully established Governments and democracy and are only interested in seizing power. The limitations here of U.N. operations, however well-planned and successful they may be, arise from a section of the people whom they are intended to benefit becoming hostile and the inevitable killings, which are bound to result from military operations. The recurrence of coups and seizures of power by gangs of power-hungry, blood-thirsty men in some of the countries in Africa and elsewhere, and the remote chances of democracy taking root in the near future, makes the situation even more gloomy. The ballot is still a long way off and it will be quite a while before it will replace the bullet in these countries.

India has accepted the responsibility for restoring peace in Sierra Leone under Maj. Gen. Vijay Jettey with the combined U.N. forces numbering around 130,000. The General who had an earlier experience under a U.N. command in Iraq and Iraq is believed to be against taking a very tough line against the rebels. Gen. Jettey already seems to have made some

ভারত বনাম ভারত

মানবজীবনের মান উন্নত হইতেছে কি? এই মানের একটি মাপকাঠি মাথাপিছু জাতীয় আয়। কিন্তু এই মাপকাঠি দিয়া জীবনের মান স্বেচ্ছায়জনক ভাবে পরিমাপ করা যায় না। ফলে অর্থনীতিবিদরা বরাবরই মানিয়াছেন যে মাথাপিছু জাতীয় আয় একটি মাত্রা হইতে পারে, কিন্তু জীবনের মান মাপিবার জন্য অন্যান্য মাত্রাও প্রয়োজন। ১১ বৎসর ধরিয়৷ রাষ্ট্রপুঞ্জের উন্নয়ন কর্মসূচির (ইউ এন ডি পি) পরিচালকরা এই কাজই করিতেছেন। প্রতি বৎসর প্রকাশিত হইতেছে হিউম্যান ডেভেলপমেন্ট রিপোর্ট (এইচ ডি আর) অর্থাৎ মানব উন্নয়নের খতিয়ান। প্রথম রিপোর্টটি প্রকাশিত হইয়াছিল ১৯৯০ সালে। ইউ এন ডি পি'র অনুপ্রেরণায় এখন ইসলামাবাদ হইতেও প্রতি বৎসর প্রকাশিত হইতেছে দক্ষিণ এশিয়ার মানব উন্নয়ন রিপোর্ট। ভারতের বিভিন্ন রাজ্যও নিজস্ব মানব উন্নয়নের খতিয়ান প্রস্তুত করিতেছে। ১৯৯৫ ও ১৯৯৮ সালে মধ্যপ্রদেশে রিপোর্ট প্রকাশিত হইয়াছে, কর্ণাটকে ১৯৯৯ সালে। অন্যান্য রাজ্যেও কাজ চলিতেছে। পশ্চিমবঙ্গ ব্যতিক্রম। কোনও গুচ কারণে পশ্চিমবঙ্গ সরকার এইচ ডি আর প্রস্তুতি বিষয়ে অনিচ্ছুক।

ইউ এন ডি পি'র মানব উন্নয়নের খতিয়ানে গণনা করা হয় হিউম্যান ডেভেলপমেন্ট ইনডেক্স (এইচ ডি আই) বা মানব উন্নয়ন সূচক। এই সূচক কবিবার জন্য তিন ধরনের তথ্য প্রয়োজন। প্রথম— জন্মকালে প্রত্যাশিত গড়পড়তা আয়; দ্বিতীয়— শিক্ষার মান, যাহা মাথা হইয় সাক্ষরতার হার ও স্কুলে ভর্তির হারের সাহায্যে; তৃতীয়— মাথাপিছু জাতীয় আয় তথা মোট অভ্যন্তরীণ উৎপাদন (জি ডি পি)। এই তিন ধরনের তথ্যের সমন্বয় ঘটাইয়া মানব উন্নয়ন সূচক পাওয়া যায়। এই সূচকের সর্বাধিক সম্ভাব্য মান ১, সর্বনিম্ন ০। সূচকের মান ০.৮-এর উর্ধ্বে হইলে ইউ এন ডি পি মনে করে দেশটিতে মানব উন্নয়ন উত্তম, ০.৫ হইতে ০.৮-এর মধ্যে থাকিলে মানব উন্নয়ন মধ্যম এবং ০.৫-এর নিম্নে থাকিলে— অধম। সদ্য প্রকাশিত ২০০০ সালের রিপোর্টটিতে মোটামুটি ১৯৯৮ সালের তথ্য সংকলিত ও লাব্ধ হইয়াছে। ১৭৪টি দেশের মানব উন্নয়ন সূচক ক্রম হইয়াছে। ভারতের সূচকের পরিমাপ ০.৫৬৯। অর্থাৎ ভারত মধ্যমবর্গীয় দেশ। ১৯৯৮ পর্যন্ত ভারতের স্থান ছিল অধমের তালিকায়, ১৯৯৯ হইতে এই অধম মধ্যম হইয়াছে। মানব উন্নয়ন সূচক অনুসারে ১৭৪টি দেশের ক্রমও প্রকাশিত হইয়াছে। ভারতের স্থান ১২৮তম। ভারতের মাথাপিছু জাতীয় আয় যত, তাহা অনুসারে এই ১৭৪টি দেশের মধ্যে ভারতের ক্রম ১২১তম। অর্থাৎ মাথাপিছু জাতীয় আয়ের তুলনায় ভারতে মানব সূচক উন্নয়ন সূচক অপেক্ষাকৃত কম। ১৯৯৯ সালের

রিপোর্টে ভারতের স্থান ছিল ১৩২, অর্থাৎ এ বছর সে চার ধাপ উঠিয়াছে। এই উত্তরণের কারণ দুইটি; এক, মাথাপিছু জাতীয় আয়ের বৃদ্ধি এবং দুই, সাক্ষরতার হারে দ্রুত অগ্রগতি।

ক্রম-তালিকায় সর্বোচ্চ স্থানে আছে কনোডা, তাহার মানব উন্নয়ন সূচক হইল ০.৯৩৫। লক্ষণীয়, শ্রীলঙ্কায় এই সূচক ০.৭৩৩, অর্থাৎ তৃতীয় বিশ্বের এই দ্বীপরাষ্ট্র সর্গোরবে উত্তমবর্গে স্থান করিয়া লইয়াছে। ভারতে জন্মকালে প্রত্যাশিত আয় ৬২.৯ বৎসর, শ্রীলঙ্কায় ৭৩.৩। ভারতে সাক্ষরতার হার ৫৫.৭ শতাংশ, চিনে ৮২.৮। ১৯৯১ সালের জনগণনা অনুসারে ভারতে সাক্ষরতার হার শতকরা ৫২। সম্প্রতি সংকলিত ন্যাশনাল স্যাম্পল সার্ভে অর্থাৎ জাতীয় নমুনা সমীক্ষার তথ্য অনুসারে এই সাক্ষরতার হার বৃদ্ধি পাইয়া ৬২ শতাংশ হইয়াছে। সত্য সত্যই সাক্ষরতার হার এতটা বাড়িয়া থাকিলে ভবিষ্যতের মানব উন্নয়ন রিপোর্টে ভারতের নাম আরও উপরের দিকে উঠিবে। বর্তমান রিপোর্ট অনুসারে ভারতে স্কুলে ভর্তির হার ৫৪ শতাংশ। বতসোয়ানার মতো দেশে এই হার ৭১ শতাংশ। বর্তমানে ভারতের ১৫.৮ শতাংশ মানুষের চল্লিশের উর্ধ্বে বাঁচিবার আশা নাই। ৭১ শতাংশ মানুষ সাফাই ব্যবস্থার (স্যানিটেশন) অভাবে ভোগেন, ২৫ শতাংশের নাগালে স্বাস্থ্য ব্যবস্থা নাই। ৩৫ শতাংশ মানুষ দারিদ্র সীমার নীচে বাস করেন। পুরুষের তুলনায় নারীর অবস্থা আরও শোচনীয়। মানব উন্নয়ন রিপোর্টে তাহার হিসাবও আছে। অনুরূপ সমস্যা দেখা দেয় তফশিলি জাতি ও জনজাতির ক্ষেত্রে। ভারতের বিভিন্ন রাজ্য ও প্রদেশের মধ্যে ব্যবধানও সমস্যার কারণ। চিরাচরিত অর্ধে অনগ্রসর রাজ্য বিহার, মধ্যপ্রদেশ, রাজস্থান ও উত্তরপ্রদেশ। (ইহার একযোগে 'বিমারু' অভিধায় নিম্নিত) ওড়িশা এবং পশ্চিমবঙ্গের কয়েকটি জেলাও সমপরিমাণ অনগ্রসর। ভারতে মানব উন্নয়নের প্রসারের জন্য এই রাজ্য ও জেলাগুলির প্রতি বিশেষ দৃষ্টি দেওয়া দরকার। সংস্কার-পরবর্তী ভারতে কিন্তু বিভিন্ন রাজ্যের মধ্যে ব্যবধান বাড়িতেছে, কমিতেছে না। সম্প্রতি যোজনা কমিশনের সদস্য স্টেট সিংহ আলুওয়ালিয়া এই প্রবণতার প্রতি দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ করিয়াছেন। ভারতে এমন রাজ্যও আছে যেখানে প্রকৃত আয় বাড়িতেছে বার্ষিক গড় ১০ শতাংশ হারে এবং জনসংখ্যা বাড়িতেছে ১ শতাংশ হারে। অর্থাৎ সেখানে মাথাপিছু আয় বছরে ৯ শতাংশ হারে বাড়িতেছে। আবার এমন রাজ্যও আছে যেখানে আয় বাড়িতেছে ১.৫ শতাংশ হারে কিন্তু জনসংখ্যার বার্ষিক বৃদ্ধি-হার শতকরা ২.৫। অর্থাৎ মাথাপিছু আয় বছরে ১ শতাংশ কমিতেছে। ভারতের মধ্যে অনেক ভারত।

1 JUL 2000

বাংলাদেশের সাফল্য

মাথাপিছু আয়ের হিসাব লইলে বাংলাদেশ এখনও দুনিয়ার দরিদ্রতম দেশগুলির তালিকায়। অদূর ভবিষ্যতে সেই তালিকা হইতে তাহার উত্তরণের সম্ভাবনা কম। কিন্তু এই দারিদ্রই যে প্রতিবেশী দেশটির শেষ পরিচয় নয়, তাহার নানা পরিচয় ক্রমাগত মিলিতেছে। জন্মনিয়ন্ত্রণে বাংলাদেশের সাফল্য ইতিমধ্যেই বিভিন্ন বিশেষজ্ঞ ও আন্তর্জাতিক নানা প্রতিষ্ঠানের সপ্রশংস স্বীকৃতি পাইয়াছে। সম্প্রতি সে দেশের কৃষি-ফলনের হিসাব কষিয়া দেখা গিয়াছে যে খাদ্যশস্যের বাজারে চাহিদা মিটাইবার মতো জোগান দেশের মাটি হইতেই মিলিতেছে, অর্থাৎ— অন্তত বাজারের চাহিদা এবং জোগানের সীমিত মাপকাঠিতে— বাংলাদেশ খাদ্যে স্বয়ম্ভর হইয়াছে। বাংলাদেশের গ্রামীণ ব্যাঙ্কের মডেল এখন দেশের সীমান্ত অতিক্রম করিয়া, এমনকী দক্ষিণ এশিয়া তথা তৃতীয় বিশ্বের সীমা ছাড়িয়া উন্নত দুনিয়াতেও অনুসৃত হইতেছে। নানা দিক হইতে নানা সংকেত দেখিয়া স্বভাবতই ধারণা হয় যে, দরিদ্র দেশটি তাহার দারিদ্র লইয়াই এক ধরনের উন্নয়নের পথে বলিষ্ঠ পদক্ষেপে অগ্রসর হইতেছে। এবং, সেই অগ্রগতিতে কোনও শোরগোল নাই, কোনও আড়ম্বর নাই, ইহা নীরব অগ্রগতি। ঠিক এই নীরবতার সত্যটিই বাংলাদেশের অন্য এক সাফল্যের পরিপ্রেক্ষিতেও চিহ্নিত হইয়াছে। এশিয়ান ডেভেলপমেন্ট ব্যাঙ্কের অর্থসাহায্যে পরিচালিত নন-ফর্মাল এডুকেশন প্রোগ্রাম (এন এফ ই ডি) বাংলাদেশে কাজ করিতেছে ১৯৯১ সাল হইতে। প্রথাবহির্ভূত শিক্ষা দানের এই প্রকল্পের পরিচালকরা বলিতেছেন, ১৯৯১ সালে দেশে সাক্ষরতার হার ছিল শতকরা ২৭, আজ তাহা দাঁড়াইয়াছে শতকরা ৬২।

দুনিয়ার ইতিহাসে ইহার তুল্য দ্রুত সাক্ষরতা-বিস্তার কয়টি ঘটিয়াছে তাহা রীতিমতো গবেষণার বিষয়। বস্তুত, সমাজতান্ত্রিক দুনিয়ায় কোনও কোনও দেশে বিপ্লবের পরে অনুরূপ সাফল্য দেখা গিয়াছিল। কিন্তু তাহার সঙ্গে বাংলাদেশের অভিজ্ঞতার একটি মৌলিক পার্থক্য আছে। এই দেশে সাক্ষরতা কর্মসূচিতে রাষ্ট্রীয় আদেশ-নির্দেশের ভূমিকা নাই, বস্তুত রাষ্ট্র এখানে নিজেকে নিতান্তই নেপথ্যে রাখিয়াছে, শিক্ষা বিস্তারের প্রকল্পের প্রধান নায়কের ভূমিকায় আছে জনসমাজ, অসরকারি সংস্থাগুলি (এন জি ও) যে সমাজের এক অতি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ অঙ্গ হইয়া উঠিয়াছে। সমাজতান্ত্রিক দেশে যে সাফল্য আসিয়াছিল 'বৈপ্লবিক' তৎপরতায়, বাংলাদেশে তাহা আসিয়াছে আপাত-প্রশান্ত এক সামাজিক কর্মকাণ্ডের পথে। কিন্তু ওই প্রশান্তির গভীরে রহিয়াছে একটি যথার্থ সামাজিক বিপ্লব, যাহা ব্যাপক অশিক্ষার অন্ধকার হইতে

সমাজকে ব্যাপক শিক্ষার আলোকে উত্তীর্ণ করিতে পারে। এই কারণেই এন এফ ই ডি'র কর্তারা বাংলাদেশের সাফল্যকে 'নীরব বিপ্লব' নামে অভিহিত করিয়াছেন। সর্বব বিপ্লবের আন্তি, ক্ষতি এবং অন্তঃসারশূন্যতা গত এক দশকে গোটা সমাজতান্ত্রিক দুনিয়ায় নিঃসংশয়ে প্রমাণিত, নীরব বিপ্লবকেই যথার্থ বিপ্লব বলিয়া গ্রহণ ও শ্রদ্ধা করিবার সময় আসিয়াছে। লক্ষণীয়, সমাজতান্ত্রিক দুনিয়ার একাধিক দেশেই সমাজতন্ত্র-উত্তর পরে শিক্ষার হাল শোচনীয়। ইহা সংকেত দেয় যে বৈপ্লবিক শিক্ষাবিস্তারের ভিত্তি সমাজে সুপ্রোথিত ছিল না। আশা করা যায়, বাংলাদেশের মতো দেশে সেই ভিত সুদৃঢ়, কারণ এখানে শিক্ষা বিস্তারের সঙ্গে সমাজের তৃণমূল অবশি ওতপ্রোত ভাবে জড়াইয়া গিয়াছে।

সেখানেই বাংলাদেশের অভিজ্ঞতা হইতে শিখিবার আছে। কেবল সাক্ষরতার ক্ষেত্রে নয়, সমাজজীবনের এবং অর্থনীতির নানা ক্ষেত্রেই সে দেশের সমাজের গভীরে এক নূতন চেতনার সঞ্চার ঘটিয়াছে। বিভিন্ন আন্তর্জাতিক সংস্থার আর্থিক ও প্রযুক্তিগত সাহায্য, বিভিন্ন এন জি ও এবং অন্যান্য প্রতিষ্ঠানের ব্যাপক কর্মকাণ্ড, সর্বোপরি সামাজিক মানুষের সক্রিয় অংশগ্রহণ— সব মিলাইয়া যে পরিবেশ তৈয়ারি হইয়াছে তাহাকে সদর্থে সমাজবিপ্লবের পরিবেশ বলা চলে। এই অভিজ্ঞতা হইতে একাধিক বিষয় লক্ষণীয়। প্রথমত, বাংলাদেশের রাজনীতি এই সমাজবিপ্লবকে আপন সংকীর্ণতার বৃত্তে আবদ্ধ ও বিনষ্ট করিতে পারে নাই, এ বিষয়ে পশ্চিমবঙ্গের দলতন্ত্রসর্বস্ব রাজনীতির সঙ্গে প্রতিবেশীর বিস্তর তফাত। দ্বিতীয়ত, বাংলাদেশের নাগরিক সমাজের বিপুল আর্থিক বৈষম্য গ্রামাঞ্চলের সমাজমুছনকে বাধা দিতে পারে নাই, চাহেও নাই, গ্রামসমাজ কার্যত শহুরে মধ্যবিত্তের তোয়াক্কা না করিয়া আপন শক্তিতে আপনই অগ্রসর হইতেছে। ইহাও পশ্চিমবঙ্গ হইতে ভিন্ন পরিস্থিতি। তৃতীয়ত, বাংলাদেশের সমাজে জাতপাত ও অন্যবিধ বিভাজন ভারতীয় সমাজ হইতে অনেক কম। বৈষম্য অবশ্যই সে দেশেও আছে, কিন্তু তাহা এ দেশের মতো প্রতি পদে সমাজ সংস্কারের পথে দুস্তর প্রাচীর তুলিতে চাহে না। ভারতে দরিদ্র ও অনগ্রসর শ্রেণীর মধ্যে শিক্ষা বিস্তারের পথে উচ্চবর্ণের সমাজপিতারা কী ভাবে বাধা সৃষ্টি করিয়াছেন তাহা আজ সর্বজনবিদিত, কেবল মাইরন ওয়াইনারের গবেষণার ফলগুলি দেখিলেই চলে। বাংলাদেশের সমাজে এই ধরনের বাধা কম। স্পষ্টতই, ইহাও শিক্ষণীয়, তবে তাহা সামাজিক আদর্শ আমূল পরিবর্তনের শিক্ষা। কঠিন শিক্ষা। কত কঠিন, সে বেধ পশ্চিমবঙ্গের বামপন্থী শাসকদের আছে কি?

