

SOUTH AFRICA AND "THE AGENDA FOR PEACE"

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INTRODUCTION

On 31 January 1992 the UN Security Council, at a meeting of Heads of State and Government, requested the UN Secretary-General to prepare an analysis of the capacity of the United Nations for preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacekeeping by 1 January 1993. It was also requested that recommendations be made on ways of strengthening and developing the efficacy of this capacity within the provisions of the UN Charter.

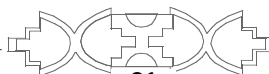
The Secretary-General's observations culminated in a report named An Agenda for Peace. In this report, Dr Boutros-Ghali has remarked that the period of global transition currently being experienced, is marked by a tendency in which regional and continental associations of states are evolving ways of deepening co-operation. In the process, national boundaries are blurred and states are seen to yield some sovereign prerogatives to larger common political associations. However, fierce new assertions of nationalism and sovereignty are experienced at the same time and the cohesion of states is threatened by ethnic, religious, social, cultural or linguistic strife.

With the Cold War era in the past, the international community is in a better position to cope with global conflict through the UN Security Council, especially as the Council now endeavours to use consensus as the basis of its decisions, as it has illustrated during the Gulf War. This *modus operandi* has enhanced the effectiveness of the Council considerably. This is of great importance when considering that the Security Council was rendered powerless to deal with global conflict during the Cold War era to a large extent as a result of 279 vetoes that were applied, with the last one in May 1990.

It should be realised that the traditional concept of peacekeeping has come a long way since the first armed UN peacekeeping operation, when the UN Emergency Force (UNEF) patrolled the Egyptian side of the Israel-Egypt armistice demarcation line in the Gaza strip, from late 1956 to June 1967. In contrast, by March 1995 the UN was actively involved in thirty separate efforts to prevent conflict and had sixteen peacekeeping operation contingents deployed, involving military and civilian personnel of almost 64 000. The annual budget for UN peacekeeping efforts amounts at present to US\$ 3,6 billion.

APPROACHES TO ENSURE GLOBAL PEACE

These factors call for a new approach in ensuring global peace. The Secretary-General has defined different categories in which the prevention of



conflict could be dealt with, namely preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding. These categories are defined as follows:

- Preventive diplomacy is action to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflict, and to limit the spread of the latter when it occurs.
- Peacemaking is action to bring hostile parties to agreement, essentially through such peaceful means as those foreseen in Chapter 6 of the UN Charter.
- Peacekeeping is the deployment of a United Nations presence in the field, normally with the consent of all parties concerned, and usually involving United Nations military and/or police personnel. It frequently expands the possibilities for both preventing conflict and making peace.
- Peacebuilding is action to identify and support structures that will strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict.

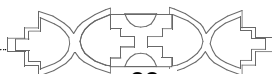
Just as diplomacy will continue to prevent conflict and ensure peace across the span of all activities, there may not be a clear dividing line between peacemaking and peacekeeping. The deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping force may, for instance, enhance the possibilities for the prevention of conflict, facilitate the process of peacemaking and, in some cases, also serve as a prerequisite for peacebuilding.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND EXAMPLES

It normally takes considerable time for the actual deployment of a UN peacekeeping force after the Security Council has mandated it. The Secretary-General promotes the idea of preventive deployment as a precautionary measure. This would mean that peacekeeping forces could be deployed in a state where crisis conditions already exist or in an inter-state conflict situation where the conflicting states are of the opinion that a UN presence on both sides of their borders could discourage hostilities.

To accelerate the process of deployment further, the Secretary-General elaborated on this aspect in the Supplement to an Agenda for Peace, published in January 1995. He has recommended that the United Nations give serious consideration to the employment of a rapid reaction peacekeeping force. Such a force, drawn from the armed forces of a number of UN member states, would be the Security Council's strategic reserve for emergency situations where the rapid deployment of peacekeeping forces is necessary. These troops would be stationed in their home countries and would maintain a high level of readiness.

Some UN member states have also initiated discussions on the possibility of keeping UN troops on standby, with the idea that such troops can be deployed in the field as a temporary measure, immediately after a Security Council mandate for the deployment of troops, and until the bulk of the peacekeeping contingent has arrived.



In 1950 the Security Council of the United Nations authorised a group of UN member states to undertake peace enforcement action in the Korean Peninsula as provided for in Chapter 7 of the UN Charter. It did so again in 1990 in response to the aggression against Kuwait. More recently, the Security Council has authorised groups of UN member states to undertake enforcement action, if necessary, to create conditions for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia and Rwanda, as well as to facilitate the return to democracy in Haiti.

In the same vein, the Council has authorised, through regional arrangements, the use of force by member states in Bosnia and Herzegovina to ensure compliance with its ban on military flights in the country's air space, to defend UN personnel, and to deter attacks against the UN declared "safe areas" through which humanitarian assistance is channelled.

