

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Three inescapable observations form the foundation of this report. First, deadly conflict is not inevitable. Violence on the scale of what we have seen in Bosnia, Rwanda, Somalia, and elsewhere does not emerge inexorably from human interaction. Second, the need to prevent deadly conflict is increasingly urgent. The rapid compression of the world through breathtaking population growth, technological advancement, and economic interdependence, combined with the readily available supply of deadly weapons and easily transmitted contagion of hatred and incitement to violence, make it essential and urgent to find ways to prevent disputes from turning massively violent. Third, preventing deadly conflict is possible. The problem is not that we do not know about incipient and large-scale violence; it is that we often do not act. Examples from “hot spots” around the world illustrate that the potential for violence can be defused through the early, skillful, and integrated application of political, diplomatic, economic, and military measures.

The Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict does not believe in the unavoidable clash of civilizations or in an inevitably violent future. War and mass violence usually result from deliberate political decisions, and the Commission believes that these decisions can be affected so that mass violence does not result.

To undertake effective preventive action, the Commission believes that we must develop an international commitment to the concept of prevention, a habit of preventive investment, more effective regimes for controlling destructive weaponry, and a working portfolio of legal standards that rest on a normative consensus regarding the responsibilities of governments to each other and to their peoples. Responsible leaders, key intergovernmental and nongovernmental institutions, and civil society can do far better in preventing deadly conflict than the record of this century and the current epidemic of violence suggest.

THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

Violent conflict has often resulted from the traditional preoccupation of states to defend, maintain, or extend interests and power. A number of dangerous situations today can be understood in these terms. Yet, one of the most remarkable aspects of the post–Cold War world is that wars within states vastly outnumber wars between states. These internal conflicts commonly are fought with conventional weapons and rely on strategies of ethnic expulsion and annihilation. More civilians are killed than soldiers (by one estimate at the rate of about nine to one), and belligerents use strategies and tactics that deliberately target women, children, the poor, and the weak.

Many factors and conditions make societies prone to warfare: weak, corrupt, or collapsed states; illegitimate or repressive regimes; acute discrimination against ethnic or other social groups; poorly managed religious, cultural, or ethnic differences; politically active religious communities that promote hostile and divisive messages; political and economic legacies of colonialism or the Cold War; sudden economic and political shifts; widespread illiteracy, disease, and disability; lack of resources such as water and arable land; large stores of weapons and ammunition; and threatening regional relationships. When long-standing grievances are exploited by political demagogues, the scene is set for violence.

The Commission's work has identified three broad aims of preventive action:

- **First, prevent the emergence of violent conflict.** This is done by creating capable states with representative governance based on the rule of law, with widely available economic opportunity, social safety nets, protection of fundamental human rights, and robust civil societies. The aim is to prevent dangerous circumstances from developing and coalescing through efforts to establish these more desirable circumstances. A network of interlocking international regimes underwritten by the rule of law provides a supporting environment for this purpose. This approach is comparable to primary prevention in public health—and has been the Commission's main emphasis.
- **Second, prevent ongoing conflicts from spreading.** This is done by creating political, economic, and, if necessary, military barriers to limit the spread of conflict within

and between states. Firebreaks may be created through well-designed assertive efforts to deny belligerents the ability to resupply arms, ammunition, and hard currency, combined with humanitarian operations that provide relief for innocent victims.

- **Third, prevent the reemergence of violence.** This is done through the creation of a safe and secure environment in the aftermath of conflict and the achievement of a peace settlement. This environment can be established through the rapid introduction of security forces to separate enemies, oversee disarmament plans, and provide a stabilizing presence. Simultaneous, immediate steps will also be necessary to restore legitimate political authority, to install functioning police, judicial, and penal systems, and to integrate external and internal efforts to restore essential services and restart normal economic activity.

Effective preventive strategies rest on three principles: early reaction to signs of trouble; a comprehensive, balanced approach to alleviate the pressures, or risk factors, that trigger violent conflict; and an extended effort to resolve the underlying root causes of violence.

- **Early reaction to signs of trouble.** Early action requires early detection and skilled analysis of developing trends. In addition, leaders and governments will need to formulate clear statements of interest, develop measured, pragmatic courses of action to respond to the warning signs, and provide support for locally sustainable solutions. Normally, early reaction will also require

broad political consultations to gain the confidence of the parties to the dispute and to establish a common framework for preventive engagement. And this demands that governments develop a flexible repertoire of political, economic, and military measures—and options for their use—to stop dangerous trends.

- **A comprehensive, balanced approach to alleviate the pressures that trigger violent conflict.** Large-scale crises strain the capacity of any single government or international organization. This strain becomes particularly unbearable when, as is often the case in intrastate disputes, a government is itself party to a worsening conflict. Outside help is often necessary to deal with building crises within and between states. An effective response usually requires a range of political, economic, social, and military measures and the deliberate coordination of those measures.
- **An extended effort to resolve the underlying root causes of violence.** Discrimination and deprivation combine in deadly fashion, particularly when deliberately and systematically imposed. To address the root causes of violence, leaders and governments must ensure fundamental security, well-being, and justice for all citizens. Such a structural approach to prevention not only makes people better off, it inhibits the tendency to use violence to settle differences.

Strategies for prevention fall into two broad categories: operational prevention (measures applicable in the face of immediate crisis) and structural prevention (measures to ensure that crises do not arise in the first place or, if

they do, that they do not recur). The report develops these approaches and suggests how governments, international organizations, and the various institutions of civil society might implement them.

OPERATIONAL PREVENTION: Strategies in the Face of Crisis

When violence appears imminent, the responsibility for operational prevention falls mainly on those closest to an unfolding crisis. But since the parties in a crisis often cannot find nonviolent solutions on their own, the help of outsiders is necessary in many instances. It is of vital importance, however, that the economic, military, or diplomatic actions and policies of outsiders not exacerbate dangerous situations. Even well-intentioned efforts, if not carefully planned, can make matters worse.

Operational prevention relies on early engagement to help create conditions in which responsible leaders can resolve the problems giving rise to the crisis. Four key elements increase prospects for success:

- A lead player—an international organization, country, or even prominent individual around which or whom preventive efforts can mobilize
- A coherent political–military approach to the engagement designed to arrest the violence, address the humanitarian needs of the situation, and integrate all political and military aspects of the problem
- Adequate resources to support the preventive engagement

- A plan for the restoration of host country authority (particularly applicable to intrastate conflict)

These elements provide a framework for applying various preventive political, economic, social, and military measures. These steps may not be sufficient in themselves to forestall violence indefinitely, but they can help open up the political space and time necessary for those closest to the conflict to pursue other means to resolve the dispute. The following discussion explores this framework and many of the measures the Commission believes can be used to prevent the emergence of mass violence.

Leadership

Effective leadership derives from a special relationship or capacity that makes an organization, government, agency, or prominent individual the logical focal point for rallying the help of the international community. For example, U.S. leadership in the Gulf War, supported strongly by the UN, was critical in maintaining unity within a diverse coalition of nations; and in the early 1990s, the UN led an ambitious international peace initiative in Cambodia. In most cases, the active support of the members of the UN Security Council—especially the permanent members—is important to success.

A Comprehensive Political–Military Response

Preventive responses must seek not only to reduce the potential for violence but also to create the basic conditions to encourage moderation and make responsible political control possible. This means that in the acute phase of

a crisis, assertive efforts may be necessary to deny belligerents weapons and ammunition. These military steps may need to be complemented by economic steps to deny access to the hard currency to procure weapons and pay combatants (steps that themselves demand that outsiders refrain from providing weapons, funds, and other resources to factions in conflict). In addition, humanitarian assistance will usually be needed to help noncombatant victims of the crisis, and such assistance must be carried on in close coordination with the other political, military, and economic efforts under way. This last point bears emphasis: the crisis response must integrate the humanitarian, economic, political, and military elements if it is to have increased prospects for success.

Moreover, an integrated response should bring together the efforts of governments, international organizations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and private relief agencies. It should also coordinate the efforts of outside parties with those of the local responsible leadership.

Resources

As a crisis escalates, and even as efforts begin to help defuse its effects, political rhetoric to mobilize preventive efforts often outpaces the flow of resources, which consists of cash and contributions “in kind” by governments, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and global NGOs, such as CARE and Oxfam. Significant resources also come from many smaller humanitarian organizations, such as Médecins Sans Frontières, and other private sector agencies. While these nongovernmental and private sector organizations may not play leading roles in either mobilizing the international response to a crisis or in developing the

general plan of engagement, their services and resources are vital to the larger effort and should be systematically integrated into the overall approach.