উন্নয়নের নতুন ভাবনা

পশ্চিমবঙ্গ কাজে লাগাবে কি

তপন ভৌমিক

কেউ কেউ ন্যায্য মনে করেন যে বাংলাদেশ, ভারত, মায়ানমার, শ্রীলংকা এবং থাইল্যান্ড, এই পাঁচ দেশের জোট 'বিমস্ট-এক' কে 'বে অব বেঙ্গল ইকনমিক বেসিন' বলাই ভাল। আমারও তাই মত। এরকম নাম দিলে পশ্চিমবঙ্গ স্বভাবতই এর মধ্যে নতুন অন্তর্ভুক্ত হুঁজে পাবে, কারণ পশ্চিমবঙ্গ এবং বঙ্গোপসাগর একেবারে ওতপ্রোত ভাবে জড়িত। নাম না পাল্টালেও অবশ্য অসুবিধা নেই। পশ্চিমবঙ্গের অর্থনৈতিক কাঠামো, চাষাবাস, প্রাকৃতিক সম্পদ, এমনকী শিল্পের কাঠামো সব কিছু খতিয়ে দেখলে স্পষ্ট বোঝা যাবে 'বিমস্ট-এক' অঞ্চলের সাথে এর গভীর সাদৃশ্য। ভাবাবেগের কথা নয়, যদি 'বিমস্ট-এক' অঞ্চলের অর্থনৈতিক কাঠামোকে একক ভাবে ধরা যায় তবে দেখা যাবে পশ্চিমবঙ্গের অর্থনৈতিক কাঠামো ছোট আকারে তার প্রতিবিম্বিত্ব করছে। এক আশ্চর্যজনক সাদৃশ্য দুইয়ের মধ্যে। মিল আছে প্রকৃতি ও জলহাওয়ায়, নদী ও জলাশয়ে।

সময় এসেছে পশ্চিমবঙ্গকে নতুন করে দেখার ও তার ভৌগোলিক অবস্থানের তাৎপর্য ভেবে দেখার। খালি পূর্ব ভারতের একটা রাজ্য হিসেবে দেখলে এ রাজ্যের অর্থনৈতিক বিকাশের সম্ভাবনা খুবই কম। এটা দৃষ্টিভঙ্গিকেও সীমিত করে দেয়। বলছি না যে পশ্চিমবঙ্গ নিজেকে বিচ্ছিন্ন ভাবে দেখুক। কিন্তু অর্থনৈতিক বিকাশের সুযোগের জন্য পশ্চিমবঙ্গকে অন্য ভাবে, অন্য দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি নিয়ে দেখতে হবে।

বেশ কয়েক বছর আগে ভারত সরকার বৈদেশিক নীতির কিছুটা পরিবর্তন করে 'লুক ইন্ট' নীতির উপর জোর দিয়েছিল। তার সুফলও অনেকখানি পাওয়া গেছে। ভারতের সঙ্গে দক্ষিণ-পূর্ব এশিয়ার দেশগুলোর সম্পর্ক এখন অনেক ভাল। তারাও আমাদের সঙ্গে অর্থনৈতিক সম্পর্ক দৃঢ় করায় আগ্রহী। এ পরিপ্রেক্ষিতে আমার মনে হয়, পশ্চিমবঙ্গের নতুন ভূমিকা আছে, কারণ সঠিক ভাবে ভেবে দেখলে পশ্চিমবঙ্গই ভারতের 'গেটওয়ে টু দি ইস্ট'। রাজ্যের সরকার ও লোকজনদের সেই ভাবেই রাজ্যকে দেখা উচিত। বিশেষ করে দীর্ঘ মেয়াদী উন্নয়নমূলক কর্মসূচি ও চিন্তাধারা সেই ভাবেই চালিত করা উচিত। অর্থাৎ পূর্বদিকের এশীয় দেশগুলোর সঙ্গে দৃঢ় অর্থনৈতিক সম্পর্ক গড়ে তুলতে হবে। এর জন্য যা করা দরকার সবই করতে হবে।

'বিমস্ট-এক'র প্রতিষ্ঠা ও খোলা বাণিজ্যের যে কথা হচ্ছে তাতে পশ্চিমবঙ্গের জন্য রয়েছে বিরাট সুযোগ। অন্যান্য অনেক সমস্যার মধ্যে, এ রাজ্যের অর্থনৈতিক প্রগতির পথে এক বিরাট বাধা হল পর্যাপ্ত বাজারের অভাব। এ রাজ্যের বাইরে বাজার নেই বললেই চলে। একমাত্র লোহা ও কয়লা বাদ দিলে পশ্চিমবঙ্গের তৈরি কোন জিনিসটা ভারতের বাজারে পাওয়া যায়? আশেপাশের রাজ্যগুলো তো দারিদ্র-প্রবণ রাজ্য,

জনসংখ্যা	জাতীয় আয়	আয়বৃদ্ধি	
বাংলাদেশ	১২.৬	৪৪.০	৪.৮
ভারত	৯৮	৪২১.৩	৬.১
মায়ানমার	৪.৪	—	৬.৩
শ্রীলংকা	১.৯	১৫.২	৫.৩
থাইল্যান্ড	৬.১	১৩৪.৪	৭.৪

সূত্র: ওয়ার্ল্ড ডেভেলপমেন্ট রিপোর্ট (১৯৯৯-২০০০), বিশ্বব্যাংক,
 ১: জনসংখ্যা (১৯৯৮) কোটিতে; জাতীয় আয় (১৯৯৮) শত কোটি ডলারে; জাতীয় আয়ের বার্ষিক বৃদ্ধির (১৯৯০-৯৮) হার শতাংশে।

ক্রয়ক্ষমতা নেই বাস্তবিক অর্থে। কিন্তু তুলনামূলক ভাবে বিমস্ট-এক ও তার খোলা বাজার এই সমস্যার সমাধান করতে পারে। কাজেই পশ্চিমবঙ্গের উচিত এই বিমস্ট-এক ও তাতে যে সমস্ত চিন্তা-ভাবনা ও পরিকল্পনা চলছে সে ব্যাপারে উৎসাহ নেওয়া এবং এই সমস্ত দেশগুলোর সঙ্গে অর্থনৈতিক সম্পর্ক দৃঢ় করা। সুযোগ অফুরন্ত ও সহযোগিতার ক্ষেত্রও বিরাট। এ অঞ্চলের দেশগুলোর কাছ থেকে রাজ্যের অনেক কিছু শেখারও আছে। এই যেমন বাংলাদেশের গ্রামীণ ব্যাংক ও মাইক্রো ক্রেডিট ব্যবস্থার

এখনও বেশ কিছু বছর লাগবে। এখনও পর্যন্ত এটা একটা প্রস্তাবের পর্যায়েই রয়েছে। কিন্তু পশ্চিমবঙ্গের উচিত এখনই তৎপর হওয়া। প্রথমত, 'বিমস্ট-এক'-এর চবিট্রা ভাল ভাবে বোঝা উচিত, বোঝা উচিত এখানে কী চিন্তা করা হচ্ছে। তার পর ভেবে দেখতে হবে এই অঞ্চলের দেশগুলোর সঙ্গে নিবিড় অর্থনৈতিক সম্পর্ক গড়ে তুলতে হলে রাজ্যের কী করণীয়। কোন কোন ক্ষেত্রে সহযোগিতার সুযোগ আছে, তার জন্য কী পরিকল্পনা চাই, সেগুলো নিয়েও বিস্তারিত চিন্তাভাবনার দরকার। সংক্ষেপে বললে একটা 'বিমস্ট-এক' নীতি তৈরি করা উচিত। কোনও বিশেষজ্ঞ সংস্থা নিযুক্ত করে একটা পরিকল্পনা ও স্ট্যাটস্টিক তৈরি করলে আরও ভাল হয়।

পরিশেষে বলব, সময় এসেছে পশ্চিমবঙ্গের নিজেকে নিয়ে নতুন করে ভাবার। অর্থনৈতিক সীমারেখাকে ভৌগোলিক সীমারেখার মধ্যে আবদ্ধ না রেখে অনেক বড় করে দেখতে হবে। এটাকে এগিয়ে নিয়ে যেতে হবে দেশের ভিতরে উত্তর-পূর্ব রাজ্যগুলোয় ও দেশের বাইরে বাংলাদেশ, ভেটনাম, নেপাল, মায়ানমার ও তারও উপরে। দেশের ভিতরে উত্তরমুখী ও বাইরে পূর্বমুখী জায়গা জুড়ে 'বিমস্ট-এক' উন্মোচন করতে পারে এক বিশাল উন্নতির সম্ভাবনা, এই রাজ্যের জন্য। এত দিন পর্যন্ত, এমনকী এখনও, কেন্দ্রীয় সরকারকেই রাজ্যের অর্থনৈতিক অবস্থার জন্য দায়ী করা হয়েছে বা হয়ে থাকে। এতে অনেকটা সত্য আছে, অস্বীকার করব না। কিন্তু এ সব আর না করে, একটু সুযোগসন্ধানী মনোবৃত্তি নিয়ে ভবিষ্যতের কথা ভাবা উচিত।

কেন্দ্রীয় সরকারের আর্থিক ক্ষমতা ফীণ হয়ে আসছে। সে দিন বেশি দূরে নয় যখন কেন্দ্রীয় সরকার রাজ্যগুলোকে বলেই দেবে, 'এত দিন অনেক পেলেছি, পুঁজেছি ধর পারছি না, তোমরা এখন বড় হয়েছ, যা পারো করো, আমার কাছে আর টাকা চেয়ে না, দিতে পারব না। বরং পারলে আমাকে দাও, এখন তোমাদের উচিত আমাকে দেখা।' এরকম একটা অবস্থার সৃষ্টি হলে পশ্চিমবঙ্গ যেন তলিয়ে না যায়। (শেষ)

সময় এসেছে পশ্চিমবঙ্গের নিজেকে নিয়ে নতুন করে ভাবার। অর্থনৈতিক সীমারেখাকে ভৌগোলিক সীমারেখার মধ্যে আবদ্ধ না রেখে অনেক বড় করে দেখতে হবে।

সফল্য, মায়ানমারে চাল ও ডালের উৎপাদনশীলতা, থাইল্যান্ডে কৃষিজাত (বিশেষত খাদ্যদ্রব্য) শিল্পের বিরাট অগ্রগতি, এবং আরও অনেক কিছু। পশ্চিমবঙ্গেরও অনেক কিছু দেওয়ার আছে। তবে কী দেওয়ার আছে, কী ভাবে তা রাজ্যের উন্নতিতে ব্যবহার করা যায় সে দিকেই জোর দেওয়া উচিত। যথাযথ চেষ্টা চালালে থাইল্যান্ড অনেক ক্ষেত্রেই বিনিয়োগ করতে পারে, বিশেষত কৃষিভিত্তিক শিল্পে, যেখানে পশ্চিমবঙ্গের বিশেষ সম্ভাবনা রয়েছে। আমার মতে রাজ্য সরকার যখন বিদেশি বিনিয়োগ আনার জন্য বিশেষ চেষ্টা চালাচ্ছে, তখন থাইল্যান্ডকে একটু বিশেষ নজরে দেখা উচিত। এই একটা দেশ যার নজর এ রাজ্যের উপর পড়লে দক্ষিণ এশিয়ার অন্যান্য দেশ স্বতঃস্ফূর্ত ভাবেই সাড়া দেবে। কিন্তু এর জন্য রাজ্য সরকারকে যথেষ্ট প্রয়াস চালাতে হবে।

'বিমস্ট-এক'-এর দেশগুলোর মধ্যে খোলাখুলি ব্যবসা বাণিজ্যের ব্যবস্থা চালু হতে

লেখক কনফেডারেশন অব ইন্ডিয়ান ইন্ডাস্ট্রিয় (সি আই আই) বরিশত উপদেষ্টা

UNDP pats India for improving all-round record in human development

But nation, which ranks 128 on report's index, still has long way to go

The Times of India News Service

NEW DELHI: The United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) human development report (HDR) 2000, released on Thursday, contains plenty of good news for India. Not only has the country moved up four notches to 128 on the human development index (HDI) this year, India has been complimented for putting human rights at the core of its development strategies.

After South Africa, India is the most frequently cited country in the report, which evaluates 174 countries on the basis of their achievements in terms of life expectancy, educational attainment and real incomes. The focus of this year's report is on human rights, based on the belief that "poverty is as much a human rights issue as arbitrary arrest".

Although the report contains several positive references to India, there is little room for complacency. The report makes it clear that the country still has a long, long way to go before it can ensure a better life for all those who are homeless, who cannot afford proper health care and whose children remain out of school.

HUMAN RIGHTS: India has been complimented for its human rights approach in its development programmes. Lest our politicians and bureaucrats start claim all the credit for themselves, however, the report notes how public interest litigation (PIL) cases have been effectively used to secure the social and economic rights of citizens.

Describing India as the world's largest democracy, the report mentions how its supreme court has insisted on the rights of all citizens to free education and basic health care. With the exception of the Convention on Torture, India has ratified all major international human rights instruments.

India also figures, along with Canada and the U.S., for putting in place national institutions and laws providing for affirmative action for its minorities and marginalised groups. The report notes that such actions in the economic and political spheres have benefitted the scheduled castes and tribes.

India has a robust civil society sector and the UNDP report showcases the work of the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan in Rajasthan which campaigns for people's right to information, and the Gujarat-based DISHA, a group defending the interests of tribals and forest workers and campaigning for higher budgetary allocations. It also acknowledges the presence of independent citizens' groups like the People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) which act as a pressure group in ensuring compliance with international commitments.

On the flip side, the report mentions India, along with the U.S., Britain, Israel and Russia, as countries where the minorities suffer serious discrimination. Having applauded the judiciary, the report also says the shortage of judges and the overwhelming backlog of cases tend to strangle the rule of law in many countries, including India, where there are 2,000 pending cases per judge.

POVERTY AND REFORMS:

The report says that instead of signing a secret agreement on reforms with international financial institutions, India debated the options far more openly than most other countries undergoing similar economic reforms. India has won praise for the fact that despite persistent political instability and fragile coalition governments, the broad consensus on economic policy reform has survived.

In terms of impact, the report says India's economic reforms have produced the most rapid growth in its history, twice the average annual rate before the reforms. India has been mentioned among the countries which have achieved spectacular progress in reducing income poverty, down from 54 per cent of the population in 1974 to 39 per cent in 1994. At the same time, UNDP says that widespread poverty and income disparities still exist in the country. Noting that employment in the formal sector has grown impressively in the past decade, the report says that in India, the rate of employment increased 2.4 per cent a year in 1987-1996, outpacing the labour force growth of 2.2 per cent.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

30 JUN 2001

UN report praises India's human rights, not development record

Nearly half on less than dollar a day

OUR BUREAU

Eleven Indians made it to the Forbes list of the world's 200 richest men earlier this month. Today, nearly half a billion Indians appeared on another list — of the world's poorest people.

The annual human development report prepared by the UN revealed that 44.2 per cent Indians live below the international poverty line, defined as \$1 a day in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP), a measure used to compare real price levels across countries.

But the good news is India has gone up the ranks in terms of the human development index by four to 128, just above Pakistan at 135, but way below Sri Lanka at 84, among its neighbours.

The index is based on three indicators: longevity, as measured by life expectancy at birth, educational attainment and standard of living.

For the first time since it began to be issued 10 years ago, the report, which ranks 174 countries

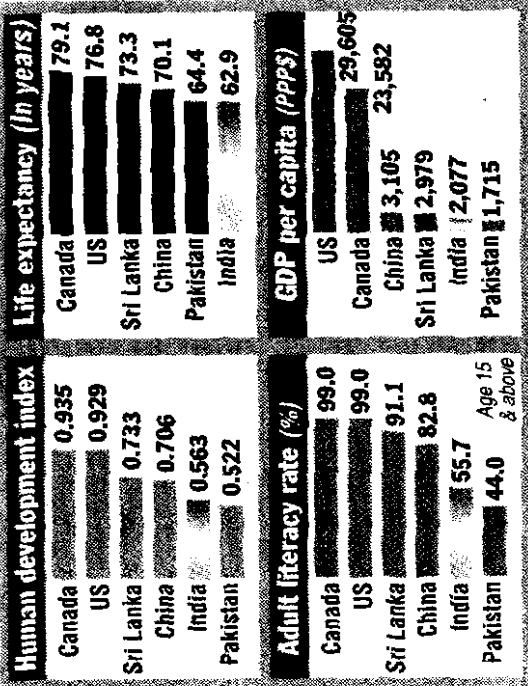
and territories, has introduced a new element — human rights, linking it to development.

Nobel laureate Amartya Sen has written the conceptual framework for the report. He said: "Human development and human rights are close enough in motivation and concerns to be compatible, yet different enough in strategy and design to supplement each other fruitfully."

India finds high praise in the report for its human rights record. Conversely, civil and political rights are not enough if people are starving and do not have access to education, proper health care and a decent way of making a living.

India has been found wanting here. It has 48 doctors per 100,000 people, even less than Pakistan. But a health bomb may be ticking elsewhere, the report warns. India has the highest number of people with AIDS, estimated at 4.1 million, or about 13.6 per cent of 30.1 million people with the disease worldwide.

The report lists some heartening facts, too. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 6**



UN report

FROM PAGE 1

The report says that employment in the formal labour market grew at the rate of 2.4 per cent between 1987-96, outpacing labour force growth at 2.2 per cent.

In healthcare too, some stats are heartening. Life expectancy at birth has improved to 62.6 years in 1995-2000 from 50.3 years in 1970-75. The infant mortality rate (per 1000 live births) has dropped sharply to 69 in 1998 from 130 in 1970 and the under-five mortality rate (per 1000 live births) has almost halved, falling from 206 in 1970 to 105 in 1998.

There is bad news for the tobacco industry as cigarette consumption per adult has been falling — in 1993-97, the annual average was a modest 117 against 562 in Pakistan and a whopping 4075 in Surinam, the highest in the world.

30 JUN 2000

10 JUN 2000

IN some African countries, an AK-47 sells for six dollars, the price of a meal at McDonalds. If you think the figure has something to do with the sale of the world's largest fast food chain you're in for a surprise. The revelation is based on the facts stated in the UNDP's Human Development Report 2000, and indicate that the personal security of people all over the world is still under threat because of the abundant supply of arms in some countries.

About 500 million small arms are in circulation around the world, 100 million of which, says the report, are assault rifles. The easy availability of weapons has contributed to rising crime and violence. In the Bahamas there are more than 80 recorded homicides per 100,000 people annually. In Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, the increase in crimes such as murder, robbery and theft has been alarming.

Going by the report, for the seventh successive year Canada tops the Human Development Index among 174 countries in terms of life expectancy, education and income. In radical analysis that challenges many traditional assumptions. The report argues that many democracies fail to adopt policies that protect or promote human rights.

About 46 countries worldwide accounting for more than one billion people have achieved high human development. Every region of the world has made progress in human development — but the level and the pace of advance have not been uniform. Twenty-two countries in Africa and Eastern Europe have experienced a reversal of human development since 1990 — mostly due to the HIV/Aids pandemic and conflicts.

Advances in human development have added to this progress. Between 1980 and 1999 malnutrition was reduced; the proportion of underweight

Deprivations remain

Poverty eradication is a major human rights challenge of the 21st century, says a United Nations Development Programme report. ALOKESH SEN reports

Poverty Index, it has the highest poverty rate, followed by Ireland and the United Kingdom. The main reason is the prevalence of functional illiteracy: approximately one adult in five.

Gender equality does not depend on economic growth either, with some developing countries like Costa Rica ranked 24 in the report's measure of gender empowerment, ahead of Japan at 41. Yet Costa Rica's gross domestic product per capita is less than one-third of Japan's.

Employment in the formal labour market grew impressively in the past decade. In China, employment increased 2.2 per cent a year during 1987-96 —

outpacing a labour force growth of 1.5 per cent. The corresponding rates in India were 2.4 and 2.2 per cent.

Serious problems remain: at least 150 million of the world's workers were unemployed at the end of 1998. Unemployment varies by ethnic group — in South Africa unemployment among African males in 1995 was 29 per cent, seven times the four per cent rate among white counterparts.

Life expectancy in African countries has fallen by more than 10 years in the

past decade. More than 30 countries accounting for more than half a billion people today have a per capita income lower than that of two decades ago.

In the OECD countries, even with an average life expectancy of 76 years, more than 10 per cent of the people born today are not expected to survive to age 60.

To protect human rights, people are also demanding more transparency and accountability. Thailand's new constitution allows people to demand accountability from public officials for corruption and misdeeds. One person in five is estimated to participate in some form of civil society organisation.

(The author is on the staff of The Statesman, Calcutta.)

Realising the right to primary education in India -- are actors meeting their obligations?			
Actor	Obligation	Measure	Result
PARENTS	Must be willing to send children to school.	Proportion of parents who think it is important for children to be educated.	■ 89% for girls, 98% for boys.
GOVERNMENT	Must provide schools that are accessible.	Distance of school from house	■ 92% of rural population had a primary school within 1km. ■ 49% of rural population had an upper-primary school within 1km.
	Must provide adequate facilities.	Number of teachers.	■ 2% of primary schools had only one teacher appointed. ■ 21% had only a single teacher present at the time of the survey.
		State of facilities.	■ 58% of schools had at least two rooms. ■ 60% had a leaking roof. ■ 89% did not have a functioning toilet. ■ 59% did not have drinking water.
		Head teacher attendance and activity.	On the day of the survey visit to the school ■ 25% of head teachers were engaged in teaching activities. ■ 42% were engaged in non-teaching activities. ■ 33% were absent.
COMMUNITY	Must support school teachers and parents.	Public discussions	■ 49% of village education committees had not met in the past years.
MEDIA	Must report on neglect of basic education.	Proportion of newspaper articles on basic education	In one year's newspaper articles: ■ 8,550 on foreign investment. ■ 3,430 on foreign trade. ■ 2,650 on defence. ■ 990 on education. ■ 60 on rural primary education.