The Secretary-General admits that the UN only has a limited capacity for peace enforcement at present. It would be inappropriate, however, for the UN to develop such a capacity at this stage when the organisation is starved of resources and hard pressed even to handle the less demanding peacemaking and peacekeeping responsibilities entrusted to it.

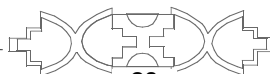
THE PROMOTION OF GLOBAL SECURITY

It should be clear that the world has now moved into a phase where the key goals of the UN Charter, namely common or Global Security can be actively promoted in the absence of bipolar divisions. Common security requires a less threatening approach that is quite different to that which the world has become accustomed to, such as meetings between allies to map out collective defence strategies. The Secretary-General's An Agenda for Peace thus requires a rethinking of the future role of the UN in securing global peace and preventing conflict.

Another factor that goes hand-in-hand with concepts such as peace, stability and the prevention of conflict, is that of development. In An Agenda for Peace, Dr Boutros-Ghali identifies the promotion of sustainable economic and social development as one method through which the sources of conflict could be countered.

Development was again emphasised in the Secretary-General's Agenda for Development published in May 1994. The Agenda for Development calls for a "universal, human-centred environmental protection, special justice and democracy". The most urgent task of development, according to the Secretary-General, is to attack the causes and symptoms of poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy. A co-ordinated, comprehensive approach to development is, in his view, the only way to effectively mobilise public opinion, address the problem of donor fatigue and attract development assistance.

In Section II, entitled "Dimensions of development", the Agenda for Development set out five major and intertwined dimensions in development: peace, economic growth, environmental protection, social justice and democracy. In a later section the report states, "*Without peace, human energies cannot be productively employed over time. Without economic growth, there will be a lack of resources to apply to any problem. Without a*



healthy environment productivity will devour the basis of human progress. Without societal justice, inequalities will consume the best efforts at positive change. Without political participation in freedom, people will have no voice in shaping their individual and common destiny”.

The UN Charter determines that all UN member states should make a contribution towards global peace.

Article 43.1 of the UN Charter determines further that: “*all members of the United Nations, in order to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security, undertake to make available to the Security Council, on its call and in accordance with a special agreement or agreements, armed forces, assistance, and facilities, including rights of passage, necessary for the purpose of maintaining international peace and security”.*

Article 45 of the UN Charter determines that “[i]n order to enable the United Nations to take urgent military measures, members shall hold immediately available national air-force contingents for combined international enforcement action. The strength and degree of readiness of these contingents and plans for their combined action shall be determined, within the limits laid down in the special agreement or agreements referred to in Article 43, by the Security Council with the assistance of the Military Staff Committee”.

In practice this will entail a request by the UN Secretary-General, on behalf of the UN Security Council, to UN member states or groups of member states to make contributions of some kind to peace support efforts. Any agreements reached in this regard, however, are subject to ratification by the signatory state or states in accordance with their constitutional process.

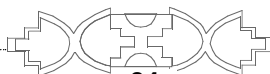
SOUTH AFRICAN INVOLVEMENT IN PROMOTING SECURITY

The South African Department of Foreign Affairs has prepared the following procedure to deal with such requests by the United Nations Secretary-General:

1. Upon receipt of such a request, the Department of Foreign Affairs will have the responsibility to ascertain whether the South African Government will be in a position both logistically and financially to provide the requested assistance. Should this be the case, the political dimensions of participation will then receive attention.
2. Should participation be approved by the political authorities, the United Nations will be informed of South Africa’s readiness to make a contribution and, will at the same time be provided with a detailed description of personnel and material to be seconded, as well as an indication of a time frame for involvement.

This *modus operandi* will lead to an agreement between the South African Government and the United Nations on the scope of South African involvement.

It should also be mentioned that South Africa is not pressurised to contribute troops to peacekeeping operations, as has been speculated in the media



recently. Like all other UN member states, South African contributions to UN peace support can potentially cover the entire spectrum and will, in the first place, be determined by available resources. As is also the case with all other UN member states, final decisions in this regard will be taken by the political authorities of South Africa, who are, in the final analysis, accountable to the South African public.

The entire spectrum of global conflict prevention and management, however, has become an extremely expensive exercise. South Africa's own obligatory contribution to UN peace support efforts currently accounts for 0,34 per cent of the total UN budget earmarked for peace support operations. This makes South Africa the single largest contributor on the African continent with Libya second at 0,21 per cent. South Africa's contribution is more than double that of Nigeria and nearly five times that of Egypt.

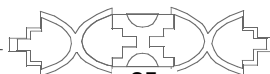
Apart from its financial contributions, South Africa will have to consider ways of contributing in a practical manner towards the Secretary-General's Agenda for Peace. All requests for participation in UN peace support efforts will be individually evaluated by South Africa, and it is the intention to employ a gradual approach by initially concentrating on preventive diplomacy, peace-making and humanitarian assistance.