Transition to Host Nation Control

The international response to a potentially explosive intrastate situation, from its outset, must plan for the full restoration of authority and responsibility to the leaders of the country in crisis. The participation of community and national leaders in all aspects of the international response helps allay fears regarding the motives of outside parties, and a plan to restore local authority also reassures outsiders that their job will come to an end. While many governments may be willing to help in a crisis, few if any are willing to stay indefinitely—competing domestic demands and other international concerns drastically restrict even a willing government’s ability to engage in a costly international effort over the long term. The Commission believes that the primary responsibility to avoid the reemergence of violence once peace has been achieved belongs to the people and their legitimate leaders; they must resume complete responsibility for their own affairs at the earliest opportunity.

Measures to avoid imminent violence fall into four broad groups:

- Early warning and early response
- Preventive diplomacy
- Economic measures, such as sanctions and inducements
- The use of force

Early Warning and Early Response

The capacity to anticipate and analyze possible conflicts is a prerequisite for prudent decision making and effective action. Indicators of imminent violence include widespread human rights abuses, increasingly brutal political oppression, inflammatory use of the media, the accumulation of arms, and sometimes a rash of organized killings. This was certainly true of the violence in Rwanda and Bosnia in the first half of the 1990s.

Yet even practical early warning will not ensure successful preventive action unless there is a fundamental change of attitude by governments and international organizations. A systematic and practical early warning system should be combined with constantly updated contingency plans for preventive action. This would be a radical advance on the present system where, when a trigger event sets off an explosion of violence, it is usually too difficult, too costly, and too late for a rapid and effective response. Thus, in addition to the relatively easy identification of major hot spots and checklists of problem conditions, policymakers also need specific knowledge of the major elements of destabilization and the way in which they are likely to coalesce to precipitate an outbreak of violence.

During the early stages of a crisis, policymakers should not only be attentive to how circumstances could worsen, but they should also be alert for opportunities to make constructive use of local issues and processes that could help avoid violence. And they should exercise great care as to whom they support and how that support is offered.

States, international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, business enterprises, religious leaders, scientific groups, and

the media all have, in their different ways, a capacity for early warning. NGOs, for example, are often the first to be aware of, and to act in, crisis areas, and they have a wealth of information regarding the conditions and grievances that give rise to violence. (Indeed, the disruption of normal NGO operations is itself an early warning signal that conditions are deteriorating dangerously, a signal that governments often miss.) For example, in Rwanda, the human rights NGO Africa Watch warned in 1993 that Hutu extremists had compiled lists of individuals to be targeted for retribution—individuals who the next year were among the first victims.

But there are problems involved when humanitarian and other nongovernmental and private sector groups take on an increased information and early warning role. The information these groups provide is not always accurate or balanced. Many conflicts today occur in relatively remote regions where accurate information about the competing sides and their partisans is hard to obtain, which makes it difficult to form a valid picture of the overall situation. Moreover, humanitarian organizations, business enterprises, and religious institutions that operate regularly within or near crisis areas develop their own agendas that often do not conform to those of governments, the parties to the dispute, or outsiders. Thus, what might appear to one group as an unambiguous opportunity for action may be seen as the opposite by another.

Governments and international organizations are ultimately best suited to alert the broader international community to a coming crisis and to assess the validity of the information available from other sources. But they seldom do so; there are no mechanisms in place for governments or the decision-making bodies

of the major regional organizations to acquire systematically the information that international and national NGOs, religious leaders and institutions, the business community, or other elements of civil society have accumulated from years of involvement. There are signs that this may be changing, however. In a major report on UN reform issued in July 1997, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan recognized the importance of NGOs and other elements of civil society and acknowledged the essential contribution they make to UN operations.

In sum, it is difficult for major governments to claim that they did not know that violence on the scale of a Rwanda or Bosnia could happen. Similarly, it is implausible for such governments, especially of the larger, more powerful, and wealthy states, to claim that nothing could be done to avert such crises. Increasingly, they are being held accountable not only for “What did they know and when did they know it?” but also for “What could they have done and when should they have done it?”

To repeat, to prevent deadly conflict, the problem is less one of early warning than of early action. As a first step, diplomatic engagement can help overcome this problem.

Preventive Diplomacy

When crisis threatens, traditional diplomacy continues, but more urgent efforts are also made—through unilateral and multilateral channels—to pressure, cajole, arbitrate, mediate, or lend “good offices” to encourage dialogue and facilitate a nonviolent resolution of the crisis. Diplomacy and politics need to find ways to cope with grievous circumstances occurring anywhere in the world, not only because these circumstances are tragic in them-

selves, but also because they have an increasing capacity to harm others. The efforts needed today are therefore tied, perhaps as never before, to a complex web of economic and social relationships that span the globe.

In deteriorating circumstances a number of steps may help manage the crisis and prevent the emergence of violence. First, states should resist the traditional urge to suspend diplomatic relations as a substitute for action and instead maintain open, high-fidelity lines of communication with leaders and groups in crisis. Second, governments and international organizations must express in a clear and compelling way the interests in jeopardy. This step is particularly important should more assertive steps to deal with the crisis become necessary later.

Third, the crisis should immediately be put on the agenda of the UN Security Council or of the relevant international organization, or both, early enough to permit preventive action. At the same time, a means should be established to track developments in the crisis, to provide regular updates, and to include a mechanism to incorporate information from NGOs and other nongovernmental actors to support high-level deliberations on unfolding events.

Fourth, and notwithstanding the foregoing imperative to broaden the multilateral context of an unfolding crisis, governments should be attentive to opportunities to support quiet diplomacy and dialogue with and between moderate leaders in the crisis. Special envoys and representatives of key states or regional organizations or on behalf of the UN have time and again demonstrated their value, particularly in the early stages of a crisis.

Diplomatic and political strategies to avert a looming crisis demand creative ways of defusing tensions and facilitating mutual

accommodation among potential belligerents. Such strategies can include a serious discussion of peaceful border adjustments or revisions, new constitutional arrangements, forms of regional or cultural autonomy, or even, in unusual circumstances, partition. Potential solutions may lie in various forms of power sharing to help assure groups that their interests are not at the mercy of the whim of the majority.

Official diplomacy can be greatly strengthened by private sector activity. Long used in international negotiations by leaders to take informal soundings of adversaries' intentions, so-called Track Two diplomacy is increasingly the strategy of choice for dealing with problems beyond the reach of official efforts. Some governments have found NGOs very useful in brokering political agreements and supplementing governmental roles. In recent years, many groups in the United States and Europe, such as the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy, International Alert, The Carter Center's International Negotiation Network, the International Crisis Group, the Project on Ethnic Relations, and the Conflict Management Group, have developed models for multitrack diplomacy and conflict resolution. These organizations have played active roles in building relationships between conflicting parties and with interested governments, offering training in diplomacy and conflict resolution, and providing good offices to parties that are committed to the peaceful resolution of conflict.

Economic Measures

In circumstances of incipient conflict, a number of economic measures are at the disposal of states and international organizations in a position to influence potential belligerents to avoid

violence. Sanctions, of course, are one such tool. But beyond sanctions, inducements, economic conditionality, and the dispute resolution mechanisms of international trade and other economic organizations may also prove useful.

Sanctions

Sanctions can play an important role in support of preventive diplomacy, notwithstanding the fact that practical questions remain about governments' abilities to use sanctions effectively. Sanctions serve three broad policy functions for governments: to signal international concern to the offending state (and, by example, to others), to punish a state's bad behavior, and to serve as a precursor to stronger actions, including, if necessary, the use of force.

Sanctions should be part of a broader influence strategy that puts maximum political and economic pressure as precisely as possible on the offending parties—preferably ruling parties or specific leaders rather than whole populations. States that impose sanctions should also take steps, in accordance with the UN Charter, to reduce unwanted or undesirable side effects and minimize the privation and suffering of innocent civilians and the economic losses often suffered by neighboring countries.

Sanctions regimes that are focused on commodities exclusively must be swiftly and comprehensively imposed to be most effective. Graduated, piecemeal approaches are unlikely to work. Sanctions regimes should be supported, where necessary, with the forceful measures suitable to ensure compliance and demonstrate resolve. Diplomatic and other political communications should be clear on the behavior necessary for sanctions to be lifted and, where possible, accompanied by an incentive package.