■ The sample consisted of 188 villages, 1,200 households and 236 schools in four different states of India 1996. Source: PROBE team 1999.

children fell in developing countries from 37 per cent to 27 per cent and that of stunted children from 47 per cent to 33 per cent. Between 1970 and 1999 in rural areas of the developing world, the percentage of people with access to safe water increased more than fourfold from 13 to 71 per cent. Some countries made spectacular progress in reducing income property — China from 33 per cent in 1978 to seven per cent in 1994. Yet many deprivations remain: worldwide 1.2 billion people have poor incomes, living on less than one dollar a day. More than a billion people in the developing countries lack access to safe water and more than 2.4 billion people lack adequate sanitation.

The report warns that in many

countries, the hard-won progress in civil liberties is being undermined by economic stagnation or decline. Poverty eradication is a major human rights challenge of the 21st century.

About 790 million people are hungry and have little access to food and 1.2 billion live on less than a dollar a day. Even in Overseas Economic Cooperation and Development countries, some eight million people are undernourished. In the USA alone, some 40 million people are not covered by health insurance.

In the richest nations, the report shows where relative prosperity has failed to improve lives. Although the USA has the second highest per capita income among 18 of the richest countries ranked on the report's Human

HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

THE SPECIAL FEATURE of the 2000 edition of the Human Development Report (HDR) of the United Nations Development Programme is not the mass of statistics on the various human development indices, which tells us little more than what is already known about the situation in India and other countries, but in the unusual attempt to combine the two distinct concepts of human rights and human development.

The idea of human development as developed in successive HDRs has come to mean an expansion of people's capabilities — the freedom to do the kind of things that an individual may value and the simultaneous ability to live a long, healthy and productive life. On the other hand, human rights — in their broadest meaning covering political, economic, gender, social, civic and minority guarantees — have meant securing for all people the right to live a life of dignity. As the HDR points out, the concept of human rights was for decades the subject of polarised debate. During the Cold War, the capitalist societies tended to highlight the absence of democratic rights in the socialist societies, while the latter focussed on the lack of fulfilment of universal economic and social rights in the market economies. More recently, the Governments of developing countries have often chosen to argue that human rights come after and not before economic development. The report stresses instead that distinct as they are and running in parallel as they may be, the two reinforce each other: human development is essential for human rights and human rights are essential for human development. For example, the adoption by a society of the right to education gives a certain moral legitimacy to campaigns to increase levels of literacy — which is an essential component of human development. And human development by expanding the fund of available economic resources makes it possible for a Government to set up schools and pay salaries for teachers

that are necessary to fulfil the right to education. This is only one example of how human rights and human development are mutually supportive and not exclusive as often made out to be. The policy implication of this analytical linkage between the two is self-evident — neither can be considered in isolation of the other and one cannot be either provided or advanced without the other.

While the HDR highlights the substantial progress that has been made globally in the past century in the expansion of human rights and the advancement of human development, it also stresses that the unfinished tasks are many and enormous. Consider the presence of political rights. More people than ever before may now be electing their representatives in government, but the presence of parliamentary democracy does not mean the absence of widespread discrimination against regional and ethnic minorities. Nor does the presence of political rights at one time preclude their abrogation later as have been witnessed over the past year in Pakistan and Fiji. Moreover, while the number of countries ratifying the basic human rights covenants increased dramatically during the 1990s, the experience in most countries has been that mere ratification does not lead to guaranteed enforcement. Similarly, in human development, the global proportion of people living in poverty may have fallen during the 1990s, but 20 per cent of the world's population still lives in income poverty and 40 per cent does not have access to basic sanitation. Moreover, even as the world economy as a whole has been expanding, the inequalities between countries are perhaps larger now than ever before in human history. It is just as well that one of the main observations of the 2000 HDR is that "poverty eradication is not only a development goal, it is a central challenge for human rights in the 21st century."

THE HINBY

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Rights for development

By C. Rammanohar Reddy

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THE VIEW that the concept of human rights is a western tool to admonish and destabilise developing countries is still around us, though the intensity of such feelings has diminished in recent years. It probably was often the case during the 1960s and 1970s that when Governments of the developed countries spoke about human rights they did so selectively and with a purpose. — there was silence about human rights violations in Iran but there was never any hesitation in expressing indignation about their occurrence in Cuba. However, it is hard to keep seeing a conspiracy under the notion that all people have a basic set of indivisible and unalienable rights that gives them the opportunity to live a life of dignity and freedom. It is hard to deny as well that human rights are not "private" rights in any way but represent claims that individuals have on society. Governments and the international community for guarantees of fundamental freedoms. It has, however, been more difficult to erase the notion in popular perception that human rights are "only" about political and civil rights — the rights to vote, free speech, assembly and protection from harassment by organs of the state. That economic, social and cultural rights stand on the same footing and form part of a larger indivisible set of human rights is not yet part of popular consciousness. This must be surprising since all these rights are an integral part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

While there is still a considerable amount of ambivalence towards something as basic as human rights, there is the much more recent concept of human development as pioneered and developed over the past decade by the United Nations Development Programme in its annual Human Development Report (HDR). Drawing on the work of Prof. Amartya Sen, the idea of human development has been an attempt at evolving a more rounded process and measure of development that are seen in terms of an expansion of people's "capabilities", in the first instance the freedom to "to lead a long and healthy life, to be knowledgeable and to have access to the resources needed for a decent standard of living". Now in the 2000 edition of the HDR, there is the experiment to

The novelty of the UNDP's Human Development Report this year is the centrality it accords to human rights in the advancement of human development.

harness the two different and yet related concepts of human rights and human development in aid of each other.

If in operational terms human rights are about the duties and obligations of society and Governments to guarantee basic freedoms, then from this perspective one can assess the degree of success in enhancing human development and thereupon locate the responsibility for further action.

An illustration (in the HDR) is a right to free elementary education. If such a right is not fulfilled, the human development status of a society is correspondingly diminished, which leads to concerns about which agents in society are to blame and who should be given the responsibility to accelerate a movement towards universal realisation of this right. How human development can be put to use in the fulfilment of human rights is more difficult to discern, but there is a connection. Since public action is at the centre of attempts to enhance human development, it is possible to compare alternative sets of policies that will advance human rights. This, as the report argues, could be of importance in developing countries where by computation (because of resource constraints) there may be a need to prioritise concern for the many different human rights.

Of the many interfaces between human rights and human development, the one that encompasses the "economic" aspect is of particular interest since there is often a conflict — real or imaginary — between the agenda to end deprivation and that to further human rights. On this the HDR has a fair bit to offer though it also does, as in the past, occasionally address complex issues in very simplistic terms.

First, all human rights — political, civil, economic and social — are indivisible and no one set of rights is superior to the other. But the fulfilment of rights involves not only a set of judicial, administrative and social arrangements securing these rights

rights there is no escaping from recognising the centrality of rapid growth in yielding the resources required for accelerated human development. All too often human development has been equated, rightly or wrongly, with downplaying the importance of GDP growth. But as the HDR notes there is only that much which can be achieved with measures that carry modest costs and a restructuring of national budgets — in other words rapid economic growth is necessary. There may be no automatic link between growth and an expansion of human development and policies to convert one to the other may be necessary. But a table tucked away in a corner of the report presents evidence to show that countries with currently low levels of human development are almost all economies which grew poorly during the 1990s. So rapid growth is necessary for advancement of human development and fulfilment of human rights.

Fourth, the HDR points out that while countries have advanced economic rights without giving much importance to political and civil rights (examples being Singapore and Malaysia which are not cited as such in the study), this does not mean that their absence delivers faster growth. Indeed, as is argued, the provision of democratic rights can lead to demands for greater accountability, more participation in the decision-making process and therefore to citizens having a greater stake in the system. But participation where the community directly experiences benefits and costs (as in local water and sanitation projects) is one thing, productive public involvement in macro-economic policy formulation is another and lot more difficult option. In this context, the UNDP report argues against structural adjustment "by stealth" (described somewhat facetiously as the John le Carré approach, after the spy novels by the British author of this name) but it is amusing to be told that India followed a rights-based approach (open participation and expression of opinion) in formulating and implementing its reform programme. Such shortcomings do not, however, take away much from the novelty of the HDR this year which is the centrality that it accords to human rights in the advancement of human development across the world.

MACROSCOPE

which human development expands and its composition at each "stage of development" would reflect these choices. Ultimately, however, there will have to be a progressive realisation of all rights.

Second, the fulfilment of basic rights does not mean that the state has to incur immediately and on its own all the expenditure necessary to secure these freedoms for its citizens. People instead have "claims to a set of social arrangements — norms, institutions, laws, and an enabling economic environment (MLE) as this set of arrangements is called) — that can best secure the enjoyment of these rights".

Take the example of housing again. Governments have an obligation to provide security of tenure, forbid mass evictions, prevent discrimination in housing, etc. A Government would not in the HDR's scheme of things therefore be obliged to construct free housing for all. However, it becomes more problematic to defend this argument against state-provided "hand-outs", as the UNDP report calls them, when a human right as fundamental as the freedom from hunger is involved.

Third, once there is an acknowledgement of the importance of an enabling economic environment to fulfill human

MOHAN SAHAY
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, July 10. — A major part of India survives without proper sanitation and access to safe drinking water. This is, however, of little concern to the central and state governments, though the subject receives priority in most political party manifestos.

The NDA, in its election manifesto of 1999, promised that if returned to power, it would provide safe drinking water to all villages in a couple of years. Now the UNDP has a different story.

The Planning Commission regularly churns out statistics showing that 98.04 per cent of India's population is covered under the drinking water scheme, the source of information being various state governments and the rural development ministry.

The latest report on human develop-

ment by the United Nations Development Programme debunks this squarely. The report says 70 per cent of the population suffers from poor sanitation while 19 per cent have no access to safe water.

Mr Arun Shourie, Minister of State for Planning and Programme Implementation, says the onus of providing access to drinking water and proper sanitation lies with the state government. The Centre's role is only limited to getting the schemes imple-

mented. Mrs Krishna Singh, Planning Commission advisor, admits the gap between access to safe water and its availability. New Delhi, for instance, has 100 per cent access to safe water, but, in reality, it is not available in

many areas, she remarked.

For sanitation, there are no statistics to show what percentage lives in unhygienic conditions without facilities of clean lavatories.

A Planning Commission report admits that half the Indian villages have no access to safe drinking water though the rural development ministry says "over 95 per cent of the villages are covered".

Though the Centre has accorded high priority to providing safe drinking water with huge investment, "the problem of potable water has remained unresolved and the gap is increasing every year".

An official circular on the appraisal of work done in the drinking water supply sector, notes that "a large per-

UNDP report calls water bluff

centage of people in rural areas suffer from water-borne diseases, indicating the use of unprotected and unhygienic drinking water sources. The reasons cited for this are:

- Platforms for hydraulic pumps and pipelines are not well laid leading to water contamination.
- Drainage is unsatisfactory.
- Testing of water is not done.
- Disinfection is not carried out and people fall back on the original contaminated source as the new source is not dependable.

The audit review carried out two years ago by the Accountants General threw up some startling revelations on the failure of the scheme and programmes of water

supply.

Some of the reasons were:

- Misdirected application of funds without adequate planning and scientific identification of water resources resulting in time and cost over runs.
- Schemes abandoned midway or becoming inoperative after huge amounts were spent.
- Inadequate maintenance rendering water sources defunct or non-operative.
- Material purchases in excess of requirement were lying in stores unaccounted for in books.
- Water quality testing laboratories were ill-equipped having inadequate facilities and lack of trained manpower.
- Water treatment plants installed to control fluorosis, remove excess iron and salinity were non-functional, resulting in continued supply of unsafe drinking water to the rural population.

THE STATESMAN

11 JUL 2000

Uzbekistan seeks entry into three-nation transit pact

Our Political Bureau

NEW DELHI 3 MAY

UZBEKISTAN WANTS to join the transit agreement between India, Iran and Turkmenistan to facilitate freight movement from India to Uzbekistan. Addressing a CII meeting to exhort Indian business to set up shop in the Central Asian country, Mr Islam Karimov, the visiting Uzbek President, also agreed to a limited barter trade with India in oil and gas, cotton and pharmaceuticals.

Two days and a \$10 million credit line and nine other agreements with India under his belt, Mr Karimov made a determined pitch for Indian investments in various sectors. This puts the Indo-Uzbek clutch of agreements at 40.

In his talks with the Indian leadership, Mr Karimov said there were certain common approaches to the prevailing regional situation defined by the civil war in Afghanistan.

He said India and Uzbekistan faced similar threats from the same quarters and the two countries will coordinate actions to combat international terrorism, religious extremism, drug trafficking and organised crime.

In an informal meeting with reporters later, Mr Karimov said: "if we do not tackle these threats now, the consequences will be grave."

However, he saved his most eloquent presentation for an "economic embrace" with India.

He welcomed the idea of Indian banking offices in Tashkent, textile mills (Uzbekistan is the fifth largest producer of cotton) and gems and jewellery manufacturing units (Uzbekistan has large reserves of precious metals and precious stones).

He also agreed that barter trade should be eventually upgraded to clearing house trade.

The problem Indian industry faces is the complete lack of economic and financial infrastructure in Uzbekistan. The State Bank of India (SBI) used to have a representative office in Tashkent but inadvertently had to wind it up.

The Economic Times

3 4 MAY 2000

An Interactive UN

New Role for a New Age

By LALITA PANICKER

AS his term draws to a close, US President Bill Clinton appears determined not just to bring about peace in all parts of the world but also to upgrade the quality of life of people everywhere. As he swept across the subcontinent recently, he spoke of his desire, among other things, to usher in women's empowerment, poverty alleviation through technology and the greater spread of immunisation. Very often, he sounded more like the secretary general of the United Nations than the savvy business facilitator that he is supposed to be.

Digital Divide

Interestingly, the United Nations' millennium vision unveiled recently by Secretary General Kofi Annan is brisk and business-like, departing from the usual do-good jargon characteristic of the UN. In an effort to reinvent itself and make the UN more relevant in the new world, the report dwells at length on the importance of technology, particularly information technology as a tool with which to reduce various disparities. India gets particular mention in this, with the UN recognising India's potential in the field of information technology. The Internet, it says, has taken over people's lives — it took television 13 years and 38 years for radio to reach 50 million people while the same number of people adopted the Internet in just four years. From the mere 143 million people who logged onto the Internet in 1998, 700 million will do so by 2001.

It is India which Mr Annan speaks of as an example of how the digital divide can be bridged. "No country has benefited more from the digital revolution than India, whose software industry is expected to increase about eightfold to \$58 billion by 2008. The industry has created a new cadre of high-technology entrepreneurs." Though software exports account for only nine per cent of India's total exports, for small countries like Costa Rica, they are as high as 38 per cent. The millennium vision delineates the link between the digital revolution and economic growth and development. That this will increasingly benefit poorer countries like India is evident from the fact that to a large extent this technology is able to bypass the perennial problem of lack of finances. It recognises that the IT revolution enables poor countries to leapfrog several painful stages of development and while the intellectual capital is not universally available, it is far more

widespread in the developing world than is finance capital.

The report talks about the innovative uses that IT has been put to by a number of small countries. Mauritius, for example, has used the Net to position its textile industry globally in keeping with the UNCTAD Trade Point Programme which allows participants to trade products on-line.

The UN, on its part, has announced a new Health InterNetwork for developing nations whereby 10,000 online sites in hospitals, clinics and public health facilities will be operated throughout the developing world. This will provide relevant health and medical information designed for unique and localised needs. The first sites will be launched in India in a couple of months. For India, with its crumbling public health system, this will be invaluable. Patients can now take a second opinion from a specialist on the Net and medical personnel can keep themselves posted on relevant developments in other parts of the country and the world. Another initiative is the setting up of a United Nations Information Technology Service which will be a consortium of high-tech volunteer corps, including Net Corps Canada and Net Corps America to train people in developing countries to make the most of infotech opportunities and set up additional digital corps in their regions.

Traumas of War

In a recent conference, a top UN official was asked where the cash-strapped UN would get the funds required for this ambitious IT venture. The UN, he said, is looking to the private sector to generate the finances for this, adding that countries like India could be of great help in pitching in with its IT expertise. What was unsaid is the fact that by bringing in the private sector, the UN will be able slowly to begin extricating itself from the pressures that it faces from major donors like the US which has always maintained that if it pays the piper, it will call the tune.

Technology has also been brought in to reduce the traumas of war. One is tackling the issue of children who have been separated from their parents in deadly conflicts and natural disasters. In the strife in Bosnia, Rwanda and Burundi and in floods and earthquakes in Mozambique and Turkey, the plight of lost children was the most heart-rending. A new project put together by the UN called Child

Connect uses a shared database open to all agencies working in the field to reunite lost children with their parents. The procedure of posting information to concerned parties which took months earlier now takes barely minutes. This model of shared information could serve as a model for future humanitarian emergencies. The infrastructure set up in the times of crisis can always be utilised once things get back to normal by local people who could be trained to operate and maintain it.

Millennium Vision

Alongside, a new disaster response programme has been launched which will provide mobile and satellite telephones and microwave links for humanitarian relief workers. This is because during disasters, local communication systems are so extensively damaged that they become inoperable. The communications systems used by different relief agencies often differ so widely in quality that they suffer compatibility problems. The electronics giant Ericsson has launched the new programme and has undertaken to not only install equipment where none exists but to maintain and upgrade it. The programme is being touted by the UN as its new vision of greater private-public co-operation and as an example of global corporate citizenship.

Perhaps, mindful of the criticism that the UN has been subjected to, for what many governments consider, its wasteful expenditure on mega conferences in exotic locales, the millennium vision speaks of using IT to hold interactive global electronic conferences which not only save airfares, hotel bills and conference costs but can easily and cheaply accommodate 10,000 participants as easily as 10. Within the UN secretariat itself, electronic meetings have been proposed instead of face-to-face interactions in order to make more efficient use of staff time.

The millennium vision is being articulated at a time when the UN is being increasingly sidelined by a resurgent US and its allies. The secretary general appears keenly aware that in peace-keeping and brokering, he will be subject to pressures from the big powers. Hence the attempt to redefine the working of the organisation and shift the focus away from government and make it more interactive with civil society.



THE TIMES OF INDIA

5 MAY 2000

New U.N. forum for Iraq arms inspection

UNITED NATIONS, APRIL 7. A newly-established U.N. Iraq weapons inspection agency is planned as a tightly-controlled, technical, leak-proof body with the right to unrestricted access, according to a report yesterday.

Special 'cultural programmes' will train staff in "the importance of understanding national sensitivities and the proper handling of adversarial situations." The new agency, called the U.N. Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC), replaces the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM), last headed by the Australian diplomat, Mr. Richard Butler, which had plenty of experience with 'adversarial situations.' Iraqi officials repeatedly tried to block or dupe its inspectors, sent to hunt down Baghdad's chemical, biological and ballistic missile stocks, and they were never allowed back in the country af-

ter December 1998. Iraq's hostility was augmented by a virtual boycott of UNSCOM by Baghdad's supporters on the Security Council — Russia, China and France — resulting in that body's demise.

The UNMOVIC plan, sent to the Security Council, was drawn up by Mr. Hans Blix, a Swedish former head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, who took over on March 1 as Executive Chairman of the new agency.

Unlike the UNSCOM, which relied mainly on experts seconded from, and paid by, their own Governments, most UNMOVIC staff will be U.N. employees. This places them firmly under a cardinal U.N. Charter rule barring them from receiving orders from their governments or any other outside body.

"This will contribute to giving 'a clear United Nations identity,

to the Commission," Mr. Blix wrote.

The few UNSCOM staff who have not yet left will be eligible to compete for the UNMOVIC posts, along with other candidates.

Mr. Blix will have an executive assistant but no deputy — another contrast with the UNSCOM, whose deputy executive chairman was always an American. The most recent deputy was Mr. Charles Duelfer who resigned in February.

In contrast to the UNSCOM, the UNMOVIC appears intended as a more technical body, with no posts for Russian and French political figures either as in the past.

A college of Commissioners — similar to a group of Commissioners under the UNSCOM — is to meet at least once every three months to provide "professional advice and guidance."