Should a political decision be made for South Africa to contribute troops to UN peacekeeping operations some time in the future, South Africa will at least have to be assured that UN involvement has been consented to by the conflicting parties. Such a prerequisite would ensure, at least to some degree, the safety of our troops. An absence of consent could easily turn a peacekeeping operation into a peace enforcement situation where peacekeeping troops are obliged to defend themselves, resulting in the possible loss of life.

Although the SANDF can be proud of its expertise and readiness, the challenge for South Africa - as a UN member state - will be to develop those capabilities that will enable it to act as peacekeeper within the context of multinational, multicomponent forces where South Africa is not a party to the conflict. This will place a special political responsibility on the Government.

South Africa finds itself in the unique position where its own successful transformation to democracy has been strengthened by structures such as the National Peace Secretariat and the presence of UN Peace and Election Observers. The United Nations has interpreted its involvement in South Africa as an exercise in preventive diplomacy. The internal transformation process which preceded the April 1994 elections could also be classified as such.

Chapter 8 of the UN Charter provides for regional arrangements in respect of peace support initiatives. Its own experience in preventive diplomacy has enabled South Africa, together with Botswana and Zimbabwe, to play a positive role in preventing conflict in Lesotho. South Africa also contributed towards the peace processes in Angola and Mozambique. As an elected member of the OAU Organ of Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, South Africa is currently involved in efforts to bring about peace in all states on the continent where conflict prevails.



The country's main concern, however, lies with the civilian populations who are the primary victims of effects of conflict. The donation of emergency relief supplies by the government and the people of South Africa to the population in Rwanda amply demonstrates this commitment. Furthermore, the donation of two vehicles to the World Food Programme for use in Rwanda should also be seen within this context.

Peacebuilding is another aspect high on South Africa's agenda. The recent deployment of South African election observers a part of both the UN and OAU election observer teams in Mozambique is regarded as an important contribution to peacebuilding.

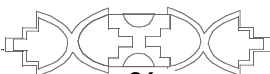
However, elections do not necessarily signal the end of a potential for conflict. It remains important for countries to be assisted by other states in their region, as well as by the international community at large, during a post-conflict era. South Africa's role will once again be determined by resource restrictions, and the intensity of the problem. Areas where we have the expertise to make a contribution, such as agriculture and mine lifting, should be further explored.

SOUTH AFRICA AND ARMS CONTROL

There are many other problem areas which the Secretary-General identified as obstacles to peace, one of them being in the field of non-proliferation and arms control. The South African Government has committed itself on numerous occasions to a policy of non-proliferation and arms control that covers all weapons of mass destruction. The country is also party to a number of treaties and conventions regulating these issues, such as:

- The Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapons Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water, and it supports further negotiations aimed at the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban treaty.
- The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological and Toxic Weapons and Their Destruction.
- The Convention of the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction.
- South Africa also ratified the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons on 10 July 1991, and recently supported the extension of this Treaty, participating in the Review and Extension Conference in New York.

The end of the Cold War and the process of transition undergone by a number of states in the Southern African region, have led to enormous quantities of arms being sold on illegal markets within the region. South Africa is aware of and concerned about the fact that there is room for improvement with regard to effective control mechanisms over these weapons that are also increasingly used in criminal activities. As this situation poses a real threat to peace and stability in the region, South Africa is already co-operating with its neighbours in various ways to address the problem.



A Working Committee was established at the UN to further strengthen the recommendations of the Secretary-General contained in his Agenda for Peace and the Supplement to the Agenda for Peace. South Africa participates in these debates on an on-going basis and the public is also invited to channel contributions to this debate through the section responsible for global security of the South African Department of Foreign Affairs.

CONCLUSION

The UN's ability to deal effectively with conflict on a global scale will, in the final instance, be determined by the financial means at its disposal. The Secretary-General has therefore proposed that a set of measures be adopted to deal with cash flow problems caused by the high level of unpaid contributions by UN member states. Other measures such as the establishment of a Special Peacekeeping Reserve Fund and a Humanitarian Revolving Fund have also been suggested.

The creation of such mechanisms would most likely only bring temporary relief. With the current escalation in the rate of conflict world-wide, the UN will simply not be able to cope with the financial demands that the effective management of global conflict will place on it. The problem is further complicated by the reluctance of some UN members to contribute troops to UN peacekeeping operations. Participation of this kind places an extra financial burden upon member states. It could also take considerable time before participating states are partially reimbursed by the UN for expenses incurred.

The accent on the merits of preventive diplomacy should be interpreted against this background. The time has arrived to bring to the attention of the parties involved in both intra- and inter-state violence that the international community will not be able to cope with the financial demands of their continued conflict. More importantly, the price paid by civilians as a result of conflict can no longer be tolerated. Parties involved in a situation where conflict is developing, should therefore accept timely regional and international mediation. Preventive diplomacy is the first step towards protecting civilians against the devastating effects of conflict.