“Targeted” sanctions offer a way to focus the penalty more directly on those most responsible for the crisis. Such targeted sanctions include freezing leaders' personal assets or denying them access to hard currency. For this purpose, financial information can be shared among cooperating nations to identify and restrict the cash flows of leaders who threaten to use violence.

Inducements

Inducements could have greater preventive potential if they were better understood. Essentially, the inducement process involves the granting of a political or economic benefit in exchange for a specified policy adjustment. Inducement policies strive to make cooperation and conciliation more appealing than aggression and hostility. Examples of inducements include favorable trade terms, tariff reductions, direct purchases, subsidies for exports or imports, economic and military aid, favorable taxation, access to advanced technology, military cooperation, and the many benefits that accrue to members in good standing in international organizations. Policymakers often juggle a variety of political, military, and economic elements in a package of inducements.

Inducements are especially influential when used against the backdrop of sanctions—where benefits of cooperation can be weighed against stark punishments for pursuing violence.

Conditionality

One particularly potent tool for effective preventive action may be conditionality, the forging of links between responsible, nonviolent behavior and the promise of greater reward through growing integration into the community of market democracies. Increasingly,

through their bilateral programs and through pressure on the international financial institutions, states are attaching good governance conditions to the development assistance provided to emerging economies. Associating assistance with responsible governance in this way may give the international community a powerful source of leverage with those who persistently use violent means to pursue their aims. States that attach these kinds of conditions to their aid are not themselves above scrutiny, however. The potential leverage of conditionality is diminished when donor states demand higher standards of behavior than they themselves are prepared to observe.

Economic Dispute Resolution Mechanisms

Every major international trade organization has mechanisms to help broker disputes that may arise among members, and members commit themselves to pursue their grievances through these organizational processes and to be bound by their findings. The dispute resolution mechanism of the World Trade Organization (WTO) is typical: following the identification of a grievance, a panel of experts may be assembled to rule on the merits of the case. If found in violation, an offending party is required to bring its policies or practices into compliance within a reasonable period of time or face a damage judgment. If corrective action is not taken, the aggrieved party may retaliate by raising duties. Decisions may be appealed, and uncorrected behavior can lead to more serious measures such as sanctions or expulsion from the organization.

These mechanisms are designed to work between governments, of course, and may be less suitable for brokering internal eco-

nomics disputes, and governments do not appear uniformly eager to invite outside engagement on such matters. Nevertheless, some similar mechanisms may be adaptable for use by governments in internal affairs, and they remain in any case important tools to help manage disputes between states. Given the great significance of economic issues in an increasingly interdependent world, the lessons learned from these mechanisms for nonviolent dispute resolution deserve closer attention.

Forceful Measures

At first sight, contemplation of the threat or use of forceful measures might seem at odds with the Commission's focus on the prevention of deadly conflict. But situations will continue to arise where diplomatic responses, even supplemented by strong economic measures, are simply insufficient to prevent the outbreak or recurrence of major violence. The question arises as to when, where, and how individual nations, and global and regional organizations, should be willing to apply forceful measures to curb incipient violence and stop potentially much greater destruction of life and property. The Commission believes that there are three broad principles that should govern any such decision:

- First, any threat or use of force must be governed by universally accepted principles, as the UN Charter requires. Decisions to use force must not be arbitrary, or operate as the coercive and selectively used weapon of the strong against the weak.
- Second, the threat or use of force should not be regarded only as a last resort in desperate circumstances. Governments must be attentive to opportunities when clear demonstra-

tions of resolve and determination can establish clear limits to unacceptable behavior.

- Third, states—particularly the major powers—must accept that the threat or use of force, if it does become necessary, must be part of an integrated, usually multilateral strategy, and used in conjunction with political and economic instruments. One way to achieve these aims is to institutionalize the emerging view that when employing force for preventive purposes, states should only do so with a UN Security Council resolution specifying a clear mandate and detailing the arrangements under which force will be used and the units that will be involved in the action.

The Commission does not mean to suggest that there are no circumstances under which the unilateral use of force might be contemplated. Indeed, the Charter authorizes unilateral force in certain circumstances. For the kinds of preventive action contemplated here, however, a multilateral response should be the norm, as envisaged in the UN Charter, and a norm that should apply to large as well as small states.

There are three distinct kinds of operations where the use of force and forces—that is, military or police personnel—may have an important role in preventing the outbreak or recurrence of violent conflict: postconflict peacekeeping, preventive deployments, and “fire brigade” deployments. Only the third of these involves personnel on the ground having the mandate or capacity to apply forceful measures (other than in self-defense)—but the credibility of all three as preventive strategies depends on the perception that if peace breaks down, forceful measures to restore it may well be forthcoming.

Peacekeeping and Maintaining Civil Order

In the aftermath of cease-fires and more substantial peace settlements, traditional, lightly armed peacekeeping missions can help monitor and restrain tense situations. These operations have been most effective when deployed in very specific circumstances where the parties to a conflict are separated along clearly demarcated boundaries and when they agree to a cease-fire and the presence of the outside forces. Such deployments could also be applied as a valuable means of improving security for UN humanitarian enterprises, especially refugee camps. These missions serve several purposes, including to signal the interest and engagement of the international community, to observe and monitor relations between antagonistic parties, and to act as a deterrent against renewed fighting.

Experience in a number of UN missions—Bosnia, Cambodia, Haiti, Rwanda, Somalia, Western Sahara, and elsewhere—suggests the particular need to plan carefully and execute responsibly peacekeeping deployments, as well as law-and-order operations designed to establish and maintain legitimate civil control. An international policing force can monitor situations of potential unrest, establish a presence through patrols and precincts to help keep tensions in check, retrain or replace problematic elements within the host country’s own police force, and restrain gang or other organized criminal activities until local authorities can resume complete control. Strengthening local policing capacities through international, regional, or ad hoc arrangements may reduce the necessity for military interventions. Technological innovations that permit law enforcement and military forces to use

less-than-lethal means for keeping order may increase the effectiveness of their operations.

Policing cannot by itself ensure civil control. Good police practices are not a substitute for political systems providing alternative outlets for grievances. Success depends on the degree to which policing practices are supported (and regulated) by legitimate governmental, judicial, and penal systems underwritten by the rule of law.

“Thin Blue Line” Preventive Deployments

Until recently, peacekeeping operations—both traditional and expanded—were only used in the aftermath of conflict to help reconcile the parties and to prevent the recurrence of fighting. A new concept has now emerged with the deployment in late 1992 of a small force of troops and civilian monitors to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, with the objective, so far successful, of preventing the spread of hostilities from other areas of the former Yugoslavia. The essence of the strategy is a preventive military rather than diplomatic response involving the positioning of troops and related personnel on one or both sides of a border between parties in dispute.

The success to date of the deployment in Macedonia may suggest that this measure could prove a particularly effective preventive device. One potential disadvantage, as the experience in Cyprus illustrates, is that sometimes the international community must be prepared to stay for an extended, perhaps even indefinite, period of time.

“Fire Brigade” Deployments

Much debate has swirled around the idea of establishing a rapid reaction capability within the UN or through other regional arrangements

to give the international community a means to respond quickly to an emerging crisis. Many political difficulties attach to such a capability, however, and governments have in large measure proved unwilling to take the steps necessary to establish such a force.

The Commission supports the establishment of a rapid reaction force of some 5,000 to 10,000 troops, the core of which would be contributed by members of the Security Council. The force would also need a robust planning staff, a standing operational headquarters, training facilities, and compatible equipment. The Commission offers two arguments for such a capability: First, the record of international crises points out the need in certain cases to respond rapidly and, if necessary, with force; and second, the operational integrity of such a force requires that it not be assembled in pieces or in haste. A standing force may well be a necessity for effective prevention.

Currently, the UN Security Council is ill-equipped to implement quick decisions to establish a military presence on the ground in a crisis. The political machinery and the logistical and financial structure necessary to make things happen within days do not exist. Transportation, communications, and supply functions are contracted out through a competitive, laborious, and time-consuming system. Crisis military staffing is ad hoc and drawn from standing organizations within the UN. This lack of capacity creates genuine operational hazards. The existence of a standing rapid reaction capability would help ensure that these problems are solved.