The plan was drawn up 'on the

assumption' that Iraq would accept the new monitoring system. This is something that Baghdad has so far said it will refuse to do, though cooperation is the key to any easing of sanctions in force against Iraq since its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Because of uncertainty whether the UNMOVIC will actually be able to enter Iraq, Mr. Blix proposed a 'two-step approach' to recruitment. He will first fill core staff posts and only later proceed to full-scale recruitment, if and when it becomes fully operational.

Mr. Blix stressed that the Security Council resolutions require the UNMOVIC, like the UNSCOM, to have "immediate, unconditional and unrestricted access to any and all areas, facilities, equipment, records and means of transport." — Reuters

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- 8 APR 2000

New U.N. inspection team for Iraq

HD-17
UNited Nations, APRIL 14. The Security Council quickly approved a streamlined arms inspection commission for Iraq on Thursday. But Russia warned that it would be on the lookout for anyone named to the panel who might be troublesome to Iraq.

Mr. Hans Blix, the new chief inspector and author of the organisation plan for the new panel, created by the Council in December, said he was pleased with the Council endorsement. He is waiting to see what move Iraq makes. The Iraqi Government has belittled and criticised the plan for renewed inspections. But Mr. Blix has said his door is open to the Iraqis if they want to talk about it. He added, however, that he would not negotiate the plan's terms. Some Council members are confident that Iraq will eventually comply in some fashion.

On that assumption, Mr. Blix will begin naming a core staff for the commission, the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission, and prepare a list of unfinished business in Iraq. The Russians are expected to try to block the reappointments of two former Russian inspectors with extensive knowledge of the Iraqi missile and chemical weapons programmes and who have considerable experience in Iraq. That

raises concerns among independent arms experts that political pressures will weaken the panel. The plan by Mr. Blix, a former director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, seems intended to minimise that. It requires that all inspectors be U.N. employees, not officials on loan from governments. It also divides inspection and intelligence gathering, so that the agency cannot be accused of spying for any government.

A year ago, accusations arose that inspectors from the previous arms commission, UNSCOM, had spied for the United States. But other governments were also known to be collecting information for their own use through inspections in Iraq and may have in some cases passed that on to officials in Baghdad.

The Iraqis have argued that sanctions should be lifted without further inspections because all of Iraq's weapons have been destroyed as demanded. Iraq has also said that the American-led campaign to keep sanctions in place has caused many deaths and excessive deprivation of the Iraqi people. The Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan said in a speech last month that the United Nations was in danger of losing a propaganda war with Iraq on this issue. — *New York Times*

THE HINDU

15 APR 2000

'UN sanctions fail their objectives'

NEW YORK: Sanctions imposed by the UN security council have mostly failed their objectives, and in the case of Iraq the failure is tied to flaws in the overall relationship between the U.S. and the world body, a study says.

The 15-nation council is to review this week the effectiveness of those punitive measures, including the recent use of sanctions to try to stop terrorism in places like Afghanistan and Sudan.

The study by the New York-based International Peace Academy says the council imposed sanctions against 12 countries since 1990 as a collective measure in the post Cold War period. Only two were imposed—against Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe, and South Africa—in the first 45 years of the world body.

In the best known case, the nine-year-old economic sanctions against Iraq, critics, including UN officials, have said sanctions harmed the civilian population more than Iraqi leaders for whom the sanctions were intended. The study, titled *The Sanctions Decade*, will help the council's review. It discussed sanctions against Iraq, Yugoslavia, Libya, Liberia, Somalia, Cambodia, Haiti, Angola, Rwanda, Sudan, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan, all imposed since 1990, ranging from economic and diplomatic sanctions to arms embargo.

It said economic sanctions, decreed in August 1990, to punish Iraqi President Saddam Hussein for invading Kuwait have resulted in a partial compliance with UN resolutions. But the political animosity between Iraq and Western countries, mostly the U.S., has "prolonged the political crisis and the agony of the Iraqi people."

"The failings of sanctions were not due to the limitations of the instrument itself, but to the flaws in the overall U.S.-UN policy toward Iraq," it said. The trade sanctions

against Libya imposed in 1992 in the downing of Pan American flight 103 in 1988 over Lockerbie in Scotland, which killed 270 people, had a "modest economic impact." But the ban on air traffic was "remarkably effective," the study said. Libya, last year, surrendered two suspects in the bombing of the Pan American plane for trial at The Hague by a Scottish court.

In contrast to sanctions that brought partial results, the sanctions against Angola's Unita rebels were a "failure," the study said. The UN sanctions against rebels in Sierra Leone played only a "minor role" because the rebels were able to expand their military power and made significant gains over the democratically elected government.

"The ineffectiveness of the sanctions resulted from inadequate monitoring and enforcement efforts," the study said, pointing out that west African nations failed to monitor the implementation of the sanctions.

Arms embargoes against Somalia, Liberia and Rwanda failed. That failure in Rwanda was followed by the massacre of an estimated 800,000 people in 1994, most of them Tutsi, killed by Hutu. "The international community was also unable to halt the spread of the war into Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo), and hundreds of thousands of additional deaths," the study said.

The Security Council, whose task is to maintain peace and security around the world, used sanctions against governments known for harbouring terrorists or for involvement in terrorist acts. It imposed sanctions against Libya, Sudan and Afghanistan.

If sanctions has brought some results in Libya, which appeared to have renounced terrorism as part of a deal with Washington and London in the Pan American case, they were unsuccessful in Sudan and Afghanistan. (DPA)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

17 APR 2000

UN Security Council for 'smarter' sanctions

Decides to set up working group to recommend steps

New York, April 18

UN SECURITY Council members have called for re-focusing sanctions to avoid harming innocent civilians while the leadership targets of those measures have so far escaped the punishment.

The 15-nation Council held a review of the sanctions, which an independent study by the New York-based International Peace Academy said have mostly failed their objectives, the clearest case being Iraq.

Canada's Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy, whose government commissioned the study, said the legitimacy, credibility and utility of UN sanctions have been increasingly questioned by the international community.

"Our meeting today is a recognition that the Security Council members, indeed the majority of member states, understand the need to address the fundamental challenge: maximizing the effectiveness of sanctions while minimizing the harm to civilians," he said.

Axworthy, like many other diplomats and UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, called for "smart sanctions" that would aim at abusive governments, organizations or rebel groups that are found human rights violators or engaged in terrorism.

"Targeted sanctions should be combined creatively with targeted incentives," Axworthy said.

The UN sanctions against Iraq have been found by most Council members for hitting the wrong targets: the civilians while Iraqi authorities have ducked UN resolutions on the elimination of weapons of mass destruction.

Axworthy said Canada will donate one million dollars to rehabilitate schools and to meet basic humanitarian needs.

Council members also believed that sanctions are not an end in themselves. They called developing a strategy that will incorporate the punitive measures into UN prevention and resolution programmes and not to impose them for symbolic measures.

US ambassador James Cunningham said the Council

should find ways to minimise the unintended impacts of sanctions and to improve the capacity of the UN in the implementation of the measures.

"Sanctions are designed to force an end to behaviours or policies judged to be unacceptable," Cunningham said. "The goal is compliance, and the requirements should be clear."

The study made by the International Peace Academy, entitled "The Sanctions Decade," said economic and trade sanctions and arms embargoes imposed on a dozen countries since 1990 have mostly failed their objectives.

Those sanctions were imposed on Iraq, Yugoslavia, Libya, Liberia, Somalia, Cambodia, Haiti, Angola, Rwanda, Sudan, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan.

The study found that sanctions have partially or totally failed in those countries.

In Iraq, critics, including UN officials, said the harsh economic sanctions imposed since 1990 have caused severe malnutrition and deaths among children and women. (DPA)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

19 APR 2000

posed American system a new form of armament. Its representative Sha Zukang derisively referred to the US as a "certain country" and "certainly a super-power which rampantly intervenes in other countries' internal affairs" and warned against a few countries strengthening their military power by restricting others.

Mr Sha accused the U.S. of continuing to improve its overwhelming first strike capability.

A group of seven countries, calling themselves "New Agenda Coalition" sharply criticised the slow pace of disarmament by nuclear weapons states and warned that the world is growing increasingly impatient.

Mexico spoke on behalf of the group which includes New Zealand, Ireland, South Africa, Sweden, Brazil and Egypt.

But Ms Albright said, "None of us has within our power to create overnight the conditions in which nuclear disarmament is

rogue countries, naming North Korea and Iran. Washington is trying to negotiate the amendment to the treaty with Moscow to enable it to go ahead and deploy such a system as and when it is ready. But Moscow says it could lead to collapse of all arms control arrangements.

Ms Albright also said the U.S. would continue to seek universal adherence to the NPT in South Asia and beyond. She did not name India or any other country and rejected the idea of expansion of the exclusive five-member nuclear club.

"There is no provision in the treaty for new nuclear weapon states; nor will there be one. For we will not break faith with all the states - from the former Soviet republics to South Africa - who made good decisions to strengthen their own security and the cause of non-proliferation by joining the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT)," she said.

U.S. plans on anti-missile system attacked in UN

UNITED NATIONS: The U.S. has said "unrealistic and premature" steps towards nuclear disarmament could harm the non-proliferation regime, but strongly defended its plan to develop anti-missile defence system to counteract possible threats from, what it terms as, rogue states.

Addressing the review conference of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT) Monday, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said her country shares the frustration many feel about the pace of progress towards a world free of nuclear weapons.

"But we also know that if countries demand unrealistic and premature measures, they will harm the NPT and setback everyone's cause," she said.

Despite Albright's defence, the first day's proceedings clearly revealed that the U.S. stood isolated on the issue as speaker after speaker criticised its decision, asserting that it could lead to renewed arms race.

Among the most vocal critics was China which called the proposed American system a new form of armament. Its representative Sha Zukang derisively referred to the U.S. as a "certain country" and "certainly a superpower which rampantly intervenes in other countries' internal affairs" and warned against a few countries strengthening their military power by restricting others.

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But Ms Albright said, "None of us has within our power to create overnight the conditions in which complete nuclear disarmament is possible. But in our own regions, and in our own ways, we each have a contribution to make."

Right at the outset, Secretary General Kofi Annan, slammed

the U.S., warning that its national missile defence system, as it calls the anti-missile defence system, could jeopardise the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty and lead to renewed arms race.

Britain too said any U.S. defence against nuclear missile attack should not violate agreements such as the ABM treaty signed by Moscow and Washington in 1972.

"Any initiative on NMD (national missile defence) must not undermine international treaty obligations, must be in compliance with international treaty obligations, both bilaterally in respect to the ABM treaty and also multilaterally," said foreign office minister Peter Hain.

Supporting Mr Annan, New Zealand's minister for disarmament said if the U.S. develops such a system, other countries that have the capacity would look towards that also.

But Ms Albright said the 1972 ABM treaty has been amended before and could be amended again to face threats from the rogue countries, naming North Korea and Iran. Washington is trying to negotiate the amendment to the treaty with Moscow to enable it to go ahead and deploy such a system as and when it is ready. But Moscow says it could lead to collapse of all arms control arrangements.

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The treaty has been ratified by 187 member states. India, Pakistan, Israel and Cuba are the four states that have not joined the regime. (Agencies)

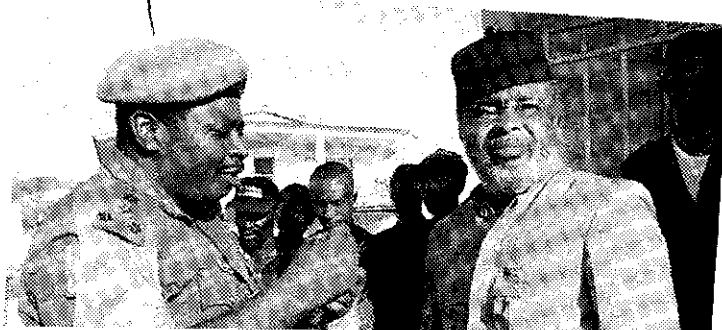
THE TIMES OF INDIA

26 APR 2000

U.N. forces deployed hastily: Zambia

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MAY 7. At the United Nations, the focus is still on Sierra Leone where the rebel troops have taken more peacekeepers as hostages and are knocking at the doors of the capital city of Freetown. There is still some confusion here on the latest "status" of the rebel march with one set of officials at the world body questioning the assertion that the fall of Freetown to the leader of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), Mr. Foday Sankoh, was



what Mr. Sankoh is trying to do is to test the mettle of the U.N. forces now that the West African force led by Nigeria has left the country, and that irrespective of what may be said in public by the RUF leader, there is a general reluctance to abide by the terms of the Lome Accord reached last year.

But several African nations, including Libya, are trying to work out a concerted strategy.

U.N. forces deployed hastily: Zambia

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MAY 7. At the United Nations, the focus is still on Sierra Leone where the rebel troops have taken more peacekeepers as hostages and are knocking at the doors of the capital city of Freetown. There is still some confusion here on the latest "status" of the rebel march with one set of officials at the world body questioning the assertion that the fall of Freetown to the leader of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), Mr. Foday Sankoh, was just a matter of time.

Meanwhile, a report in *The New York Times* datelined Lusaka speaks of the Zambian President indirectly criticising the military leadership of the United Nations forces in Sierra Leone. The U.N. forces in Sierra Leone are under the command of Major General Vijay Kumar Jetley of India.

Zambia has had about 200 of its military personnel under the aegis of the U.N. taken hostage by the RUF and the President of Zambia, Mr. Fredrick Chiluba, has argued that the U.N. troops had been deployed too quickly in unknown territory, without of date maps and shortage of vital equipment.

"This is not the first time our forces have been in peacekeeping. This is the third or fourth time. We have done very well because whenever we have gone, we have been under some good leadership. That depends on who is in



The leader of Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front, Mr. Foday Sankoh (right), looks on as the U.N. Peacekeeping Mission Deputy Force Commander, Gen. Peter Garba, makes a point on dealing with the hostage crisis, in Freetown on Saturday. — AP

command and who is giving orders to people to do what," Mr. Chiluba has told reporters. "I'm not a military person. But all I know is that I think they were deployed rather prematurely," the Zambian leader has been quoted.

Various news reports reaching here point to the RUF holding close to 500 hostages. The rebel forces are using captured ar-

moured vehicles of the U.N. for closing in on Freetown and are said to be using humans as shields for the purpose. For his part, Mr. Sankoh is putting on an air of injured innocence arguing, among other things, that his troops are not holding hostages and that it was the U.N. which provoked by forcibly trying to disarm his men. Analysts believe that

what Mr. Sankoh is trying to do is to test the mettle of the U.N. forces now that the West African force led by Nigeria has left the country, and that irrespective of what may be said in public by the RUF leader, there is a general reluctance to abide by the terms of the Lome Accord reached last year.

But several African nations, including Libya, are trying to work out a concerted strategy of bringing Mr. Sankoh in line.

After having some tough words for the RUF leader, the United States is still not inclined to get involved with ground troops in Sierra Leone.

U.N. in secret deal with Libya on Lockerbie

WASHINGTON, MAY 7. The United Nations has struck a secret deal with Colonel Muammar Gadhafi, guaranteeing that his regime would not be harmed by the Lockerbie trial, families of American crash victims have been told.

A private letter from Mr. Kofi Annan, U.N. Secretary-General, to the Libyan leader promised that "the conduct of the trial shall not undermine the Libyan Government", according to relatives who were read extracts by United States officials.

THE HINDU

- 8 MAY 2000

U.N. warns Taliban of fresh sanctions

UNITED NATIONS: The U.N. Security Council has warned Afghanistan's Taliban of fresh sanctions if they ignored its resolutions, and criticised the militia for pursuing a military policy in the country with outside help.

A statement read out on Thursday by council president Wang Yingfan expressed "grave concern" at mounting reports of preparation by the Afghan warring parties for a new offensive.

Conflict between the Taliban and an opposition alliance led by Ahmad Shah Masood generally erupts during the summer months.

"Members of the council strongly warned the parties not to undertake new attempts to pursue a military solution to the conflict in Afghanistan, which could only aggravate the humanitarian situation in the country," Mr Wang said.

Diplomats at the council charged Pakistan with arming and training Taliban and said its soldiers were fighting side by side with the militia.

The council members said they were prepared to consider imposition of unspecified further sanctions to force the Taliban comply with UN resolutions. (PTI)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

- 6 MAY 2000

HD 18

U.N. again takes the stick

10/5/2

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MAY 9. With the situation in Sierra Leone spinning out of control, the United Nations has ordered the evacuation of its civilian staff. The world body is looking for a rapid reaction force to bolster the blue helmets in that war-torn West African country even as British troops have started to evacuate foreign nationals from Freetown. The Clinton administration has made it known that it is willing to go no further than logistical support.

As of now Washington has made it known that if the Nigerians, for instance, are willing to get into Sierra Leone, the U.S. might help them get there. But the entry of Nigeria would be outside the framework of the U.N. The Clinton administration, in straying out of the rapid reaction force appeal, is giving the impression that it will be getting involved with the logistics of a West African force as the deployment of the remaining U.N. troops is getting delayed.

The Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, who is in New York for the funeral of Cardinal John O'Connor, met the U.N. Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, with Sierra Leone being a high priority of the discussion agenda. Ms. Albright would not discuss the

nature of her talks with Mr. Annan. "We have been working very hard over the weekend to be as supportive as possible and we will be supportive of the Secretary-General," Ms. Albright remarked.

Stung by the sudden developments in Sierra Leone, especially by the rapidly gaining perception that the U.N. peacekeepers are slowly losing the fight on the "peacekeeping" front, officials at the U.N. are slowly beginning to acknowledge that lapses and mis-steps in Sierra Leone may have contributed to the current mess. What has been really troublesome for the world body is its first announcement that the rebel forces under Foday Sankoh of the Revolutionary United Front were advancing on Freetown. It later had to retract the statement.

The U.N. is also being taken to task by independent analysts and critics for having gone into Sierra Leone without properly assessing the stakes involved. The argument that the peacekeepers got off the plane or ship and were confronted by the rebel troops is being taken with a large pinch of salt. It has also not helped that the soldiers from different countries now in Sierra Leone are not seen as prepared for an eventuality. The bottom line in this U.N. operation is that it has brought about

the same charges as before -- that the world body rushed in peacekeepers without a peace to "keep". The credibility of the U.N. has taken yet another hit. And the larger question is if the world body, given its track record, is hesitant to up the ante by challenging the rebels.

U.N. officials maintain that the reasons for the downward spiral in Sierra Leone has to be laid at the doors of Sankoh and his rebel troops. "The main thing is this was a peace agreement that everyone put their signatures to and the RUF today is not living by. And that's the heart of the problem," said Mr. Fred Eckhard, spokesman for the Secretary-General.

The other side of the argument has been that the U.N. has not even given minimal security protection and Sankoh has charged that the peacekeepers had provoked last week's violence, a charge that has been denied.

Meanwhile, troops loyal to the rebel leader have said that the U.N. failed to provide protection even to the home of Sankoh near Freetown, the scene of clashes that left at least four persons dead. Sankoh is now with Sierra Leone army soldiers who want to ensure his safety so that the peace process in the country can continue.

THE HINDU

7 0 MAY 2007

Evacuation begins in Sierra Leone

10/5 Thomas Abraham 119-18

LONDON, MAY 9. British paratroopers today began evacuating foreign nationals from Sierra Leone, hours after they secured the main airport in the capital, Freetown. About 250 soldiers from the paratroop regiment have landed in Sierra Leone and will be reinforced by around 400 soldiers. The British force will be backed up by a helicopter carrier with 650 commandos, a frigate and two landing craft.

The British Government has made it clear that this troop deployment is solely to evacuate an estimated 1,000 British, European, Commonwealth and U.N. staff from Sierra Leone, and that the troops do not intend to get involved in the fighting.

Indian, Jordanian, Kenyan and Zambian U.N. troops, who are deployed in Sierra Leone, have come under attack and been taken hostage by the rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF) led by Foday Sankoh. But the rapid deployment of the troops — the paratroopers were in place in Sierra Leone within 24 hours of getting their orders — is the latest example of Britain's increasingly interventionist foreign policy. Britain had earlier taken a leading role in voicing Western concerns about the violence in Zimbabwe. Now in the case of Sierra Leone, it has become the first Western nation to send in troops. The British armed forces too have been restructured for this kind of rapid response. It is an indication of the

extent to which Britain has become involved in projecting its powers overseas, that its troops are currently active in the Gulf, Bosnia, Kosovo and now in West Africa.

