

claim to be democratically accountable, and its actions under chapter VII are probably not even amenable to judicial review.⁴¹ The system is so closed, and the Security Council so all-powerful, that there are no mechanisms which provide redress for those (individuals or states) who suffer harm and no means by which local communities might challenge decisions which affect them. As Ruth Wedgwood observes, the sense is that we really ought to cherish the Council for what it is doing and worry about the fine points later.⁴²

The peacekeeping principle of impartiality, which has also been transgressed, illustrates some of the concerns this raises. The Security Council is an unashamedly political body controlled by the veto powers and therefore hardly capable of designing neutral interventions. We have seen neutrality (mis)used as an excuse for Security Council inaction to disguise its lack of political will, in the Rwandan situation⁴³ and in Bosnia.⁴⁴ Impartiality has also justified the inaction of peacekeepers in the face of disappearances, extra-judicial executions, rape allegations and other serious human rights abuses.⁴⁵ Anne Orford points to other disparities between the rhetoric of an impartial Security Council and the realities with respect to women's security. She argues that women are often *less* secure as a result of Security Council actions:

Security Council actions, including military operations and economic sanctions, have [negatively] influenced the struggle of women to acquire basic sociopolitical rights, improve health and survival, secure freedom from rape and sexual harassment, and establish economic security. Perhaps the clearest

⁴¹ W Michael Reisman, "The Constitutional Crisis in the United Nations" (1993) 87 *American Journal of International Law* 83; Ruth Gordon, "United Nations Intervention in Internal Conflicts: Iraq, Somalia and Beyond" (1994) 15 *Michigan Journal of International Law* 519.

⁴² Ruth Wedgwood, "The Evolution of United Nations Peacekeeping" (1995) 28 *Cornell International Law Journal* 631, 631.

⁴³ Rosenblum, above n 32, 192.

⁴⁴ Berdal, above n 30, 78.

⁴⁵ Weiner and Ni Aolain, above n 36, 313-314.