The Security Council should immediately establish a working group to develop the operational requirements for such a capability and make recommendations for a Council deci-

sion regarding the guidelines for raising and funding such a force. The force would be under the authority of the Security Council and its deployment subject to a veto by any of the permanent members.

In the end, of course, the use of such a capability may mean that other efforts to forestall violence have not been effective. The foregoing discussion has illuminated measures that can help defuse a crisis that has reached an acute phase. But the question remains: What can be done to prevent crises from getting to that point to begin with? In other words, what conditions inhibit the rise of violence and how can these conditions be established and maintained?

STRUCTURAL PREVENTION: Strategies To Address the Root Causes of Deadly Conflict

Structural prevention—or peace building—comprises strategies such as putting in place international legal systems, dispute resolution mechanisms, and cooperative arrangements; meeting people’s basic economic, social, cultural, and humanitarian needs; and rebuilding societies that have been shattered by war or other major crises.

This report argues that whatever model of self-government societies ultimately choose, and whatever path they follow to that end, they must meet the three core needs of security, well-being, and justice and thereby give people a stake in nonviolent efforts to improve their lives. Meeting these needs not only enables people to live better lives, it also reduces the potential for deadly conflict.

Security

People cannot thrive in an environment where they believe their survival to be in jeopardy. Indeed, many violent conflicts have been waged by people trying to establish and maintain a safe living space. There are three main sources of insecurity today: the threat posed by nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction; the possibility of conventional confrontation between militaries; and sources of internal violence, such as terrorism, organized crime, insurgency, and repressive regimes.

Nuclear Weapons

The retention of nuclear weapons by any state stimulates other states and nonstate actors to acquire them. Thus, the only durably safe course is to work toward elimination of such weapons within a reasonable time frame, and for this purpose to be achieved, stringent conditions have to be set to make this feasible with security for all. These conditions must include rigorous safeguards against any nuclear weapons falling into the hands of dictatorial and fanatical leaders. Within this context, steps that should be taken promptly in this direction include developing credible mechanisms and practices:

- To account for nuclear weapons and materials
- To monitor their whereabouts and operational condition
- To ensure the safe management and reduction of nuclear arsenals

Since nuclear arms are the deadliest of weapons, they create an especially critical problem of prevention. The Commission

believes that preventive efforts against violence with conventional weapons or other weapons of mass destruction would be strongly reinforced if fuller efforts were made to control the nuclear danger. For example, the world would be a safer place, and the risks of deadly conflict would be reduced, if nuclear weapons were not actively deployed. Much of the deterrent effect of these weapons can be sustained without having active forces poised for massive attack at every moment. The dramatic transformation required to remove all nuclear weapons from active deployment is feasible in technical terms, but substantial changes in political attitudes and managerial practices would be necessary as well.

The Commission endorses the ultimate objective of elimination long embodied in the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and recently elaborated in separate reports issued by the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons and by the U.S. National Academy of Sciences. Precisely because of its importance, we wish to emphasize the conditions that would have to be achieved to make elimination a responsible and realistic aspiration.

In a comprehensive framework to achieve that objective, the foremost requirement would be an international accounting system that tracks the exact number of fabricated weapons and the exact amounts of the fissionable materials that provide their explosive power. For technical as well as political reasons, it will inevitably require a considerable amount of time to develop an accounting system that could support a general agreement to eliminate active nuclear weapons deployments. The requisite accuracy is not likely to be

achieved until such a system has been in operation over a substantial period of time. The Commission strongly recommends that efforts be initiated immediately to create such a system as a priority for the prevention of deadly conflict.

Concurrently, governments should eliminate the practice of alert procedures (i.e., relying on continuously available weapons) and set an immediate goal to remove all weapons from active deployment—that is, to dismantle them to the point that to use them would require reconstruction. In addition, the major nuclear states should reverse their commitment to massive targeting and establish a presumption of limited use. Finally, as this process proceeds, multilateral arrangements will need to be made to ensure stability and the maintenance of peace and security in a world without nuclear weapons.

In several regions of the world today, volatile circumstances involve neighbors, one or more of which may possess nuclear weapons. These circumstances give added impetus to developing improved methods of accounting for and safeguarding nuclear weapons and materials. The aim must be to move the specter of nuclear weapons far to the background of any conventional confrontation. For this to happen, the nuclear states must demonstrate that they take seriously Article VI of the NPT, which calls for signatories to make good faith progress toward complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

Biological and Chemical Weapons

Although there have been numerous protocols, conventions, and agreements on the control and elimination of biological and chemical

weapons, progress has been slowed by a lack of binding treaties with provisions for implementation, inspection, and enforcement. Regarding biological weapons, it is impossible to control completely or deny access to materials and information. But it may be possible to gain greater control through mechanisms to monitor the possession of and the construction of facilities for the most dangerous pathogens. A registry could be established in which governments and other users would register strains under their control and detail the purposes of experimentation. Registrants would be required to publish the results of their experiments. This registry would seek to reinforce the practice of systematic transparency and create a legal and professional expectation that those working with these strains would be under an obligation to reveal themselves. In addition, the professional community of researchers and scientists must engage in expanded and extensive collaboration in this field and establish a close connection to the public health community.

The Commission believes that governments should seek a more effective categorical prohibition against the development and use of chemical weapons. The international community needs systematic monitoring of chemical compounds and the size of stockpiles to ensure transparency and to guard against misuse.

If progress on these fronts is to be made, complex disagreements within both the international community and individual states must be addressed. While there remains a critical need for continued progress, the gains that have been made in the control of nuclear weapons have created important expectations of transparency, accountability, and reciprocity, and may help improve the control of biological and chemical weapons.

Conventional Weapons

As detailed in the report, violent conflict today is fought with conventional weapons. The Commission recognizes that all states have the right to maintain adequate defense structures for their security and that achieving global agreement on the control of conventional weapons will be difficult. Nevertheless, progress should be possible to control the flow of arms around the world. The global arms trade is dominated by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and Germany. Jointly, they account for 80–90 percent of such activity. To date, few efforts to control the flows of conventional weapons have been undertaken, and the trade in small arms and ammunition—which account for the majority of deaths in today’s conflicts—remains largely unregulated. One effort in the right direction is the international movement to institute a worldwide ban on the production, stockpiling, distribution, and use of land mines. The Commission strongly endorses this effort.

Governments must keep conventional arms control near the top of their national and multilateral security agendas. NATO and other regional arrangements that offer the opportunity for sustained dialogue among the professional military establishments will help, and in the process promote important values of transparency, nonthreatening force structures and deployments, and civilian control of the military.

Cooperating for Peace

Around the globe, national military establishments in many—but not all—regions are shrinking and their role has come under profound reexamination as a result of the end of the Cold War and the sharp rise of economic globalization. With the end of the confrontation

between East and West, military establishments in the former Warsaw Pact are being reconfigured and the forces of NATO and many Western nations are being reduced. The Commission believes that the general trend toward force reduction and realignment, the current absence of interstate war in the world, and the continuing development of international regimes form a foundation from which states can continue to reduce the conventional military threat that they pose to one another.

Security within States

Intrastate violence can result from active insurgencies, political terrorism, or organized crime. Four essential elements provide a framework for maintaining a just regime for internal stability:

- A corpus of laws that is legitimately derived and widely promulgated and understood
- A consistent, visible, fair, and active network of police authority to enforce the laws (especially important at the local level)
- An independent, equitable, and accessible grievance redress system, including above all an impartial judicial system
- A penal system that is fair and prudent in meting out punishment

These basic elements are vital yet hard to achieve, and they require constant attention through democratic processes.

Governments, international organizations, and private sector groups operating internationally have important roles to play in

maintaining internal security. In general, outsiders can help by:

- Promoting norms and practices to govern interstate relations, to avoid and resolve disputes, and to encourage practices of good governance
- Reducing and eventually eliminating the many military threats and sources of insecurity between states, including those that contribute to instability within states
- Not exacerbating the interstate or intrastate disputes of others, either on purpose or inadvertently. The history of third-party intervention is replete with examples of interventions that were unwarranted, unwanted, or unhelpful.

Existing in a secure environment is only the beginning, of course. People may feel relatively free from fear of attack, but unless they also have the opportunity to maintain decent living standards, discontent and resentment can generate unrest.