As in the case of Zimbabwe, Britain appears to have decided to act because it was the former colonial power in Sierra Leone. The British Foreign Secretary, Mr. Robin Cook, told the House of Commons that Britain would not "abandon its commitment to Sierra Leone" and that it was committed to the Government of the President, Mr. Tejan Kabba.

Britain's past involvement in Sierra Leone has not been with-

out controversy. In 1997, after Mr. Kabbah was deposed in a military coup, a British firm, Sandline International, shipped several tonnes of weapons to forces loyal to Mr. Kabbah, in defiance of a United Nations ban. Sandline said the shipment was made with the knowledge and encouragement of the British Government. A government enquiry later cleared Ministers of encouraging the arms exports though civil servants knew what was happening.

Since then, Britain has become a major aid donor to Sierra Leone and has taken a leading role in co-ordinating international efforts to rebuild Sierra Leone. Mr.

Cook said Britain would continue to "take the lead in the U.N. and elsewhere to restore the peace process," adding that "Britain has done more than any other country outside the region to restore legitimate Government in Sierra Leone." The British Foreign Secretary said the current conflict had been triggered when U.N. troops entered Sierra Leone's diamond-producing areas, which is held by the rebel RUF led by Sankoh. "One of the triggers of the current violence appears to have been the attempt by the U.N. forces to enter the diamond-producing region which is held by the RUF and provides them with weapons and friends."

Britain has, however, made it clear that it is not going to use its troops to bolster the U.N. peace-keeping operation. Mr. Cook said the U.N. force was 3,000 short of its mandated strength of 11,500 and he urged the countries involved to fully deploy the numbers they had committed. He said Britain would help to keep the airport open to facilitate U.N. deployment and would be willing to provide logistical equipment such as vehicles for the U.N. forces.

Rebels target key town

Reuters reports from Freetown:

Sierra Leone rebels were today fighting the Sierra Leone army for control of Masiaka, an important crossroads town around 56 km from the capital, Freetown, witnesses said.



The television image shows an angry mob of protesters on the streets of Freetown near the home of the rebel leader, Mr. Foday Sankoh, on Monday. — Reuters

THE HINDU

10 MAY 2000

220 U.N. troops leave Sierra Leone

UNITED NATIONS, MAY 10. In yet another setback for U.N. peacekeeping operation, 220 U.N. troops withdrew from Sierra Leone amid fears of an imminent rebel attack even as African leaders warned that any attempt to overthrow the Government in the strife-torn nation would be dealt with military force.

With over 500 U.N. peacekeepers still held hostage, the contingent of 220 Nigerian and Guinean soldiers retreated from Masiaka, 65 km east of Freetown, when they came under attack from unidentified gunmen.

"The contingent of 220 soldiers retreated after exhausting their ammunition in exchange of fire with the gunmen," a spokesman of the U.N. mission in Sierra Leone said even as the U.S. offered to airlift the Bangladeshi contingent, and was considering helping to transport Jordanian and Indian units. The U.N. spokesman, Mr. Fred Eckhard, said Russia had indicated it might help in the peacekeeping operation.

The U.N. hopes to round out the 11,100-member force to help reinforce the embattled 8,700 peacekeepers who have come under fire by rebels of the Revolutionary United Front in clashes that have resulted in the detention of the U.N. troops.

In Abuja, Nigeria, leaders of nine African states yesterday warned they would use military

force to stop an overthrow of the Government in Sierra Leone saying they could re-deploy the West African intervention force Ecomog to end the crisis.

A communique issued at the end of the meeting stressed that the leaders were determined to use all necessary means "including the military option, to foil any attempt to take over power through the use of force."

Town recaptured

Meanwhile, the pro-government troops have recaptured the strategic town of Masiaka, killing 20 RUF rebels, said the military chief, Mr. Johnny Paul Koroma, today.

Mr. Koroma, a former junta chief who has rallied to the President, Mr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, announced on a private radio station that the army and ex-junta soldiers had taken back Masiaka, 65 km east of the capital. The government troops also seized a vehicle and a large quantity of ammunition, he said.

Mr. Koroma said pro-government forces were now advancing north to Lunsar, on the road to the rebel stronghold town of Makeni. Mr. Koroma led the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council that took power in May, 1997 before being ousted by the Nigerian-led Ecomog force, which has handed over to the U.N. peacekeeping mission Unamsil. — PTH, AFP

A shot in the arm for Bush

By Sridhar Krishnaswami
WASHINGTON, MAY 10. In the "coming together" of Mr. George Bush and Senator John McCain, the Republican party has moved forward on the road to party unity but it has still a long way to go. On the face of it, the reconciliation meeting in Pittsburgh on Tuesday is a positive step as the two Republicans appear to have patched up after a rocky period of about three months.

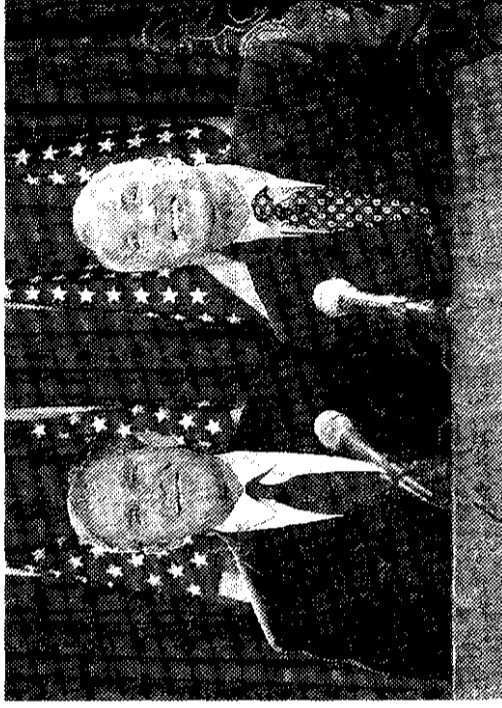
The fact that Mr. Bush asked Mr. McCain for "advice" on the Vice-Presidential nomination proves two things though the Arizona Senator rejected it. First, it shows that the Texas Governor did indeed broach the idea with

Mr. McCain will have to work for a consensus on the subject in the next few weeks.

After the "reconciliation" Mr. McCain could campaign for the Texas Governor but then would he do it enthusiastically? The substantive differences apart, the two politicians have to get past the personal remarks uttered against each other during the course of the primaries. Without doubt, Mr. McCain on a ticket with Mr. Bush would have been a major advantage for the Republicans. In fact,

after Gen. Colin Powell, a good many Americans in opinion polls indicated their preference for Mr. McCain as a running mate to the Texas Governor. This was because of the perception that Mr. McCain, apart from his personal standing, was solid on defence and foreign policy issues. If Mr. McCain is firm in his refusal to contest the Number Two slot, then he may play a major part if a Bush administration comes to power.

The Republican leadership will now have to see how the offer of cooperation by Mr. McCain is going to be put to work. In fact, the focus now is on sifting through what has been achieved at the Pittsburgh meeting. It is being said that Mr. McCain, in endorsing the candidacy of Mr. Bush, was only following a routine expected of him by fellow Republicans. It is not clear at the moment if there are to be "trade-offs" from the Bush camp for the endorsement by Mr. McCain.



The Republican presidential candidate and Texas Governor, Mr. George Bush, and the Arizona Senator, Mr. John McCain, at a news conference in Pittsburgh on Tuesday. — AP

11 MAY 200

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PERILS OF PEACE ENFORCEMENT

17/5

THE NOBLE IDEAL of the United Nations as the international keeper of the peace, under which Indian soldiers have actively participated in operations around the world for half a century and find themselves now in Sierra Leone, received a near fatal blow in Somalia in early 1995. Peace-keeping operations by the world body have since that abhorrent experience come under a cloud of doubt and uncertainty. The harrowing time that the blue berets have been through in the Western African country can only mean further loss of credibility for the world body. Authorised by the Security Council to help enforce a ceasefire agreement between Government and rebel forces, the U.N.'s peace-keeping force has been caught in the crossfire of a civil war that seems suddenly to have revived. A rebel leader who was apparently a favourite with the West and who was allowed to share power under the agreement despite war crimes allegations is holding hundreds of peace-keepers hostage in a daring challenge to the authority of the United Nations. That mercenaries such as Foday Sankoh are allowed to thrive and defy the collective power of the world body is reflective of the degree of impotence to which the U.N. has been reduced. It is also a commentary on the failure of the African leadership to assert itself. The abdication by South Africa has seen a rash of bloody clan wars in the southern and central regions of the continent. The continuing fighting in Sierra Leone shows up the inability of Nigeria, now under a flourishing democracy, to make a powerful enough impact in the western and northern regions. Every effort needs to be made by all member-nations to ensure that the operation in Sierra Leone succeeds.

What is at stake is the very future of U.N. peace-keeping, not just the plight of a small African nation. As the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, said two years ago while distributing Dag Hammarskjöld medals to families of peace-keep-

ers, too much remains to be done, too many innocents are dying, for the U.N. to think of leaving the field in the wake of some setbacks. Till that humiliating, predawn retreat from Mogadishu, capital of Somalia in the Horn of Africa, five years ago, there was every promise that the United Nations would in the long run secure the sanction, capability and resources to mount successful operations to create and keep peace. Namibia and Mozambique, both in Africa, and El Salvador were distinct success stories. Substantial gains for peace had also been ensured at other spots such as Cyprus through enforcement of cease-fires and agreements.

The debacle in Somalia saw a sea change in the fortunes of collective peace-keeping. It came at the end of two years of a brave effort to end clan warfare and mass starvation with the aim of establishing a secure environment for humanitarian relief and the ultimate rehabilitation and reconstruction of the impoverished land. It ended a remarkable period in the immediate post Cold War era when there was an unprecedented rise in demand for U.N. peace-keeping following a surge in ethnic and nationalist conflicts: whereas during the first four decades since 1948 there were just 13 operations, there have been 36 since 1988 when the U.N. effort was recognised with the award of the Nobel Peace Prize. There was even a qualitative change in the operations. Many of the civil conflicts required the U.N. peace-keepers not only to monitor ceasefires but assume a much bigger role: provide humanitarian assistance to the displaced, conduct peace negotiations, protect international aid workers, demobilise, demine and create safe havens. The peace-keepers had metamorphosed into peace-enforcers. As the U.N. emerges from the shadow of the Somalia disaster, countries such as India must ensure that the world body is restored its rightful role.

THE HINDU

17 MAY 2000

Peacekeeping in Sierra Leone

Caught in the crossfire

SINCE India is playing a leading role in the peacekeeping operations in Sierra Leone, the complicated political, economic, ethnic interests at play need to be understood. All these, and many more factors are involved in the crisis when rebels took several hundred peacekeepers hostage. They are in the process of being released in batches.

The present armed peacekeeping mission was, in fact, preceded by a UN observer mission. The chief military observer on that occasion was Brig. S. Joshi. The Lomé peace agreement, which brought the brutal civil war to an end, led to the need of the present UN peacekeeping mission to keep the peace.

As has been the pattern in recent African conflicts, neighbouring countries either milled or got involved as patrons or honest broker. Nigerian army, led, likewise, played a role during the Sierra Leone conflict, coming directly into combat with the rebel leader, Foday Sankoh's Revolutionary United Front.

Sankoh, meanwhile, has been a protégé of Liberia's President Charles Taylor. Liberia happens to be Sierra Leone's eastern neighbour. Foday Sankoh and Taylor, though in separate countries, share a common interest in Sierra Leone's famous diamonds. In war, or peace, the two, among others, have had access to the diamond mines around the eastern towns of Koidu, Sekladu and Yomadu. These towns are within stone's throw of the Liberian border making Liberia a conduit for diamond smuggling.

The UN has been accused of denying bungee jumping in car purchase

UN denies bungee jumping in car purchase

gossip in Freetown as well as at the UN. Branch Energy in Sierra Leone is a UK-based company and, interestingly, can deploy armed security guards.

Little wonder, Britain acted rather more swiftly than others when it appeared that the civil war would erupt all over again. Sir Charles Guthrie, Britain's chief of army staff, visited Freetown. Aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious headed for Freetown with over 600 marines to reinforce the paratroopers. A British fleet with Harriers and attack helicopters is anchored off the coast. Ostensibly all of this is to enable British citizens to be evacuated at short notice.



SAEED NAQVI

When one country's national interest is consistent with the general interest, I suppose we

The allegedly critical remarks by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan about Gen. Jetteley have been blown out of all proportions by interested groups

must all applaud the effort. The effect of the British intervention has been that the airport is now secure and Gen. Vijay Jetteley, Commander of the peace force, has been able to deploy a very efficient Jordanian force in the Freetown area.

The flip side of the British show of strength is that, with heavy media support, it stands out in something of a contrast to the peacekeeping forces, hundreds of their soldiers having been taken

peacekeepers may use provisions of Chapter 7 which permits use of force. The UN mission in Sierra Leone is under the overall rubric of Chapter 6 but "provisions of Chapter 7 may be used" to provide protection to government buildings, safe passage to citizens or when large-scale violence is imminent.

Obviously, this is not an easy mandate to interpret or implement. Who will decide that the situation at a given time warrants the application of Chapter 7? There are contingents from Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria, Kenya, Jordan and, of course, India. The Bangladeshis are yet to be deployed.

It is conceivable that the neighbouring African countries involved have an "attitude, a slant" towards one or the other

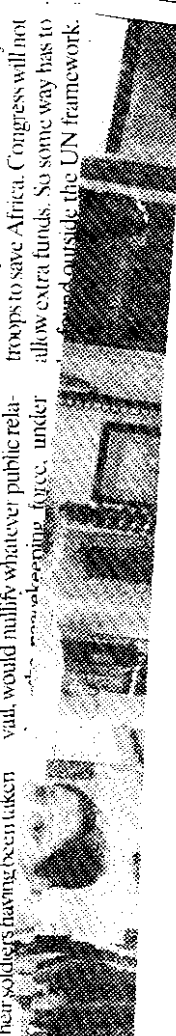
Mono Bhagat was as influential with Farah Aideded as he was with Aideded's arch rival Ali Mahdi. In Angola, Gen. Saxena was equidistant between President Dos Santos and Jonas Savimbi who, too, like Foday, lives off smuggled Angolan diamonds.

The unfavourable glare of publicity on Sierra Leone peacekeeping has exposed the difficulties in creating a cohesive force out of disparate troops, trained and equipped under different dispensations.

Peacekeeping is a great experiment in multiculturalism when the going is good. But when a crisis erupts, as happened in Sierra Leone, and the competent and the brave stand out in contrast to troops who, in this instance surrendered to the rebels without any resistance, everyone looks for scapegoats. An element of racism also enters the proceedings.

The allegedly critical remarks by the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, about Gen. Jetteley have been blown out of all proportions by interested groups lobbying with a section of the media. Annan is from Ghana and all key African countries were involved in the debacle (now under control). He was under pressure to protect his African flank. In fact, no UN Secretary General has ever singled out India for such high praise in peacekeeping as Kofi Annan has done. He said so even in a TV interview with me.

Meanwhile, the US does not know which way to look on this issue. The American heart bleeds for Africa, but the country cannot commit money or troops to save Africa. Congress will not allow extra funds. So some way has to be found outside the UN framework.



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1975

Battling for itself

WHEN the UN's Ghanaian Secretary-General Kofi Annan visited Rwanda in May 1998, he ended up being pilloried at an aggressive press conference for presiding over the UN's "hands off" policy during the genocide of the Tutsis by the Hutus four years previously. Journalists were quoting from Philip Gourevitch's then shocking, just-published book, "We wish to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed with our families."

In it, he charged that the UN had ignored a cable from its local commander warning of the impending genocide. As William Shawcross tells it in his important new book on the UN, *Deliver Us From Evil*. "His voice almost cracking, Annan ended by saying that "too much was made of one cable and that if INFORMATION was indeed the only problem then peacekeeping would be much easier. We would not be having problems in Kosovo because everybody KNOWS. We would not have had a problem in the Congo because everyone KNEW we had to separate the troops and the refugees. Why didn't it happen despite the information? Later everybody KNEW that there were refugees left behind when one million went back to Rwanda. Why didn't the information make us go and save them?"

Ever since the Rwanda genocide, the corridors of the UN have been pervaded by a heavy sense of guilt. For his part, President Bill Clinton tried to make amends for America's obstructive role by actually going to Rwanda and making a contrite apology. Yet as we all know from day to day life, guilt on its own doesn't always engender better behaviour. Neither, come to that, does having more information. We either have the will because we have the conviction, or we don't.

Thus, until a week ago, we had to watch the unfolding carnage in Sierra Leone, as did Kofi Annan, with hands clasped, baited breath, wondering how far the situation had to spiral downwards in the direction of genocide or mass killings before the resolve of the Security Council made itself apparent. Meanwhile, we were swamped with information on children being conscripted into the rebel army and children at large having their limbs amputated by machetes. "HOW MUCH information do they want?" Kofi Annan doubtless asked his wife. The Secretary-General is supposed to bake bread without flour much less yeast. Yet when the UN fields only half a loaf the media and the back-seat parliamentarians and Congress-men deride the organisation as impotent and ineffectual, overlooking that the genetic structure of this body is nothing more than the sum of its parts.

WORLD VIEW

By JONATHAN POWER

A man with an ego would have quit long ago. One of Annan's predecessors, the Burmese U Thant, suffered similar attacks when in 1967 he ordered a UN peacekeeping force to honour an Egyptian government request to withdraw from its soil, triggering an Israeli attack on Egypt and the Six Day War. "He suffered irreparable psychological damage" and his physical health steadily declined, recalls a biographer.

The Sierra Leone effort brings back to mind the UN's largest African peacekeeping operation — in the Congo in 1960-61, an intervention that led to the death of the UN's most inspired Secretary-General, Sweden's Dag Hammarskjöld. The UN, in a



Kofi Annan: under fire

much more politically difficult situation than it is today, managed to bring about a ceasefire, end mineral-rich Katanga's secession and win a peace agreement. Walter Lippmann described the odds in one of his telling columns in the *New York Herald Tribune*: "The cause of the opposition to the UN from East and West is a determination not to have the UN succeed in what it is attempting to do. For if the UN succeeds, there will not be a Communist government in the Congo. That is what Khrushchev hated about Hammarskjöld. And if the UN succeeds, there will not be a restoration of white supremacy in the Congo and that is why money, propaganda and clandestine intervention are being employed (by the French, the Belgians and the British) to frustrate the UN".

Moreover the political and managerial complications

over Sierra Leone are nothing as compared with the Congo. Brian Urquhart, a former head of UN peacekeeping, described the effort to persuade the rebellious, secessionist leader Moise Tshombe to agree to the National Reconciliation Plan as "like trying to get an eel into a bottle. The UN, moreover, was not only under strength, it had an Ethiopian contingent that was totally indisciplined and elements from the Swedish Air Force that tried to take off and bomb the rebels on their own say so.

By this measure, the UN operation in Sierra Leone is a haven of good sense. The Security Council is reasonably united. The diamond traffickers and some of the companies may have their own agenda but they do not have the ear of Western governments, as did the copper miners of Katanga 40 years ago.

Yet there is one major difference that stands out. In Congo, the USA was prepared to pull its weight on peacekeeping support, providing low cost transport for the troops of other countries and other logistical help.

Now, besides not paying its dues on time, the USA offers transport at four times the commercial rate. There may be no Cold War, but this attitude undermines the UN as effectively as an ideological fist fight.

Very much for their own reasons, the British have got involved in Sierra Leone and perhaps even saved the situation. Prime Minister Tony Blair sent in a naval task force to evacuate British and other foreigners. Once they got their feet on the ground, finding their superior training gave them a cutting edge and backed by a favourable press at home they've stayed on, secured the capital and helped with the capture of the murderous rebel leader Foday Sankoh.

But such ad hocing is not good for the UN in the long run. Insisting on operating outside the UN chain of command, the British follow in the footsteps of the bad example that the USA set in Somalia. The Nigerian military is talking about operating in Sierra Leone outside the UN as well. This is no way to revitalise the UN, nor to build up the reputation of its peacekeeping department for future conflicts.

UN peacekeeping can work very well. This has been demonstrated in places as diverse as Cyprus and Namibia. Most recently, UN intervention in East Timor has been a remarkable success. But it will happen if a will can make it work returns to the corridors of the UN. In different ways, Clinton and Blair have undermined the UN. One can only hope that peace is brought to Sierra Leone despite their deficiencies.

THE STATESMAN

26 MAY 2000

UN agreement on GMO foods signed

Nairobi, May 25

A UNITED Nations agreement that will introduce new regulations for trade in Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) has been signed by 62 countries.

After years of wrangling and US-led opposition to key parts of the treaty, the Cartagena Protocol on biosafety was agreed at a conference in Kenya's capital, Nairobi on Wednesday. But some delegates criticised what they described as a watered-down agreement.

They accused the UN convention on biological diversity of bowing to the so-called Miami group, which links the world's biggest GMO exporters, including the United States, Canada, Australia and Argentina.

Only Argentina among the leading Miami group nations signed the agreement, although the United States - barred by Congress from putting pen to paper - said it would abide by the

convention. GMO products include genetically-modified seed and fish, which environmentalists fear could make their way into the wild.

They also include products made with GMO, such as cooking oil, pasta sauces and other prepared foods. The agreement means that anything made with or containing GMO will have to be labelled 'May contain GMO'.

For some products, exporters will also have to tell importers in advance if their product contains GMO. Governments or importers will then have the right to refuse such products.

"We still have problems with the vague nature of the protocol," said Tewoldeberhan Egziabher, the spokesman for African governments at the conference.

"There is a lot of latitude for national interpretation with countries being restricted by the power of the big companies."

UN environment programme executive director Klaus Toepfer said the protocol would help

avoid situations like the accidental contamination of oilseed rape crops which provoked uproar in Europe last week.

"The question of liability is integrated in the protocol but it must be enforced," he said. "It (the contamination) gives us a signal that we have to hurry up and implement it as soon as possible."

Seed company Advanta said last week that it had sold imported seeds from Canada containing traces of GMO material to farmers in France, Britain, Germany and Sweden by mistake. Ethiopia's Tewoldeberhan said Africa was at a particular disadvantage since it had no knowledge or technical equipment to test if crops had been contaminated by other GMO.

"We will just have to take their word for it," he said. "If what happened in Europe were to happen in Africa, the chances of it being discovered are very small."

(Reuters)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

26 MAY 2000

24 MAY 2

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

The UN must push ahead with reforms to stop being marginalised even in these post-Cold War times

Still UNemployed

By J. N. DIXIT

THE SUMMIT meeting of the Heads of State and Government of all member countries of the United Nations will take place in New York in the beginning of September. In many ways, this will be the first summit of its kind — though Heads of Government and State have participated in other sessions of the UN. The umbrella item on the agenda of this summit is the role of the UN in the 21st century. Our Prime Minister is expected to attend this summit.

The significance of this summit hardly needs to be over-emphasised as it is for the first time that the members of the UN are meeting at the highest political level to assess the present predicament of the UN and its future prospects. It is also the first summit of its kind after the end of the Cold War and processes of globalised market economy affecting the international community.

That the UN Secretariat itself wishes the summit to engage in in-depth analytical discussions is clear from the advance preparations that are underway. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan issued a general Introductory Report for the Millennium Summit on April 4. He has stated in the report that the occasion of the summit and its objectives requires the leaders of the international community to step back from day-to-day events, pressures and crises and take a broader and longer term view of the state of the world and the challenges it poses.

Before touching upon what India can do or what can be achieved at the summit, it is pertinent to take note of political and procedural trends which have characterised the multilateral aspects of international diplomatic and political relations. Broadly speaking, these could be summarised as follows: The end of the Cold War has removed the macro-level ideological and military confrontations between two power blocs. But the international political and economic order still remains subject to competition between important powers for political influence, control over natural resources, acquisitive and self-centred economic and technological policies, and undercurrents of antagonisms and suspicions.

In the security and strategic dimensions, the consequence of discriminatory non-proliferation and technological regimes has been incremental trends of horizontal proliferation and fading away of the objective of comprehensive disarmament, which would ensure the elimination of the weapons of mass destruction within some definite time-frame. The technological control and denial regimes being

put in place about transfer of dual use technologies or arrangements like the Missile Control Technology Regime are unilateral and discriminatory, aimed at perpetuating the inequalities between the technologically advanced countries and the less developed countries.

The process of globalisation, which was supposed to usher in a new world economic order — which would be fair, just and characterised by equality of opportunity — is not being realised. The process is subject to profound pressures rooted in competitive national economic interests. The controversies which have affected the WTO over the last 18 months indicate the aberrations of the original objectives of globalisation: profound concerns of the human predicament related to environment, good governance, democracy and human rights. It should have transcended narrower political considerations.

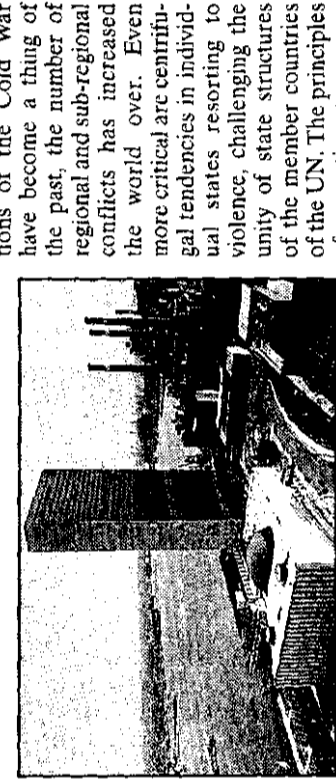
A matter of deeper anxiety is the fact that the UN freed from the Cold War, instead of being incrementally influential, has been marginalised. The UN played a secondary role in practically all the major political, security crises and conflicts, in the post-Cold War period. Though action was taken under the umbrella of the UN Security Council against Iraq for its aggression against Kuwait, the Gulf War and subsequent dealings with Iraq have been dominated by US policies. The NATO played a major role in dealing with the crisis of the break-up of Yugoslavia and all subsequent developments in the Balkans right till this day, only occasionally using the UN to legitimise some actions.

The previous UN Secretary General, Boutros Boutros Ghali, openly declared his frustration about this process. The UN peace-keeping operations in different parts of the world were subject to foreign policy impulses of interested major powers

after they used the UN apparatus in the initial stages. It should not be forgotten that Boutros Ghali was not allowed a second term because he became progressively critical about the marginalisation of the UN.

The Millennium Summit will focus on significant issues of interest to the developing countries. The role of the UN in dealing with international social, economic and developmental issues has diminished. The role is shifting away from ECOSOC and other UN agencies to multilateral financial institutions like the IMF, IBRD and so on.

Though macro-level politico-military confrontations of the Cold War have become a thing of the past, the number of regional and sub-regional conflicts has increased the world over. Even more critical are centrifugal tendencies in individual states resorting to violence, challenging the unity of state structures of the member countries of the UN. The principles of respecting state sovereignty and not interfering in the internal affairs of member states as enshrined in the UN Charter are incrementally challenged by interventionist policies justified in moral terms of human rights, etc.



India's objective will be to ensure that the UN remains free from being dominated by one power or group of powers

The reforms of the UN making its principal organs more democratic and representative remain stalled due to the political and procedural hurdles based on considerations of power equations. UN initiatives on environment, sustainable development, women's rights and problems of population and health have not gone beyond declaration of intentions and appeals for resources.

The expansion of the permanent and non-permanent membership of the Council is not being discussed in terms of the criteria implied in the UN Charter. Instead the issue is being based on seeing that the expanded membership does not diminish the influence of those who have remained influen-

tial in the Council since the end of the Cold War. This then is the state of the world and the challenges it poses about which Kofi Annan urges a longer-term view and the need to define a new role for the UN. In his report, he stated that while the frequency of inter-state warfare has declined in the last decade, far more people have been killed in civil wars, ethnic cleansing and acts of genocide. He has advocated that the concept of security must therefore change from being synonymous with defence of the territory from external attack to protection of communities and individuals from internal violence.

Annan has rightly defined the dilemmas for the UN: "Few would disagree that both the defence of humanity and defence of sovereignty are principles which should be supported." Then he goes on to state: "No legal principle, not even sovereignty, can shield crimes against humanity; these occur and cannot be prevented peacefully, the UN Security Council has a moral duty to act on behalf of the international community, even it means interference in the internal affairs of a member state."

The question he has omitted is how does the UN deal with the above concerns regarding separatism and maintenance of unity of states? The only comment Annan makes on this is: "We cannot say that separatism is always wrong." Annan's report makes wide-ranging proposals for economic development and environmental protection. He advocates reform of the Security Council, which no longer fully represents either the character or the needs of our globalised world.

Our Prime Minister will lend an influential voice at the summit. India's objective will obviously be to strengthen the UN, bring it on to the centre-stage, and to ensure that the UN remains free from being dominated by one power or group of powers. India's endeavour has to be to reconcile contradictions between the requirements of state sovereignty and the imperatives of development, economic justice, human rights and environment.

Our Government has four months to deliberate on the issues which will come up for discussions at the summit. One hopes that the members in our delegation will be well prepared by thoroughly consulting the concerned departments of the Government. More importantly, India should concentrate on the issues which would lead to the summit conclusions. India as a functioning democracy has a special role to play at the Millennium Summit.

U.N. approves equipment for Iraq

UNITED NATIONS, APRIL 1. The Security Council voted unanimously on Friday to allow Iraq to import \$1.2 billion in spare parts and other equipment this year for its ramshackle oil industry, so that more oil can be pumped efficiently and safely to pay for civilian goods and public service projects.

At the same time, the Council's Iraqi sanctions committee completed work on four lists of food, pharmaceuticals, educational material and agricultural equipment that Iraq will be permitted to purchase without a committee review, although U.N. officials will oversee and approve the purchases.

Since December, Iraq has been allowed to sell unlimited quantities of oil, although earnings are monitored and expenditures controlled through a U.N. escrow account. A third of the profits — \$20 billions since 1996 — goes to pay claims arising from Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, which led to international sanctions against the President, Mr. Saddam Hussein.

— *New York Times*

AFP reports:

Iraq today welcomed the U.N. resolution doubling the allocation for imports of spare parts for its oil industry and said it would raise output to 3.5 million barrels per day.

"We consider this decision as a step in the right direction," said the Oil Minister, Mr. Amer Rashid, quoted by the official news agency INA.

THE HINDU

- 2 APR 2 000

Ex-official assails UN policy on Iraq

United Nations, March 2

MR HANS VON Sponeck, resigning as the top UN Humanitarian official in Iraq because he considers the programme inadequate, has expressed anguish at the condition of sanctions-battered Iraqis but shied away from placing any blame on the Baghdad government.

The programme that allows Iraq to sell certain amounts of oil to buy food, medicine and other necessities, was still "financially very inadequate" despite improvements in recent years, he told a news conference yesterday.

It provided only \$252 per head per year for 23 million people, putting Iraq "in the category of a least developed country," he said.

Iraq has been the target of punishing UN sanctions since its 1990 invasion of Kuwait. They can be eased only when Iraq's weapons of mass destruction have been accounted for and scrapped, but UN arms inspectors have not been allowed back into the country for more than a year.

Asked if Iraqi President Saddam Hussein could ease the living conditions of his people if he wished, Mr Von Sponeck, who will return to Iraq before leaving his UN post at the end of this month, said, "I

would like to give you an answer but I better not now."

He also side-stepped a question about US State Department assertions that the Baghdad government had enough money to import tens of thousands of bottles of whiskey, build nine palaces and afford other luxuries for the country's elite.

Referring to the UN Security Council's "oil-for-food" resolution, the German UN official replied, "My concern was 986 and the finance available under 986."

There was no evidence that money received under that programme was diverted for other purposes, he said, adding, "There are other sources of income, but there is very little a humanitarian co-ordinator can do about that."

Although at odds with UN policy on Iraq as set by the divided Security Council, the 60-year-old Von Sponeck official was introduced by Secretary-General Kofi Annan's spokesman as speaking as a UN official who "would not express publicly his personal views."

Reporters laughed indulgently when Mr Von Sponeck, who has been a UN official for 32 years, began by thanking them "for coming to hear me as an international civil servant." (Reuters)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

- 3 MAR 2 000

UN shuts offices in Kandahar after raids

INDIA ABROAD NEWS SERVICE &
ASSOCIATED PRESS

ISLAMABAD, March 29. —
The United Nations has closed
down its offices in Afghanis-
tan's Kandahar town and with-
drawn its six-member interna-
tional staff in protest against
the search of its offices by the
Taliban.

Also as a show of protest, the
UN has stopped all its aid pro-
grams in southern Kandahar,
said Ms Stephanie Bunker, a
UN spokeswoman in Pakistan.

The militia was looking for
Ismail Khan, former governor
of Herat and a leading Opposi-
tion commander and Abdul
Zahir, son of the ex-governor of
eastern Nangarhar province.

The Taliban said they feared
the two may have sought
refuge with a foreign aid
group. The Afghan Islamic
Press has said that sources in
the anti-Taliban alliance con-
firmed Khan and Zahir, both of
whom escaped on Sunday,
have arrived in Meshed, Iran.

"The Taliban soldiers
searched the offices to ensure
that they have not taken
refuge there," said Jehangir-
wal, a Taliban spokesman.

But Ms Bunker said the
Taliban harassed staff for two
consecutive days and caused
some damage to the offices.
"Given the seriousness and the
repetition of these violations
the UN has been compelled to
stop work in the area in the
interest and safety of staff,"
said a UN statement issued
today.

THE STATESMAN

30 MAR 2000

UN members lose voting rights

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

UNHQ, Feb. 2. — Forty-five countries, mostly African, of the UN's 188 member states have lost their right to vote in the General Assembly because they failed to pay the minimum amount needed to keep the vote.

Seven others, including Bosnia, Comoros, Congo, Georgia, Guinea Bissau, Nicaragua and Tajikistan, were able to keep their vote. The Assembly yesterday extended the deadline for payment to 30 June, considering their financial difficulties.

Most of the 45 are expected to pay up by September when the General Assembly's annual session begins. Since major resolutions and measures are voted only during the session, the overall effect would be minimal.

Among those who have lost vote is Ukraine, which became a Security Council member in

January. It owes \$15 million. But non-payment does not lead to a loss of vote in the council.

Gambia, an outgoing member of the council, is also among the losers, owing slightly over \$100,39000.

The UN sends letter of assessed dues to each member state in December and they are expected to pay up by 31 January. Most members do not pay by the due date but do so over the entire year. Under the Charter, a member loses the right to vote only if its arrears on 31 January are equal to or exceed its dues to the regular budget for the last two years. But it regains the right the moment it pays the minimum needed for the vote.

However, the General Assembly has the power to allow a member state to delay the payment without losing vote if it is in financial dire straits. The member states owe the organisation about \$3.47

billion, according to the latest report on contributions to the UN budget.

Of the total amount, some \$1.3 billion are due to the regular budget, around \$2.1 billion for the peacekeeping budget, and around \$31.8 million for the two international tribunals on Rwanda and Yugoslavia.

But non-payment for peacekeeping and tribunals does not affect the vote in the Assembly.

UN spokesman John Mills said yesterday the number of members who paid their dues in full by 30 January was only 45. Later, the General Assembly released a list of 52 countries that have accumulated arrears equal to or greater than their assessments for the previous two years. Out of them seven were allowed to make payment by 30 June.

The USA, which owes more than \$1 billion, paid in December just enough to keep its vote.

THE STATESMAN

- 3 FEB 2000

Kofi Annan warns against new arms race

UNITED NATIONS: U.N. secretary-general Kofi Annan said a dangerous new arms race "looms on the horizon", and cited actions by nuclear powers, particularly the United States.

Referring to a review conference on the 1968 nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT), due to open in three months' time, he said, "It is hard to approach it with much optimism, given the discouraging list of nuclear disarmament measures in suspense, negotiations not initiated and opportunities not taken."

"A dangerous new arms race looms on the horizon," he said on Wednesday in a speech to the advisory board on disarmament matters at U.N. think tank of 20 arms experts.

Mr Annan said the 1993 START I (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) between the United States and Russia had not entered into force and START III talks had not begun. "The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) has been rejected by the senate of the United States that had been its leading champion," he said, while nuclear weapons in several countries were still on high alert.

The U.S. senate, against the wishes of president Bill Clinton, rejected in October 1999, the ratification of the CTBT, a global treaty banning nuclear tests that has not received the required ratifications to enter into force.

Again alluding to the U.S., Mr

Annun said, "Deployment of ballistic missile defences seems increasingly likely, posing a serious threat to the anti-ballistic missile (ABM) treaty and the strategic stability it embodies." The U.S. is proposing modifications to the 1972 ABM treaty, which sharply limits anti-missile defences in order to build a system capable of countering missiles launched by what it regards as

"rogue states," though not a mass attack by a major nuclear power.

Russia and China strongly oppose any modification to the ABM treaty, signed by the United States and the then-Soviet Union. The treaty is based on the theory that an anti-missile shield would only tempt the other side to build more missiles in hopes of being able to penetrate defences. (Reuters)

No miracles at Bangkok

After Seattle, it is perhaps natural for the developing world, India included, to look to the UNCTAD conference scheduled to open in Bangkok on Saturday in hope and anticipation. After all, UNCTAD has always been seen as more sympathetic to the cause of the developing world — even to the extent of taking positions diametrically opposed to the stated positions of cosy First World groupings like the G7. On the issue of capital controls, for instance, the UNCTAD's Trade and Development Report has been in sharp contrast to the position taken by the G7. Similarly, on issues like the multilateral agreement on investment, UNCTAD's position is much closer to that of the developing countries. This pro-Third World image makes UNCTAD uniquely placed to attempt a rapprochement between the seemingly intractable positions taken by the developing and developed world in the context of the next round of trade negotiations. Moreover, the UNCTAD director-general, Rubens Ricupero, a Brazilian, is regarded with much less suspicion than Mike Moore, the director-general of the WTO, who was generally seen as trying to push the US agenda. Key personalities can and do make a difference to the outcome of complex international negotiations, and Ricupero's more nuanced stance should make the developing world far more receptive to his ideas.

Unfortunately, all this can help only at the margin. The reality that UNCTAD is now quite marginalised by the WTO. It would be foolish, therefore, to expect any miracles from Bangkok. Indeed, given the realities of the global economic order, it would be foolish to expect any real progress till the US elections are over. Consequently, no dramatic breakthroughs can and should be expected from UNCTAD X. Where it can help is in articulating the specific concerns of the developing countries in a more cogent fashion and providing advice. In any case, as we have argued earlier, there is now an increasing convergence of views among countries. If the Bangkok meeting helps crystallise this, that alone should be reason for celebration.

The Economic Times

- 9 FEB 2000

11-15 Annan, Hun Sen differ on Khmer Rouge trials

UNITED NATIONS: Secretary-general Kofi Annan once again rejected Cambodia's plan to try notorious Khmer Rouge leaders, saying any court must have a majority of foreign judges and an internationally appointed prosecutor, sources at the United Nations said.

In reply to a letter from Mr Annan, Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen said on Wednesday his government was "surprised by the gap between the position raised in your letter and ours."

"The gap cannot be welcomed as it is unfair to Cambodia and does not reflect the achievements of our efforts made so far," Mr Hun Sen said in his letter.

Cambodia has insisted that it must control the trial of Khmer Rouge leaders accused of the "killing fields" atrocities in 1975-79 when up to 1.7 million people were murdered or died of starvation and disease.

Its own plan calls for a majority of national judges and requires at least one foreign judge to agree with their rulings. Any charges and indictments would have to be agreed by a Cambodian and a U.N.-appointed prosecutor.

Mr Annan said the mechanics of the court and prosecutor might lead to a stalemate and were cumbersome to operate, sources familiar with the secretary-general's letter said.

The United Nations, which has said only international supervision can ensure proper standards of justice, wants to see the establishment under Cambodian law of a special court that is dominated by foreign judges and prosecutors.

Mr Annan offered to send a team to Cambodia for further discussions, and his legal counsel, Hans Corell, said Mr Hun Sen's response would determine the visit.