Well-Being

Too many of the world's people still cannot take for granted food, water, shelter, and other necessities. The slippery slope of degradation—so vividly exemplified in Somalia in the early 1990s—leads to growing risks of civil war, terrorism, and humanitarian catastrophe.

Well-being entails access to basic necessities, including health services, education, and an opportunity to earn a livelihood. In the context of structural prevention, well-being implies more than just a state's capacity to provide essential needs. People are often able to tolerate economic deprivation and disparities in

the short run because governments create conditions that allow them to improve their living standards and that lessen disparities between rich and poor.

The Commission believes that decent living standards are a universal human right. Development efforts to meet these standards are a prime responsibility of governments, and the international community has a responsibility to help through development assistance. Assistance programs are vital to many developing states, crucial to sustaining millions of people in crises, and necessary to help build otherwise unaffordable infrastructure. But long-term solutions must also be found through a state's own development policies, attentive to the particular needs of its society's economic and social sectors.

Helping from Within: Development Revisited

For a variety of reasons, many nations in the global South have been late in getting access to the remarkable opportunities now available for economic and social development. They are seeking ways to modernize in keeping with their own cultural traditions and distinctive settings.

The general well-being of a society will require government action to help ensure widespread economic opportunity. Whether and how to undertake such interventions in the economy is controversial and should be decided and implemented democratically by societies on their own behalf. The Commission emphasizes, however, that economic growth without widespread sharing in the benefits of that growth will not reduce prospects for violent conflict and could, in fact, be a contributing factor to exacerbating tensions. The resentment and unrest likely to be induced by

drastically unbalanced or inequitable economic opportunity may outweigh whatever prosperity is generated by that opportunity.

Fundamentally, the distribution of economic benefits in a society is a political question resolved through decisions regarding the kind of economic organization a society will construct, including the nature and level of governmental engagement in private sector activity. Poverty is often a structural outgrowth of these decisions, and when poverty runs in parallel with ethnic or cultural divisions, it often creates a flash point. Peace is most commonly found where economic growth and opportunities to share in that growth are broadly distributed across the population.

There is great preventive value in initiatives that focus on children and women, not only because they are the main victims of conflict, but also because women in many vulnerable societies are an important source of community stability and vitality. For children, this emphasis entails a two-pronged approach that stresses, on the one hand, access to education and basic health services, and on the other, policies that prohibit the recruitment of child soldiers and the industrial exploitation of child labor. For women, this entails national programs that encourage education for girls, women-operated businesses, and other community-based economic activities. Moreover, in rebuilding violence-torn societies, women, usually the majority of the surviving population, must be involved in all decision making and implementation.

Making Development Sustainable

In at least three clear ways, natural resources lie at the heart of conflicts that hold the potential for mass violence through the deliberate

manipulation of resource shortages for hostile purposes (for example, using food or water as a weapon); competing claims of sovereignty over resource endowments (such as rivers or oil and other fossil fuel deposits); and the exacerbating role played by environmental degradation and resource depletion in areas characterized by political instability, rapid population growth, chronic economic deprivation, and societal stress.

Global population and economic growth, along with high consumption in the North, have led to the depletion, destruction, and pollution of the natural environment. Nearly every region of the world has a major resource endowment that will require several states to cooperate to ensure that these resources are managed responsibly. Science and technology can contribute immensely to the reduction of environmental threats through low-pollution technologies. Greater effort is required to develop sustainable strategies for social and economic progress; in fact, sustainability is likely to become a key principle of development and a major incentive for global partnerships.

Helping from Outside: Development Assistance

Promoting good governance has become the keynote of development assistance in the 1990s, along with the building of fundamental skills for participation in the modern global economy. The new approach requires a state, at a minimum, to equip itself with a professional, accountable bureaucracy that is able to provide an enabling environment and handle macroeconomic management, sustained poverty reduction, education and training (including of

women), and protection of the environment. The Commission believes that more strenuous and sustained development assistance can also reduce the risk of regional conflicts when it is used to tie border groups in one or more states to their shared interests in land and water development, environmental protection, and other mutual concerns.

The emphasis on good governance has also encouraged a more robust and responsible private sector development in many countries. There is rising economic activity in the private sector around the world.

Sustained growth requires investment in people, and programs must prevent deep, intergenerational poverty from becoming institutionalized. Development assistance can include transitional budgetary support, especially for maintenance and to buffer the human cost of conversion to market economies. Extensive technical assistance, specialized training, and broad economic education are all badly needed. So too is the building of indigenous institutions to sustain the vital knowledge and skills for development.

In sum, improving well-being requires a multifaceted approach. It means mobilizing and developing human capacities, broadening and diversifying the economic base, removing barriers to equal opportunity, and opening countries to participation in the global economy and the international community.

Justice

An understanding of and adherence to the rule of law is crucial to a healthy system of social organization, both nationally and internationally, and any effort to create and maintain such a system must itself rest on the rule of law. The rule of law is a goal in that it forms the basis

for the just management of relations between and among people. It is also a means in that a sound legal regime helps ensure the protection of fundamental human rights, political access through participatory governance, social accommodation of diverse groups, and equitable economic opportunity.

Justice in the International Community

States' efforts in relation to justice should include ways to develop international law with particular emphasis on three main areas: human rights; humanitarian law, including the need to provide the legal underpinning for UN operations in the field; and nonviolent alternatives for dispute resolution, including more flexible intrastate mechanisms for mediation, arbitration, grievance recognition, and social reconciliation.

Justice within States

There is no more fundamental political right than the ability to have a say in how one is governed. Participation by the people in the choice and replacement of their government—democracy—assures all citizens the opportunity to better their circumstances while managing the inevitable clashes that arise. Democracy achieves this goal by accommodating competing interests through regularized, widely accessible, transparent processes at many levels of government. Sustainable democratic systems also need a functioning and fair judicial system, a military that is under civilian control, and police and civil services that are competent, honest, and accountable.

Effective participatory government based on the rule of law reduces the need for

people to take matters into their own hands and to resolve their differences through violence. It is important that all groups within a society believe that they have real opportunities to influence the political process. The institutions and processes to ensure widespread political participation can vary widely.

Engineering transitions to participatory governance, or restoring legitimate governance following conditions of anarchy, may require temporary power sharing. Many forms of power sharing are possible, but all provide for widespread participation in the reconstruction effort, sufficient resources to ensure broad-based access to educational, economic, and political opportunities, and the constructive involvement of outsiders.

In the aftermath of authoritarian regimes or civil wars characterized by atrocities, the legitimacy of the reconciliation mechanisms is paramount. At least three ways exist to bring perpetrators to justice and help move societies forward: aggressive and visible use of the existing judicial system, establishment of a special commission for truth and reconciliation, or reliance on international tribunals.

International tribunals serve important accountability, reconciliation, and deterrence functions, inasmuch as they provide a credible forum to hear grievances and a legitimate process through which individuals, rather than an entire nationality, are held accountable for their transgressions. The International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague, created in response to the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia and in Rwanda, reflects these aims. Notwithstanding a number of serious problems, the tribunals have set important precedents on several key legal issues. The Commission believes that the United Nations should move

to establish an international criminal court, and it welcomes the secretary-general's proposal that an international conference be held in 1998 to finalize and adopt a treaty to establish such a court.

While the right to a say in how one is governed is a fundamental human right and the foundation of a political framework within which disputes among groups or their members can be brokered in nonviolent ways, merely giving people a say will not, of itself, ensure political accommodation. People must believe that their government will stay free of corruption, maintain law and order, provide for their basic needs, and safeguard their interests without compromising their core values.

Social Justice

While democratic political systems strive to treat people equitably, this does not mean that they treat all people the same. Just as efforts are made to accommodate the special needs of the very old, the very young, the poor, and the disabled, it is usually necessary to acknowledge explicitly the differences that may exist among various groups within a society and accommodate to the greatest extent possible their particular needs.