Mr Hun Sen, in his letter, said he welcomed a visit of U.N. officials "for further understanding" if Annan deemed it useful. He said he hoped Mr Annan would "positively review your position with other member states of the United Nations," that he said helped draft Cambodia's law on the Khmer Rouge. Mr Corell said he was not certain whether Mr Annan and Mr Hun Sen would discuss the tribunal in Bangkok, Thailand, where both are attending a U.N. conference on trade and development.

In 1997 Mr Hun Sen asked the United Nations to help organise a trial of some of the Khmer Rouge leaders held responsible for the 1970 terrors. The top Khmer Rouge leader, Pol Pot, died in April 1998, of an apparent heart attack at the age of 73 in northern Cambodia. But other leaders have never been brought to justice. (Reuters)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

11 FEB 2000

UNCTAD MEET / NATIONS DIFFER ON GLOBALISATION

Camdessus stresses poverty reduction

By P. S. Suryanarayana

BANGKOK, FEB. 13. The prime focus of today's deliberations at the ongoing tenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) at last shifted from a reinvention of globalisation and a redefinition of developed and developing countries to the consequences of an "exclusion" of marginalised countries from the process of globalisation itself.

Poverty reduction was a theme addressed by the outgoing Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, Mr. Michel Camdessus, in the context of new thinking even among the international financial institutions in the direction of "humanising globalisation." He called for "a new paradigm of development" based on the lessons of the recent Asian miracle and its subsequent reversal, besides the need to deliver globalisation to those now on the periphery, namely the lesser developed countries (LDCs).

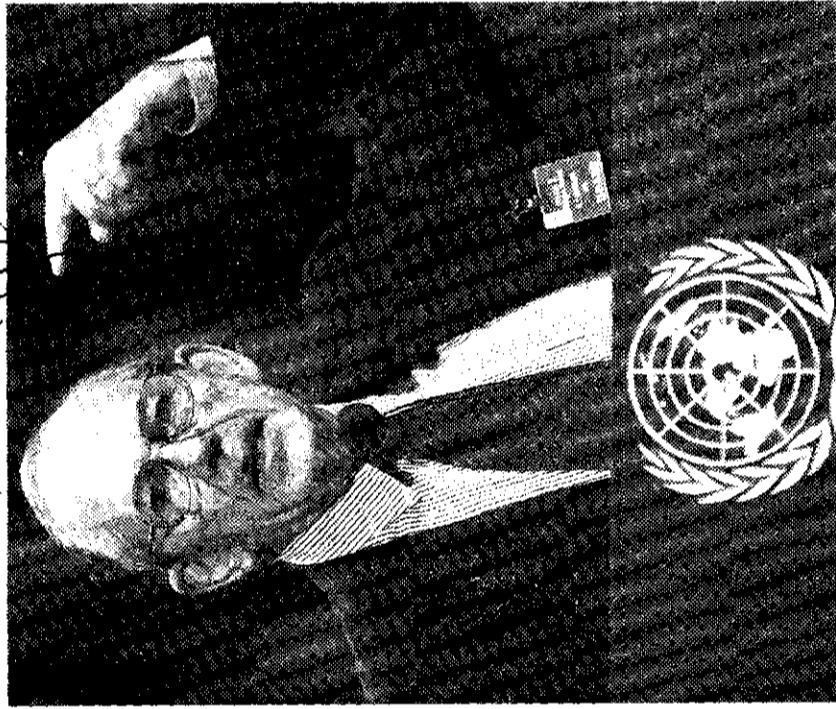
A point was made too, on behalf of the IMF, that the developing countries could do more to attract direct foreign investment instead of thinking only in terms of encouraging short-term foreign capital to their lands.

In the midst of such calls for a new dimension to globalisation,

several participants, especially those from the West, kept the spotlight sharply focussed on the need to resume a new round of international trade negotiations, which failed to take off at Seattle recently.

The U.K. Trade Minister, Mr. Richard Caborn, said that "the status quo is not an option" and it was necessary to put "a new round of negotiations on the road." The UNCTAD, in his view, could act as "a bridge" between the developing countries and the WTO by working for a mutual "confidence." Keeping the focus on the plight of the LDCs, Mr. Caborn drew attention to the debt relief that the U.K. was offering to select countries.

The U.S. Representative to the UNCTAD session spoke of a new "vision of an inclusive globalisation that works for everyone." The "key" to a realisation of this vision "is a broad participation in an international system that is fair and open." The U.S. was "prepared to collaborate with the others" towards this end but "developing countries can participate more effectively in the global economy if they can adapt more rapidly to international standards." In this, the UNCTAD could play "a particularly helpful role."



Mr. Michel Camdessus, the outgoing Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), delivers a keynote speech at the 10th United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Bangkok on Sunday. — AP

No tribunal on East Timor, says Annan

Jakarta, February 15

UNITED NATIONS Secretary-General Kofi Annan arrived in Jakarta today, one day after President Abdurrahman Wahid suspended former military chief Wiranto from the Cabinet over his alleged involvement in the bloodshed in East Timor last year.

Mr Annan hailed Mr Wahid's decision to suspend Wiranto, saying in Singapore yesterday that a global tribunal will not be set up "at this stage" to try those responsible for the East Timor atrocities.

"The government of Indonesia has demonstrated its determination to put those accused on trial and if it does go through, I think it will make Indonesia stronger and it will be helpful for its own legal system," Mr Annan said.

A UN Human Rights Commission investigation into the East Timor violence recommended an international human rights tribunal be set up to try those responsible for the bloodshed.

Mr Annan is scheduled to hold talks with Mr Wahid and other leaders tomorrow with East Timor issue high on the agenda, officials

Meanwhile, the US has offered its firm backing for Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid's suspension of General Wiranto from his Cabinet, calling it a "significant step" for democracy an agency report in Washington said.



UN Secretary General Kofi Annan (left) with Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Shihab before the start of a press conference at the airport in Jakarta upon Annan's arrival for a two-day visit. Photo: AFP

"This action reflects President Wahid's government's intention to seriously address charges against individuals alleged to be responsible for human rights abuses in East Timor," state department spokesman James Rubin told

reporters yesterday. "It is a significant step forward in development of democracy and the rule of law in Indonesia after decades of authoritarian rule and ignoring these key values," Rubin said, referring to the tenure in power of former

President Suharto.

Wahid suspended the former military chief Sunday and coordinating minister for political and security affairs in a dramatic turn about after a 16-day standoff.

(Agencies)

Trade rules must be equitable: UNCTAD

By P. S. Suryanarayana

BANGKOK, FEB. 15. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development today headed towards renewing its 'commitment' to a 'rule-based trading system' as reflected in the norms of the World Trade Organisation. The move to reaffirm this commitment in the UNCTAD declaration, now being discussed in Bangkok for adoption by Saturday, acquired importance in the context of the failure of the WTO to launch a new round of global trade negotiations at the recent Seattle conference.

However, the mood was to insist, essentially on behalf of the developing nations, that a the system should serve the interests of all countries. The idea was to ensure the integration of all countries into the global economy on terms that the less developed ones could cope with.

It was in this context that a parallel move was being made to advocate international perseverance for arriving at a 'consensus' on globalisation for all, not just those with the wherewithal.

Some leaders of the developing countries

expressed reservations, behind the scenes, about the U.S. willingness to accept 'inclusive globalisation' as a sop to the developing countries. The apprehension was that it could still turn out to be a diplomatic euphemism for selective globalisation. The UNCTAD leaders were veering to the view that globalisation in the present inter-dependent world should be accepted as "an effective instrument for the development of all countries and all people." The UNCTAD being essentially a non-negotiating forum, it looked today that such generalised concepts might in the end be acceptable to the developed countries too.

At a different level, non-governmental organisations came to the fore at the UNCTAD meetings here. Though the NGOs organised several demonstrations near the venue of the conference on a variety of issues, there was no event on the scale of the disturbances at Seattle recently. It was in this context that the UNCTAD leaders began recognising this forum as a meeting ground between governments and NGOs. Towards this end, a move

was under way to incorporate in the prospective Bangkok declaration a recognition of the NGOs and civil society as 'partners' of governments "in the development process."

Another significant feature here was the interaction between the UNCTAD as a collective forum and various specialised agencies of the United Nations. On a parallel track, the U.N. perse held a first-time dialogue with the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

IPU call

Addressing the UNCTAD plenary in Bangkok today, Dr. Najma Heptulla, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, said that 'the centrepiece' of a Declaration adopted by the IPU here in a parallel session, was a 'call' to the legislatures across the world to associate themselves more closely with the international processes relating to trade, finance and development negotiations.

Towards this end, the IPU, it was said, would seek to interact with the WTO, the UNCTAD itself and the World Bank as also the International Monetary Fund.

HD-16

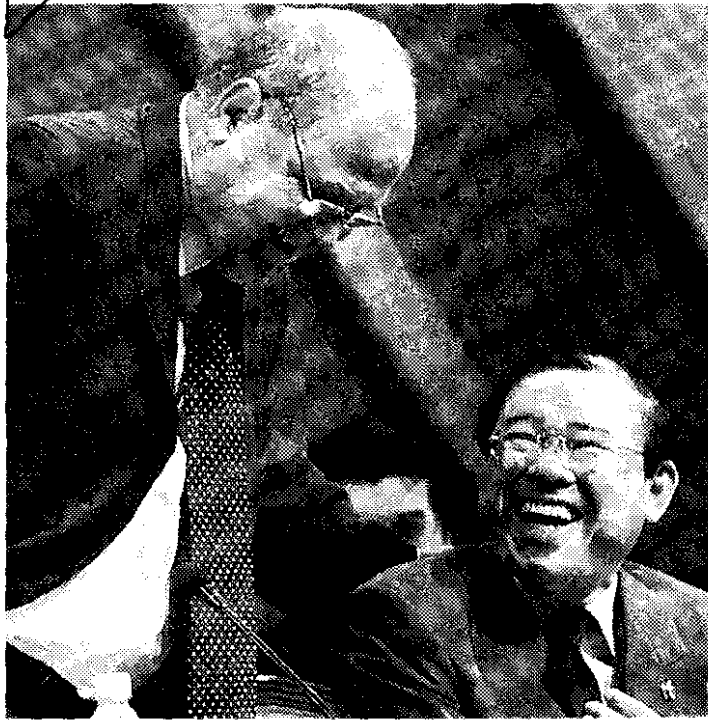
Post-Seattle round not for now

By P. S. Suryanarayana

BANGKOK, FEB. 16. The Director-General of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), Mr. Mike Moore, today held out little or no prospect of an early commencement of a new round of global trade negotiations that was recently aborted in Seattle. Addressing the ongoing United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) during an "interactive" session with the delegates in Bangkok today, Mr. Moore said there was "not a chance" of the aborted new round being launched without a "fundamental change in the position since Seattle."

Mr. Moore, who covered the same ground at a press conference later, told the UNCTAD session that there was "no enough progress yet" on the critical issue of flexibility in the positions of key countries since the Seattle meeting late last year. Some countries, which were not identified, "are beginning to show modest flexibility." But, Mr. Moore pointed out, the entrenched positions still remained "too far apart" on such key technical and economic issues, laced with political overtones, as labour standards, agriculture, anti-dumping, competition, investments and implementation, all in the specific context of a proposed new global round of trade talks. Therefore, he indicated, "we will not be able to reconvene" for such talks in the present circumstances.

Mr. Moore, however, reported some progress in two critical areas. The WTO members "have agreed," since the Seattle talks, that he and the chairman of the organisation's General Council "should carry out further consultations" for piecing together "a package of measures to assist the least developed countries



The Director-General of the World Trade Organisation, Mr. Mike Moore (left), and the President of the 10th meeting of the UNCTAD, Mr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, meet before the opening of the plenary session in Bangkok on Wednesday. — AP

(LDCs)." Second, in line with an agreement of 1994, "the members of the WTO are now going ahead with negotiations to open up new opportunities in agriculture."

However, for the launch of a new round of global trade talks in the near future, cooperation would be needed not only between the North and the South, in global goeconomic terms, but also among the "trans-Atlantic" countries, namely the U.S. and Europe. There had so far been "not enough change in the (international) landscape" since the recent Seattle meeting for him to be "optimistic" despite his wont, Mr. Moore said.

The signs needed for the launch of new multilateral trade talks were "flexibility" in budging from the positions already taken and a certain "sensitivity" among the major players in regard to one another's concerns, Mr. Moore said. There was a need for "enough balance," too, in regard to the interests and concerns of the major players across the trading spectrum. Another prerequisite was confidence-building among those countries which fell out before and during the recent Seattle conference, a development that scuttled those talks. About the pace at which a new round could now be catalysed, he pointed out that a

"snail" could not be made to look like a "race horse."

In some contrast to this bleak picture, as seen from a largely Western perspective, Mr. Moore said the key players were "not pushing against an entirely closed door" either. Although there was at this stage "a feeling of engagement," too, among the prime interlocutors, sufficient "flexibility" was lacking for a new beginning towards a revival of the aborted round of multilateral trade parleys, he explained.

Mr. Moore said he would, as the WTO chief, "pledge" himself to the task of ensuring that "a voyage of opportunity" on the multilateral trade front would be extended to "everyone" and "not just for the first-class passengers" — some support for a universal globalisation as distinct from the current model featured by a "new division — the distinction between inclusion and marginalisation."

Against the glimmer of hope about a new round of trade talks, a pet theme of the advanced states, Mr. Moore turned the spotlight on the darker side of the landscape, again as seen from the perspective of the haves. He said: "Our institutions, born out of a hot war (World War II) and matured in a Cold War, have not yet adapted fully to a (presently unfolding) new age of integration. The Berlin Wall fell more than 10 years ago, but sometimes it seems that the walls between institutions are more durable."

The UN is not the scapegoat

DURING the last US presidential election campaign, Republican candidate Bob Dole used to say in almost every speech he made, referring to the controversy over the use of American soldiers in UN operations: "I will be in charge of making that decision, not Boutros Boutros Ghali." The schoolboy effort to ridicule the UN Secretary-General always raised a laugh and helped charge President Bill Clinton's campaign to have the able Egyptian diplomat stand down. Xenophobia was regarded by both contestants as an electoral asset.

Set against the campaign of four years ago, the tenor of the current one seems to be on another plane. The cheap shot at the UN is out. In its place, if not enthusiastic, there is at least a passive recognition of its value. It would, perhaps, be going too far to surmise the candidates realise that for all America's almighty economic strength and the political and military power that is its corollary, it simply cannot be sure of getting its way when it chooses to act.

This is part of it. But another part is that, of late, the UN appears to be having some success. Not least, it has won the attention and engagement of big-time US politicians who, in recent years, have ignored it. First, Vice-President Al Gore decided to personally launch a USA-sponsored month of Security Council concentration on Africa.

Then he handed the baton to Richard Holbrooke, the high-profile former Bosnia trouble-shooter, and now USA's Ambassador to the UN, who makes little secret of his desire to be secretary of state should Mr Gore win the election. Mr Holbrooke in turn invited Congress' arch-enemy-in-chief of the UN, Jesse Helms, to address the Security Council. Although it had a predictable tone to it — "No UN institutions, not the Security Council, nor the Yugoslavia (War Crimes) tribunal, not a future International Criminal Court, is competent to judge the foreign policy and national security decisions of the USA" — the meeting at least ended on a civilised note.

Mr Gore and Mr Holbrooke's single-mindedness has breathed life into last year's moribund attempt to deploy

500 UN ceasefire monitors, supported and protected by 5000 armed UN soldiers, into the war-ridden Congo.

The USA has stood apart from peacekeeping operations ever since Mr Clinton's decision to cut and run from his country's participation in a UN peacekeeping operation in Somalia in 1993. His reaction to the death of 18 American Rangers in what in fact was a USA-authorized and commanded operation was to put the whole blame publicly on the UN, who had not even been forewarned of what was intended and who were reduced to trying to save the besieged American soldiers.

It always helps to change an attitude if the last experience has been a success. So it is with the UN which is now basking in the shine from its operation in East Timor. The first reaction to the UN-sponsored referendum

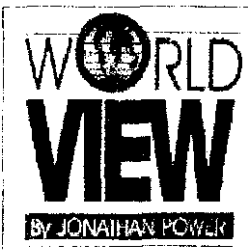
on whether or not the territory should remain part of Indonesia seemed to be a decision by the high command of the Indonesian army to punish the populace by any means at

hand (for which atrocity the ex-chief of the army, General Wiranto, has now paid the penalty this week of losing his cabinet seat).

Perhaps Western politicians in particular will now begin to recall the other UN successes of recent years to offset their hitherto unhealthy fascination with failure. Namibia, Mozambique and Cambodia, all countries beset by horrifying continuous warfare, in the latter country the worst since World War II, have all found peace through UN mediation. Conflict mediation carried out by the UN, on many occasions by the Secretary-General himself, is often unsung. A conflict prevented is not news, and often not even a provable historical episode. But if the UN is to continue forward with this renewed momentum, much hangs on the outcome of the US presidential election and its present campaign.

During the Clinton presidency the UN was wrongly denigrated and it was cruelly sabotaged, as on the occasion of its urge to head off the Rwanda genocide, which Mr Clinton later apologised for. If there now looks to be a turn for the better, recent history teaches us to cross our fingers.

Still, compared with this time four years ago, it is almost the difference between night and day.



UNCTAD panel approves draft Plan

By P. S. Suryanarayana

BANGKOK, FEB. 18. A policy of "people-centred sustainable (economic) development" in each country in an internal environment of a "democracy" was adopted tonight by the empowered panel of the tenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Bangkok. The other aspects of this option were "rule of law, transparent and accountable governance and administration," including the imperative of combating and eliminating 'corruption' which was being seen as "a global phenomenon, affecting both developed and developing countries."

Adopted by the UNCTAD's Committee of the Whole at a session planned for late tonight, this contentious political prescription will form an integral part of a draft Plan of Action to be considered and approved at the concluding plenary session in Bangkok tomorrow.

The draft includes human rights as well. It said: "Human rights and fundamental freedoms, with the right to development as an integral part, must be promoted and protected."

A consensus was reached by the UNCTAD members that national policies in respect of globalisation "must take into account its effects on basic development requirements" such as "resources, inputs and new technologies available to advance educational levels and health standards."

The draft proposed 'restructuring' of the global "financial architecture" should be viewed by the UNCTAD as a process of financial 'reforms.' The draft Plan covered an assorted range of finalised but non-binding formulations on food security, trade liberalisation, market access, foreign direct investment and services.

The draft Plan will still not help jump-start the global trade negotiations which failed to take off at the recent Seattle conference. But the developed countries of the UNCTAD saw the Plan as a possible 'catalyst' of such a negotiat-

ing process. On the requirement of food security, the draft Plan endorsed the idea of a "more focused financial and technical assistance" by the developed States to "effectively" address this problem in regard to the "net food-importing developing countries."

Developed countries, it was said, "should consider the effects of their fiscal policy choices on the needs of developing countries." It was pointed out that "unilateral measures" by the developed club, "including measures with extra-territorial effects" could trigger "a negative effect on (global) efforts to move towards a truly non-discriminatory and open trading system." Overall, the World Trade Organisation's "rules are stringent with respect to subsidies primarily used by developing countries," the draft noted.

Any new agreement that might be reached under the auspices of the WTO should incorporate "adequate provisions for assistance to the developing countries to enable them to establish the necessary infrastructure and other conditions for effective implementation." Cooperation among the UNCTAD, the World Bank, the UNDP, the WTO, the IMF and the ITC, as also regional development banks was called for.

Developing countries, it was said, "should be enabled to make full use of the Special and Differential Treatment (SDT)" as already "fully established and recognised." The SDT in WTO agreements, such as the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, "needs consideration in order to better reflect the developing countries' needs."

As for foreign direct investment in the new context of an exponential growth of technologies, especially in the electronic and information sectors, the draft called for efforts by the developing countries to "acquire and cultivate" knowhow and for parallel steps by the developed ones to transfer the same.

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U.N. Annan warns Jakarta on East Timor

DILI, (EAST TIMOR), FEB. 18. The United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, today said an international war crimes tribunal over East Timor was still possible if Indonesia failed to prosecute those responsible.