Among the most important needs are the freedom to preserve important cultural practices, including the opportunity for education in a minority language, and freedom of religion. One solution is to permit minorities to operate private educational institutions. Another is to mandate dual-language instruction. Simply put, vibrant, participatory systems require religious and cultural freedom.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF STATES, LEADERS, AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Widespread deadly conflict threatens global stability by eroding the rules and norms of behavior that states have sought to establish. Rampant human rights abuses are often the prelude to violence. They reflect a breakdown in the rule of law, and if they are allowed to continue unchecked, the result will be weakened confidence in states' commitment to the protection of human rights, democratic governance, and international treaties. Moreover, the lack of a response—particularly by states that have an obvious capacity to act—will encourage a climate of lawlessness in which disaffected peoples or opposing factions will increasingly take matters into their own hands. In this regard, the Commission believes that, as a matter of fundamental principle, self-determination claims by national or ethnic communities or other groups should not be pursued by force. The international community should advance this principle and establish the presumption that recognition of a new state will be denied if accomplished by force. The effort to help avert deadly conflict is thus a matter not only of humanitarian obligation, but also of enlightened self-interest.

States and Their Leaders

Major preventive action remains the responsibility of states, and especially their leaders. States must decide whether they do nothing, act alone, act in cooperation with other governments, work through international organizations, or work with elements of the private sector. It should be an accepted principle that those with the greatest capacity to act have the greatest responsibility to do so.

The Commission is of the strong view that the leaders, governments, and people closest to potentially violent situations bear the primary responsibility for taking preventive action. They stand to lose most, of course, if their efforts do not succeed. The Commission believes that the best approach to prevention is one that emphasizes local solutions to local problems where possible, and new divisions of labor—involving governments and the private sector—based on comparative advantage and augmented as necessary by help from outside.

The array of those who have a useful preventive role to play extends beyond governments and intergovernmental organizations to include the private sector with its vast expertise and resources. The Commission urges the combining of governmental and nongovernmental efforts in a system of conflict prevention that takes into account the strengths, resources, and limitations of each component of the system.

It cannot be emphasized enough that governments bear the greatest responsibility to prevent deadly conflict. The following sections discuss the capacity for preventive action of the private and nongovernmental sectors and intergovernmental organizations. The Commission believes, however, that much of what these various agencies and organizations can do to help prevent deadly conflict will be aided or impeded by the actions of states.

Pivotal Institutions of Civil Society

Many elements of civil society can work to reduce hatred and violence and to encourage attitudes of concern, social responsibility, and mutual aid within and between groups. In difficult economic and political transitions, the organizations of civil society are of crucial

importance in alleviating the dangers of mass violence. Many elements in the private sector around the world are dedicated to helping prevent deadly conflict and have declared a public commitment to the well-being of humanity in their various activities. They have raised considerable sums of money on the basis of this commitment, bringing them many opportunities but also great responsibilities.

Nongovernmental Organizations

Virtually every conflict in the world today has some form of international response and presence—whether humanitarian, diplomatic, or other—and much of that presence comes from the nongovernmental community. Performing a wide variety of humanitarian, medical, educational, and other relief and development functions, NGOs are deeply engaged in the world's conflicts and are now frequently significant participants in most efforts to manage and resolve deadly conflict.

As pillars of any thriving society, NGOs at their best provide a vast array of human services unmatched by either government or the market, and they are the self-designated advocates for action on virtually all matters of public concern. The rapid spread of information technology, market-driven economic interdependence, and easier and less expensive ways of communicating within and among states have allowed many NGOs—through their worldwide operations—to become key global transmission belts for ideas, financial resources, and technical assistance.

Three broad categories of NGOs offer especially important potential contributions to the prevention of deadly conflict: human rights and other advocacy groups, humanitarian and development organizations, and the small but

growing number of Track Two groups that help open the way to more formal internal or international peace processes.

Human rights, Track Two, and grassroots development organizations all provide early warning of rising local tension and help open or protect the necessary political space between groups and the government that can allow local leaders to settle differences peacefully. Nongovernmental humanitarian agencies have great flexibility and access in responding to the needs of victims (especially the internally displaced) during complex emergencies. Development and prodemocracy groups have become vital to effecting peaceful transitions from authoritarian rule to more open societies and, in the event of a violent conflict, in helping to make peace processes irreversible during the difficult transitions to reconstruction and national reconciliation. The work of international NGOs and their connection to each other and to indigenous organizations throughout the world reinforce a sense of common interest and common purpose, and demonstrate the political will to support collective measures for preventive action.

Many NGOs have deep knowledge of regional and local issues, cultures, and relationships, and an ability to function in adverse circumstances even, or perhaps especially, where governments cannot. Moreover, nongovernmental relief organizations often have legitimacy and operational access that do not raise concerns about sovereignty, as government activities sometimes do.

Some NGOs have an explicit focus on conflict prevention and resolution. They may:

- Monitor conflicts and provide early warning and insight into a particular conflict

- Convene the adversarial parties (providing a neutral forum)
- Pave the way for mediation and undertake mediation
- Carry out education and training for conflict resolution, building an indigenous capacity for coping with ongoing conflicts
- Help to strengthen institutions for conflict resolution
- Foster development of the rule of law
- Help to establish a free press with responsible reporting on conflict
- Assist in planning and implementing elections
- Provide technical assistance on democratic arrangements that reduce the likelihood of violence in divided societies

Notwithstanding these valuable contributions, the Commission believes that NGOs must improve coordination with each other and with intergovernmental organizations and governments to reduce unnecessary redundancies among and within their own operations. Specifically, the leadership of the major global humanitarian NGOs should agree to meet regularly—at a minimum on an annual basis—to share information, and promote shared norms of engagement in crises. The Commission also recommends that the secretary-general of the UN follow through with his aim of strengthening NGO links to UN deliberation by establishing a means whereby NGOs and other agencies

of civil society can bring relevant matters to the attention of appropriate organs of the United Nations.

Religious Leaders and Institutions

Five factors give religious leaders and institutions from the grass roots to the transnational level a comparative advantage for dealing with conflict situations. They have a

- Clear message that resonates with their followers
- Long-standing and pervasive presence on the ground
- Well-developed infrastructure that often includes a sophisticated communications network connecting local, national, and international offices
- Legitimacy for speaking out on crisis issues
- Traditional orientation to peace and goodwill

Because of these advantages, religious institutions have on occasion played a reconciling role by inhibiting violence, lessening tensions, and contributing decisively to the resolution of conflict.

Religious advocacy is particularly effective when it is broadly inclusive of many faiths. A number of dialogues between religions provide opportunities for important interfaith exchanges on key public policy issues. The Commission believes that religious leaders and institutions should be called upon to undertake a worldwide effort to foster respect for diver-

sity and to promote ways to avoid violence. They should discuss as a priority matter during any interfaith and intrafaith gathering ways to play constructive and mutually supporting roles to help prevent the emergence of violence. They should also take more assertive measures to censure coreligionists who promote violence or give religious justification for violence. They can do so, in part, by promulgating norms for tolerance to guide their faithful.

The Scientific Community

The scientific community is the closest approximation we now have to a truly international community, sharing certain fundamental interests, values, standards, and a spirit of inquiry about the nature of matter, life, behavior, and the universe. This shared quest for understanding has overcome the distorting effects of national boundaries, inherent prejudices, imposed ethnocentrism, and barriers to the free exchange of information and ideas.

One of the great challenges for scientists and the wider scholarly community in the coming decades will be to undertake a much broader and deeper effort to understand the nature and sources of human conflict, and above all to develop effective ways of resolving conflicts before they turn violent.

Through their institutions and organizations, scientists can strengthen research in, for example, the biology and psychology of aggressive behavior, child development, intergroup relations, prejudice and ethnocentrism, the origins of wars and conditions under which wars end, weapons development and arms control, and innovative pedagogical approaches to mutual accommodation and conflict resolution. Other research priorities include exploring ways to use the Internet and other communications innovations to defuse tensions, demystify

adversaries, and convey information to strengthen moderate elements. The scientific community should also establish links among all sides of a conflict to determine whether any aspects of a crisis are amenable to technical solutions and to reduce the risk that these issues could provide flash points for violence.

Educational Institutions

Education is a force for reducing intergroup conflict by enlarging our social identifications beyond parochial ones in light of common human characteristics and superordinate goals—highly valued aspirations that can be achieved only by intergroup cooperation. Pivotal educational institutions such as the family, schools, community-based organizations, and the media have the power to shape attitudes and skills toward decent human relations—or toward hatred and violence. These institutions can use the findings from research on intergroup relations and conflict resolution. The process of developing school curricula to introduce students to the values of diversity and to break down stereotypes should be accelerated.

The Media

Because many of today's wars occur in remote areas and have complicated histories, the international view of them has come to depend to a large extent on reporting by international journalists. A great challenge for the media is to report conflicts in ways that engender constructive public consideration of possibilities for avoiding violence. The media can stimulate new ideas and approaches to problems by involving independent experts in their presentations who can also help ensure factual, accurate reporting.

The media should develop standards of conduct in crisis coverage that include giving adequate attention to serious efforts under way to defuse and resolve conflicts, even as they give full international exposure to the violence itself. An international press council, consisting largely of highly respected professional journalists, could be helpful in this regard, especially in monitoring and enforcing acceptable professional practices. In addition, major networks should develop ways to expose publics to the circumstances and issues that could give rise to mass violence through regular public service programming that focuses on individual hot spots. Mass media reporting on the possibilities for conflict resolution, and on the willingness and capacity of the international community to help, could become a useful support for nonviolent problem solving.

Across the spectrum of activities, from worldwide broadcasts of violence and misery to the local hate radio that instigated killing in Rwanda and Bosnia, the media's interpretive representation of violent events has a wide and powerful impact. It is important to encourage the constructive use of the media to promote understanding and decent intergroup relations, even though these issues often do not come under the heading of "breaking news."

The Business Community

The business community is beginning to recognize its interests and responsibilities in helping to prevent the emergence of conditions that can lead to deadly conflict. Businesses should accelerate their work with local and national authorities in an effort to develop business practices that not only permit profitability but also contribute to community stability. This "risk reduction" approach to market development will help sensitize businesses to any

potentially destabilizing violent social effects that new ventures may have, as well as reduce the premiums businesses may have to pay to insure their operations against loss in volatile areas.

The Commission believes that governments can make far greater use of business in conflict prevention. For example, governments might establish business advisory councils to draw more systematically on the knowledge of the business community and to receive advice on the use of sanctions and inducements. With their understanding of countries in which they produce or sell their products, businesses can recognize early warning signs of danger and work with governments to reduce the likelihood of violent conflict. However, business engagement cannot be expected to substitute for governmental action. The strength and influence of the business community give it the opportunity both to act independently and to put pressure on governments to seek an early resolution of emerging conflict.

The People

The people who may be the immediate victims of violence and the citizens of countries in a position to prevent violence have an important role to play as well. Mass movements, particularly nonviolent movements, have changed the course of history, most notably in India, where Mohandas Gandhi led his countrymen in nonviolent resistance to British rule. Hundreds of millions were moved by the example of a simple man in homespun who preached tolerance and respect for the least powerful of India's peoples and full political participation for all. In South Africa, the support of the black majority for international sanctions and the broadly nonviolent movement to end apartheid helped bring the white government to the realization

that the status quo could no longer be maintained. In the United States, the leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr., inspired both whites and blacks in a massive movement for civil rights. The power of the people in the form of mass mobilization in the streets was critical in achieving the democratic revolution in the Philippines in 1986 and in Thailand in 1992.

In 1997 the Nobel Peace Prize went to representatives of a grassroots movement to ban land mines. In 18 short months, this movement developed from a collection of diffuse efforts to a worldwide movement toward consensus among many of the world's governments—strong testimony to the power of an idea in the hands of the willing.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The United Nations

The UN can be an essential focal point for marshaling the resources of the international community to help prevent mass violence. No single government, however strong, and no nongovernmental organization can do all that needs doing—nor should they be expected to. One of the UN's greatest challenges is whether and how to adapt its mechanisms for managing interstate disputes to deal with intrastate violence. If it is to move in this direction, it must do so in a manner that commands the trust of member states and their voluntary cooperation.

Strengths of the UN

As the sole global collective security organization, the UN's key goals include the promotion of international peace and security, nonviolence

except in self-defense, sustainable economic and social development, and fundamental human rights for all the world's citizens. Each of these goals is relevant to the prevention of deadly conflict. The global reach and intergovernmental character of the UN give it considerable influence when it can speak with one voice. The Security Council has emerged as a highly developed yet flexible mechanism to help member states cope with a remarkable variety of problems. The Office of the Secretary-General has considerable prestige, convening power, and the capacity to reach into problems early when they may be inaccessible to governments or private organizations. Many of the UN's functional agencies, such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the World Food Program (WFP), the World Health Organization (WHO) and, for that matter, the Bretton Woods financial institutions—the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF)—conduct effective programs of great complexity around the world. The UN system is vital to any effort to help prevent the emergence of mass violence. Its long-term programs to reduce the global disparity between rich and poor and to develop the capacity of weak governments to function more effectively are of fundamental importance to its role.

Its intergovernmental character gives the UN practical advantages for certain kinds of early preventive action—such as discreet, high-level diplomacy—that individual governments do not always have. Here, the Office of the Secretary-General has proven particularly valuable on a wide array of world problems in need of international attention. The secretary-general has brought to the attention of the

Security Council early evidence of threats to peace, genocide, large flows of refugees threatening to destabilize neighboring countries, evidence of systematic and widespread human rights violations, attempts at the forcible overthrow of governments, and potential or actual damage to the environment. The secretary-general has also helped forge consensus and secure early responses from the Security Council by deploying envoys or special representatives, assembling a group of member states to concentrate on a particular problem (so-called friends of the secretary-general), and speaking out on key issues such as weapons of mass destruction, environmental degradation, and the plight of the world's poor.

Limitations of the UN

The features that give the UN its potential often come at a price. Its global reach often demands some sacrifice of efficiency and focus, and the UN is, of course, fully dependent on its membership for political legitimacy, operating funds, and personnel to staff its operations and carry out its mandates. While member states seem in broad agreement that the UN should be concerned with a wide range of issues, there is far less agreement on what exactly the organization should do. Many countries, including some of the most powerful, use the UN as a fig leaf and a scapegoat to blur unwanted focus, to defuse political pressure, or to dilute or evade their own responsibilities. States—again, even the most powerful—often make commitments that they fail to honor.

Despite the lack of agreement on engagement in domestic conflicts by international organizations, the UN has been required to intervene in several. It shepherded the transi-

tion from war to peace in Cambodia, helped broker solutions to conflicts in new states such as the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Georgia, marshaled an unprecedented humanitarian relief effort in Somalia, and dealt with refugees from the mass slaughter in Rwanda.

With the increasing number of conflicts within states, the international community must develop a new concept of the relationship between national sovereignty and international responsibility. The contradiction between respecting national sovereignty and the moral and ethical imperative to stop slaughter within states is real and difficult to resolve. The UN Charter gives the Security Council a good deal of latitude in making such decisions, but it also lays out a number of broad principles to guide the application of these decisions. The responsibility for determining where one principle or the other is to prevail resides with the Security Council and the member states on a case-by-case basis. It is precisely the sensitivity of such a responsibility that has led to the growing demand for reform of the Security Council in order to make it more representative of the membership and more legitimate in fulfilling its responsibilities.

Strengthening the UN for Prevention

The Commission believes that the UN can have a central, even indispensable, role to play in prevention by helping governments cope with incipient violence and organizing the help of others. Its legitimating function and ability to focus world attention on key problems, combined with the considerable operational capacity of many of its specialized agencies, make it an important asset in any prevention regime. Yet certain reforms are necessary to strengthen

the UN for preventive purposes.

The Commission believes that the secretary-general should play a more prominent role in preventing deadly conflict through several steps:

- More frequent use of Article 99 of the UN Charter to bring potentially violent situations to the attention of the Security Council and, thereby, to the international community
- Greater use of good offices to help defuse developing crises
- More assertive use of the considerable convening power of the Office of the Secretary-General to assemble “friends” groups to help coordinate the international response

In addition, the Commission believes that:

- Member governments should be encouraged to make annual contributions to the Fund for Preventive Action established by the Norwegian government in 1996 for the use of the secretary-general. The secretary-general should use the fund to expand the pool of suitable candidates who serve as envoys and special representatives and to provide the resources necessary for training and support of their missions.
- The secretary-general should convene at least one meeting with the heads of the major regional organizations—as was done in August 1994—during each term of office. These meetings can be used to discuss, among other topics, potential violence in the regions, possible preventive strategies, and ways to coordinate regional and UN efforts.