"If the trial does not go forward as planned, they (the U.N. Security Council) may revert to an international tribunal," he told a news conference in the East Timor capital, Dili, before leaving for Australia. "It is essential that those who committed the atrocities be brought to

justice." The Indonesian President, Mr. Abdurrahman Wahid, has suspended the former military chief, Gen. Wiranto, from his Cabinet after a human rights inquiry implicated him in the violence.

Gen. Wiranto, who denies any wrongdoing, was in charge of the military when pro-Jakarta militias, backed by Indonesian troops, went on a systematic spree of killing and destruction after last August's U.N.-run independence vote.

Despite Annan's threat, it is widely believed the Security Council -- especially China and Russia -- would not sanction an international tribunal because of the precedent it would set.

A U.N. peacekeeping mission takes control of the territory next Wednesday, replacing a U.N.-mandated multinational force sent in to restore the peace. The world body will oversee the territory's transition to independence, expected to take up to three years. — Reuters

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UNCTAD calls for 'true partnership'

By P. S. Suryanarayana

BANGKOK, FEB. 19. The tenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), which concluded in Bangkok this evening, called for a "true partnership" among the countries on both sides of the development divide as a prerequisite for global peace and security. A commitment to a "fair, equitable and rules-based multilateral trading system" was also outlined.

Summing up the outcome of the session, the President of UNCTAD-X, Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, said the "viability" of the multilateral trading process had been vindicated in the shadow of the recent Seattle conference which "traumatised" the international community even as

it failed to launch a new round of global trade parleys. The "compatibility" of the UNCTAD with the World Trade Organisation was also in evidence, he told the closing plenary, and urged the two to work for a "development round".

The UNCTAD deliberations here had resulted in some momentum for giving a development dimension to the proposed new global trade talks. Dr. Supachai expressed the hope, too, that the two organisations could indeed work as "partners" on the global trade agenda.

The Bangkok Declaration, adopted by the UNCTAD conference's closing plenary here, redefined globalisation as "a powerful and dynamic force for growth and development."

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A new outlook for global trade talks ^u

By P. S. Suryanarayana ^u

BANGKOK, FEB. 19. The deliberations of the tenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) had raised the level of "confidence" between the bloc of haves (the developed countries) on the one hand, and the have-nots (the developing nations) on the other, in their collective endeavour to start a "development round" of global trade talks, according to Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, president of the just-concluded eight-day meeting.

He said the idea was to "build blocks" in an edifice of confidence between the two sides and the latest UNCTAD meeting had helped begin that task. Following the latest UNCTAD session, the outlook for a new round of global parleys was now "a bit more realistic" than in the wake of the collapse of the recent Seattle conference, Dr. Supachai said. In any case, he was confident that it would be "a development round" of trade negotiations, whenever it might be launched.

The UNCTAD Secretary General, Mr. Rubens Ricupero, sought to meet the criticism that there was nothing concrete for the lesser-developed countries (LDCs) either in the latest Bangkok

Declaration or in the related Plan of Action. He said that the Plan reflected a "compromise" between the developed bloc and the developing countries.

On the political significance of the Bangkok Declaration, the Thailand Foreign Minister, Dr. Surin Pitsuwan, who assessed the "sense" of the participants for drafting the document, said that the "interdependency" of the two sides across the development divide was fully reflected.

Dr. Supachai indicated that a new window of political opportunity had now been opened for considering the enlargement of the G-7 industrialised bloc to cover more states with stakes in global trade and other economic issues. He pointed out that the IMF chief, Mr. Michel Camdessus, had mooted the idea of a G-30 forum.

The U.S. took the stand that the latest UNCTAD documents could perhaps have been prepared differently in different quarters. Yet, they accorded centrality to "development strategy," the U.S. delegate noted. This should be seen against the "potential benefits" of adhering to "coherence" in "shaping the global economy," it was said. The U.S. has taken note of the need for a "global system in which all can participate and benefit."

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VOICING GLOBAL INEQUITIES

THE TENTH SESSION of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), which has just ended in Bangkok, has virtually proclaimed itself as a parliament on globalisation. The debacle which the Seattle conference of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) suffered earlier this year, no doubt, cast its shadow on UNCTAD-X. While the rationale of the resumed WTO talks on the mandated subjects of agriculture and services is self-evident, the continuing attempts being made by the U.S. and the E.U. to enlarge the WTO agenda to include labour and environment will obviously be resisted by the majority among the developing countries. The Indian delegates at the Bangkok conference, led by the Union Minister for Industry and Commerce, Mr. Mursoli Maran, have categorically opposed the prospect of an overloaded agenda for the WTO. They have nevertheless affirmed India's commitment to rule-based multilateralism in trade subject to the caveat that a Western insistence on a "one size fits all" prescription for all countries regardless of differences in levels of development is not acceptable.

The UNCTAD, which has often been regarded in the past as the strident voice of the developing countries championing the cause of free trade in preference to foreign aid, is in search of a new identity now that the WTO has emerged as a permanent institutional machinery for promoting a global order of free trade. The view that the UNCTAD could function as a bridge between the developing countries and the WTO has certainly some merit although past experience, particularly at Seattle, casts some doubts about the coherence which the UNCTAD could summon on specific issues ag-

itating the different developing countries.

A positive outcome of the Bangkok conference appears to be the convergence of belief among the UNCTAD, the IMF and the World Bank that globalisation has largely worked to the advantage of the richer countries and the multinational corporations. A clear recognition that the liberalisation of trade regimes has brought about new cleavages between the rich and the poor countries can itself be regarded as the nucleus of a new global thrust towards redressing the patent imbalances rampant in the present economic order. But that the effort would call for a restructuring of multilateral institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO such that they respond constructively to the plight of the developing countries seems to be an idea which is still to register in the collective psyche of these agencies.

The severest indictment of "fragmented" globalisation has come, at the Bangkok conference, from the Director-General of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), Mr. Juan Somavia. His characterisation of the process of globalisation as the glorification of "casino capitalism" and the imposition of the pains of structural adjustment on the weakest sections of society cannot be dismissed as an overdrawn picture of the new inequities engendered by a market-driven global economic order. Sharp and pointed as the critique of the headlong pursuit of globalisation is, it cannot be the substitute for a pragmatic alliance between the state and the market which promotes social and economic efficiency without endangering equity and harmony in the social process.

Hope from Bangkok

DESPITE THE pie-throwing incident in Bangkok, the tenth UNCTAD managed to raise fresh hope for a rapprochement between the developing and the developed countries following the impasse in Seattle. The scuttle in Seattle was not totally unmerited as the rich countries were preparing to lay down rules for the poor to follow. They were not only trying to tell them what was good for them but were also insisting on linking trade with labour and environmental standards in an attempt to curtail the competitive edge of developing countries. In contrast, the Bangkok meeting tackled globalisation in a more "poor friendly" ambience. Hence, one got to hear more of terms like 'interdependence', 'coordination' and 'cooperation'. This has raised hopes among the developing countries that a business-like dialogue over issues of mutual concern could still be possible. With some effort and good intentions, the idea of a "development round" at the WTO could come to fruition.

The Bretton Woods twins — IMF and World Bank — as well as the WTO, voiced some concern over poverty reduction at the Bangkok meeting. It is somewhat surprising that the IMF, which has generally concerned itself with the balance of payments problems of countries in trouble, should engage in a dialogue on poverty reduction. Not so surprisingly, its stringent conditionalities for bail-out cases came under fire. Following the recent exit of the Bank's chief economist, Joseph Stiglitz, there have been some attempt to turn the light inward and engage in some soul-searching on the important issue of poverty. UNCTAD, on the other hand, has always been positive on developmental issues. It has favoured easier access to markets of the developed countries. No wonder, therefore, that the Bangkok meeting warmed up to the cause of developing countries, specially under the chairmanship of Supachai Pantichpakdi of the host country.

Mr Pantichpakdi is slated to take over as head of the WTO after Mike Moore. UNCTAD's Secretary General Rubens Ricupero, who hails from Brazil, has also contributed to the process. Thus, the concept of a fresh dialogue between developing and industrial countries has once again gained momentum. The IMF's Michael Camdessus has suggested the expansion of the G7 to include 30 more countries. If implemented, this would enlarge the dialogue even further. This also lends some hope, however fragile, to the much hyped-up idea of ushering in a new world economic order.

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U.N.'S CHALLENGES IN EAST TIMOR

THE U.N. SECRETARY-GENERAL, Mr. Kofi Annan's visit to East Timor last week was timely and symbolic. He chose to visit Dili and its environs for a first-hand assessment of the ground realities even as a U.N. peace force takes charge from multinational troops called the International Force for East Timor (INTERFET). The command for the peace-keeping operation switches from Australia to the Philippines, which was chosen because it is part of ASEAN and more acceptable to Indonesia. It was an emotional Secretary-General who shared the grief of the East Timorese and placed a wreath in a church where not very long ago, pro-Jakarta militia massacred the locals. Mr. Kofi Annan held discussions in Jakarta with the President, Mr. Abdurrahman Wahid, and his senior Ministers, before meeting up with the East Timorese leader, Mr. Xanana Gusmao, in Dili. The U.N. is preparing to take on its first major challenge in peace-keeping and reconstruction in the new millennium. It will be a daunting challenge by any standards and could become not only a test case for the world body, but also a precursor for more such assignments in future. That is what makes East Timor a unique and important milestone.

Conditions seem to be ripe for the launch of a massive reconstruction exercise in this former Portuguese colony. A courageous Indonesian President, Mr. Wahid, has sacked his Political and Security Affairs Minister, Gen. Wiranto, who was till last year the chief of the armed forces and indicted by a U.N. probe

team. This was a strong signal by the President that he is fully in command and ready to cooperate with the U.N. for a smooth transition in East Timor. It has to be seen when the Attorney-General begins the real inquiry into the massacres and violence in East Timor, following the independence vote last year. And if Gen. Wiranto and his regional commanders are indeed held responsible in any way for sponsoring or silently supporting what looked to be genocide, there can be a serious situation on hand. Will the President grant amnesty to the Generals or let the law take its course?

Now that an alternative political leadership is at hand in East Timor and the U.N.'s Transitional Administration (UNTAET) is already in place, the stage is set for establishing a Government of national reconciliation there. Without delay, Mr. Gusmao and the U.N. team must draw up a list of priorities in rehabilitation and reconstruction work. The refugees from Darwin in Australia and West Timor must now return to their villages and begin to rebuild their homes. With international help, UNTAET must begin capacity and institution building in the territory through a comprehensive programme of human resource development. A multi-pronged effort to reconstruct the economy, start cottage and small industries to generate employment, retrain and humanise insurgents to take over policing duties and set up systems of local and national governance must be finalised and implemented. It is now time to act, time to begin the reconstruction of East Timor.

Kofi asks Council to decide Iraq disarm team chief fast

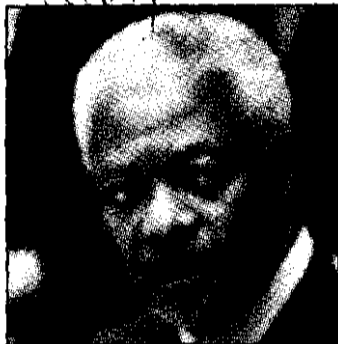
United Nations, January 14 ^{UN}

UN SECRETARY General Kofi Annan told key Security Council members to agree on one of the three candidates to head a new UN Disarmament Agency for Iraq or come to another conclusion quickly, diplomats said.

Mr Annan had hoped to announce today his choice of a new executive chairman for the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (Unmovic) created by the Security Council on December 17.

Aides said he was concerned by the failure of the council's five permanent members to agree on a candidate and meet their own Sunday deadline, a reflection of the deep divisions that paralysed policy toward Iraq for a year.

After Mr Annan yesterday held a



meeting with the five permanent council members -- United States, Russia, Britain, China and France -- he would meet them again today, UN spokesman Fred Eckhard said. Mr Annan then plans to meet the council's 10 non-permanent members.

According to a senior Chinese diplomat, the three candidates

mentioned by Mr Annan are Celso Amorim, Pasi Patokallio and Rolf Ekeus. Celso Amorim, Brazil's former UN ambassador is now at the United Nations in Geneva. He chaired several panels last year on UN policy toward Iraq. The United States and Britain last week opposed him on the grounds that he did not have a disarmament background.

Pasi Patokallio is a Finnish disarmament expert and now his country's ambassador to Israel and Cyprus. The US and Britain backed him, but others were against his candidacy. Rolf Ekeus has headed the UN Special Commission (Unsc) since its inception in 1991 until 1997, when he became Sweden's ambassador in Washington. Iraq is said to oppose Ekeus, and diplomats indicated Russia and China would follow suit. *(Reuters)*

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES
15 JAN 2000

Hurdles in selection of UNMOVIC head

By Kesava Menon

MANAMA (BAHRAIN) JAN. 16. The difficulties being faced by the United Nations Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Annan, in his search for a person to head the new Iraq weapons inspections commission indicates the magnitude of the diplomatic effort that Baghdad has made to evade its isolation.

Although Iraq does not have a direct say in the matter, Mr. Annan has to find a person who is acceptable to Russia, China and France and lesser powers with a seat in the Security Council. In pressuring Mr. Annan to choose a person who is more widely acceptable, the dare some are clearly seeking an end to the indefinite extension of sanctions against Iraq.

By the last week end, Mr. Annan was to have named the head of a newly-constituted special commission mandated to discover and dismantle whatever remains (if it does) of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programme. The new U.N. Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) replaced the former U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) which had worked at dismantling Iraq's WMD capability since 1991. UNSCOM stopped its work in December 1998 after its methodologies made it impossible for Iraq to co-operate.

With the resignation of UNSCOM's executive chairman, Mr. Richard Butler in the middle of last year, the body had become defunct. On Dec. 17 last year, the Security Council passed U.N. Resolution No. 1284, setting up UNMOVIC and apparently trying to achieve the two objectives of erasing Iraq's WMD capability and thereby creating the conditions for a lifting of sanctions.

UNMOVIC has yet to start functioning for

the primary reason that the Security Council has not been able to agree on the person to be appointed its executive chairman. According to Western media reports, Mr. Annan had short-listed 18 names but most were rejected by either of the two blocs within the Security Council's permanent members — the U.S. and the U.K. on the one hand and the threesome on the other. Mr. Annan had apparently wanted to appoint Mr. Rolf Ekeus who had headed UNSCOM till 1996 but this appointment appears to have been put in abeyance either because the Iraqis objected or Mr. Ekeus was himself disinclined. Iraq has also firmly stated that it will not co-operate with an executive chairman from one of the NATO countries.

The personality of the executive chairman is crucial. It is unlikely that there will be a complete overhaul of the UNSCOM framework. Weapons experts who worked with UNSCOM were recruited from all over the world and though theoretically most of them could probably be replaced, it is unlikely that the U.N. would be happy to lose people who have gathered experience in working with Iraq.

Administrative and logistical personnel working for UNSCOM also have experience of dealing with the difficult conditions they could encounter in Iraq. It all backs up to the executive chairman and as Mr. Ekeus in his earlier posting, and more so Mr. Butler demonstrated, the executive chairman can have a decisive say in how the commission functions.

UNMOVIC, like UNSCOM, is mandated to discover and dismantle Iraq's capabilities in the fields of chemical and biological weapons and missile delivery systems. When the relevant U.N. resolutions contain words such as "discovery" and "capabilities" in respect of these fields, it can open the scope for wide

ranging activity which goes beyond the scope of weapons inspections as strictly understood.

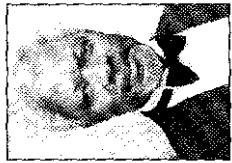
Under Mr. Butler, UNSCOM interpreted the relevant resolutions in the broadest of terms, as for instance, when they questioned university students on the grounds that they might have some knowledge of their country's capability in biological weapons. Iraq had also complained that UNSCOM was illegally prying into the functioning of their state security apparatus. Mr. Butler appeared to have interpreted the relevant resolutions in such a way that Iraq would either have to throw open every detail of its state system to outside inspection or be accused of non-cooperation.

After the stoppage of UNSCOM's work in 1998 and the subsequent bombing of Iraq (Desert Fox), Russia in particular had stated that it would not commence Mr. Butler's return to Iraq as head of the commission. The Russians, like many other people in the world, seemed to be convinced that Mr. Butler was more interested in fulfilling the U.S. policy of keeping Iraq in indefinite international isolation than in fulfilling UNSCOM's mandate. This time Russia and the two other permanent members appear determined to ensure that the head of UNMOVIC will direct the commission to its mandated task.

Given the U.S.'s global clout and the importance it places on Iraq's continued international isolation, the appointment of the UNMOVIC head will not necessarily smooth the path to a conclusion of the inspection programme. But the shenanigans that have been played out for the past nine years have clearly eroded the moral platitudes which were used to cover a hidden agenda behind the inspection programme.

UN is undecided on arms inspector for Iraq

UNITED NATIONS: The Security Council remained divided over the choice of a new UN chief arms inspector for Iraq, hours before the deadline it had set itself for approving the appointment.



Kofi Annan

Council Resolution 1284, passed on December 17, gave UN secretary-general Kofi Annan 30 days to name the chairman of the new UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (unmovic).

It asked him to make his choice after consulting Council members and with their approval.

Diplomats said this month's

Council president, US ambassador Richard Holbrooke, had told the 15 Council members he was ready to convene a meeting if there was a consensus behind a name recommended by Mr Annan. But Mr Annan's spokesman said on Sunday that no Council meeting had been called.

Diplomats said that among names Mr Annan had suggested was that of Rolf Ekenc, a former chairman of the now disbanded UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) who is now Swedish ambassador to Washington. Russia and China opposed his nomination, the diplomats said.

Iraq has reiterated that the UN resolution calling for a suspension of sanctions on Baghdad if it cooperated with a new arms body was unacceptable.

The resolution with its provi-

sions that are currently in place are unacceptable to Iraq," deputy foreign minister Nizar Hamdoun said.

"We've considered it, as something that Iraq cannot at this point deal with," Mr Hamdoun added. The Security Council issued a resolution last month which could lead to the inspectors being sent back to Iraq and an easing of sanctions if Baghdad cooperates with a new UN disarmament agency.

Mr Hamdoun said Iraq would consider a solution that would be acceptable to both Iraq and the Council.

"When they try to find a solution that is acceptable to Iraq and acceptable to the Council, we look into this possibility," he said. He also described UN difficulties in finding an acceptable chairman for a new arms inspection agency as a

"headache". Meanwhile, former US attorney general Ramsey Clark has arrived in Baghdad as the head of a delegation of humanitarian organisations bringing aid worth \$2million on the anniversary of the launch of the 1991 Gulf War.

Mr Clark was quoted by the official INA news agency as saying that the embargo imposed on Iraq after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait represented a "serious violation of human rights and a genocide against the peaceful Iraqi people."

Mr Clark's mission, named Iraq Sanctions Challenge III, groups together 16 non-government organisations from Britain, Canada, Italy, Japan and the US and is the third of its kind since Iraq's 1990 invasion. During its stay, the delegation will visit hospitals and schools. (Agencies)

U.N. Council differs on Ekeus

UNITED NATIONS, JAN. 19. The Security Council has failed to agree on a new U.N. Chief Weapons Inspector for Iraq after Russia, France and China opposed the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan's candidate, Mr. Rolf Ekeus of Sweden.

Following a two-hour meeting yesterday, the Council members decided to continue consultations among themselves until they could agree on a candidate for the new U.N. Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC).

The U.S. Ambassador, Mr. Richard Holbrooke, this month's Council President, said there was no 'artificial' deadline, an indication the process could take weeks in the Council, whose key members have been divided for years over Iraq policies.

The U.S. backs Mr. Ekeus, the first Executive Chairman of the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM), formed after the 1991 Gulf war to rid Iraq of weapons of mass destruction. He is now Sweden's Ambassador to Washington.

Mr. Holbrooke insisted that Mr. Ekeus' candidacy was still in play but other diplomats said this was no longer the case. He said the U.S. Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, would discuss the issue by phone with her counterparts.

Iraq 'not concerned'

In Baghdad, the Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Tariq Aziz, said Mr. Annan's proposal was of no consequence to Baghdad, which rejects any weapons inspections.

"The decision of the Secretary-General of the United Nations (to nominate Mr. Ekeus) does not concern us, because Iraq's position on the Security Council resolution is well known," Mr. Aziz said yesterday. — Reuters, AFP

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