- The secretary-general should establish a private sector advisory committee to draw more systematically on the expertise and insights of civil society for preventive action.
- The secretary-general should establish an advisory committee on science and technology, broadly composed of representatives from across the spectrum of the sciences, to offer advice and recommendations on a wide range of problems.
- The Security Council should call on the General Assembly to reconstitute the Collective Measures Committee to evaluate existing practices regarding the imposition and implementation of sanctions and to make recommendations regarding ways to improve their deterrent value. The Security Council should retain authority to decide when international norms have been violated and when and how the imposition of sanctions would be justified.
- UNICEF, UNDP, and UNHCR should integrate their new emphasis on prevention with a more activist UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to strengthen the UN's role in early warning, protection of human rights, and conflict prevention. The Office of the Secretary-General can play a key role in this integration.

Such measures, together with those offered by Secretary-General Kofi Annan and others in this report, would go a long way toward establishing a preventive orientation in the international community and laying the groundwork to develop standard practices that link UN actions with those of governments and NGOs.

*Reform of the Security Council**

There is a compelling need to enlarge and modernize the Security Council to ensure that its membership reflects the world of today rather than 1945. One promising proposal is that put forward by Malaysian Permanent Representative, Tan Sri Razali Ismail, during his term as president of the General Assembly. In the Commission's view, the addition of new members should reflect not only the world's capacities but also the world's needs. The use of size, population, GDP, and level of international engagement (measured, for example, through such indices as participation in UN peacekeeping) might serve as criteria for permanent membership. The Commission would also propose to remove from the Charter the prohibition on election of any new nonpermanent members for successive terms, enabling other major powers with aspirations to continuous or recurring membership to negotiate their reelection on a continuous or rotating basis. The Commission believes that any new arrangement should be subject to automatic review after ten years.

The UN's Role in Long-Term Prevention

The long-term role of the UN in helping to prevent deadly conflict resides in its central purposes of promoting peace and security,

* Commission member Sahabzada Yaqub-Khan dissents from the Commission's view on Security Council reform. In his opinion, the additional permanent members would multiply, not diminish, the anomalies inherent in the structure of the Security Council. While the concept of regional rotation for additional permanent seats offers prospects of a compromise, it would be essential to have agreed global and regional criteria for rotation. In the absence of an international consensus on expansion in the permanent category, the expansion should be confined to nonpermanent members only.

fostering sustainable development, inspiring widespread respect for human rights, and developing the rule of international law. Three major documents combine to form a working program for the UN to fulfill these roles: *An Agenda for Peace*, published in 1992; *An Agenda for Development*, published in 1995; and *An Agenda for Democratization*, published in 1996. Each report focuses on major tasks essential to help reduce the global epidemic of violence, preserve global peace and stability, prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction, promote sustainable economic and social development, champion human rights and fundamental freedoms, and alleviate massive human suffering. Each is an important statement of the broad objectives of peace, development, and democracy, as well as a valuable road map to achieving those objectives. In combination, they suggest how states might use the UN more effectively over the long term to reduce the incidence and intensity of global violence.

The International Financial Institutions

Although many people may have forgotten it, the international financial institutions (IFIs) are part of the UN system. Today, together with regional financial institutions, the World Bank and the IMF have a major interest and role to play in helping to prevent or cope with mass violence. Peace agreements need to be strengthened with economic development, and the Bank and the IMF have taken clear steps to focus on reconstruction to help prevent violence from reemerging.

The leverage of the IFIs could be used even more widely to provide incentives for cooperation in tense regions. Investment may act as a restraint on the causes of violence, and

conditional assistance might be used to show that loans and grants are available to those who cooperate with their neighbors.

The Commission believes that governments should encourage the World Bank and the IMF to establish better cooperation with the UN's political bodies so that economic inducements can play a more central role in early prevention and in postconflict reconstruction.

Regional Arrangements

The potential of regional mechanisms for conflict prevention deserves renewed attention in the next decade. These organizations vary in size, mandate, and effectiveness, but all represent ways in which states have tried to pool their strengths and share burdens.

Regional organizations have important limitations. They may not be strong enough on their own to counter the intentions or actions of a dominant state. Even if they are strong enough, regional organizations may not always be the most appropriate forums through which states should engage in or mediate an incipient conflict because of the competing goals of their member states or the suspicions of those in conflict. Nonetheless, if these organizations are inert or powerless in the face of imminent conflict, their function as regional forums for dialogue, confidence building, and economic coordination will also be eroded.

Regional efforts to promote cooperation, dialogue, and confidence building are, in many ways, still in the early stages. The histories of regional organizations are a process of adapting to regional and global exigencies. Today, the greatest of these exigencies is violent conflict within the borders of states. No region is unaffected by this phenomenon. If regional organizations are to be helpful in cop-

ing with these changing circumstances, member states must be prepared to commit the resources and demonstrate the political will to ensure that the regional efforts succeed.

The Commission believes that regional arrangements can be greatly strengthened for preventive purposes. They should establish means, linked to the UN, to monitor circumstances of incipient violence within the regions. They should develop a repertoire of diplomatic, political, and economic measures for regional use to help prevent dangerous circumstances from coalescing and exploding into violence. Such a repertoire would include ways to provide advance warning of conflict to organization members and to marshal the necessary logistics, command and control, and other functions that may be necessary to support more assertive efforts authorized by the UN.

TOWARD A CULTURE OF PREVENTION

This report emphasizes that any successful regime of conflict prevention must be multifaceted and designed for the long term.

Conflict, war, and needless human suffering are as old as human history. In our time, however, the advanced technology of destruction, the misuse of our new and fabulous capacity to communicate, and the pressure of rapid population growth have added monstrous and unacceptable dimensions to the old horrors of human conflict. We must make a quantum leap in our ability and determination to prevent the deadliest forms of conflict because they are likely to become much more dangerous in the next several decades. But the prevention of deadly conflict has a practical as well as a moral value; where peace and cooperation prevail, so do security and prosperity.

The inescapable fact is that the deci-

sion to use violence is made by leaders to incite susceptible groups. The Commission believes that leaders and groups can be influenced to avoid violence. Leaders can be persuaded or coerced to use peaceful measures of conflict resolution, and structural approaches can reduce the susceptibility of groups to arguments for violence.

Beyond persuasion and coercion, however, we must begin to create a culture of prevention. Taught in secular and religious schools, emphasized by the media, pursued vigorously by the UN and other international organizations, the prevention of deadly conflict must become a commonplace of daily life and part of a global cultural heritage passed down from generation to generation. Leaders must exemplify the culture of prevention. The vision, courage, and skills to prevent deadly conflict—and the ability to communicate the need for prevention—must be required qualifications for leaders in the twenty-first century.

There is a challenge to educate, a challenge to lead, and a challenge to communicate.

Current research is exploring practices within schools that can create a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperative interactions among peers, as well as between students and teachers. The valuable potential of educational institutions for preventing deadly conflict is emphasized. Teaching children the values of cooperation and toleration of cultural differences helps to overcome prejudicial stereotypes that opportunistic leaders routinely use for their own destructive ends. Tapping education's potential for toleration is an important and long-term task. It is necessary not only to strengthen the relevant curricula in schools and universities, but also to use the educational potential of popular media, religious institu-

tions, and the UN.

Although the prevention of deadly conflict requires many tools and strategies, bold leadership and an active constituency for prevention are essential for these tools and strategies to be effective. One of the central objectives of this Commission has been to help leaders to become better informed about the problems at hand and to suggest useful ways to respond. However, we recognize that raising leaders' awareness, although necessary, is not sufficient. We have also sought to offer practical measures by which leaders can be motivated, encouraged, and assisted to adopt a preventive orientation that is supported by the best knowledge and skills available.

Leaders must focus on generating a broad constituency for prevention. With a public that is aware of the value of prevention and informed of the availability of constructive alternatives, the political risks of sustaining preemptive engagement in the world are reduced. In practical terms, an enduring constituency for prevention could be fostered through measures that: identify latent popular inclinations toward prevention; reinforce these impulses with substantive explanations of rationales, approaches, and successful examples; make the message clearer by developing analogies from familiar contexts such as the home and community; and demonstrate the linkage between preventing deadly conflict and vital public interests. Such efforts are more likely to succeed if leaders can mobilize the media, the business community, and other

influential and active groups in civil society.

Prevention entails action, action entails costs, and costs demand trade-offs. The costs of prevention, however, are minuscule when compared with the costs of deadly conflict and of the rebuilding and psychological healing in its aftermath. This report seeks to demonstrate the need for a new commitment—by governments, international organizations, opinion leaders, the private sector, and an informed public—to prevent deadly conflict and to marshal the considerable potential that already exists for doing so.