

response mechanism must be removed from the strictly political dimension. The key sign of optimistic coming out of Rwanda is that there are many parts of the UN, as well as other international organizations, that show increasing capacity to assume such delegated authority.

The humanitarian community's response to Rwanda was fast and relatively well orchestrated amongst both UN agencies and nongovernmental humanitarian organizations. They achieved some real successes and just as promisingly are actively identifying and setting about to correct failures. Similarly, parts of the UN's peacekeeping and conflict resolution apparatus in New York, specifically DPKO, DHA, and DPA, increased their cooperation during the Rwanda crisis and are busy enhancing these consultative mechanisms.

The concept of a UN permanent rapid deployment headquarters most certainly holds promise for future Rwandas. Not least of all it will serve to reassure UN decision makers and potential troop contributing nations. Then perhaps DPKO and others will be allowed to get on with their job.

Other international non-political mechanisms, such as the UN's human rights structures and the OAU's mechanism for conflict resolution, did not play the kind of role over Rwanda that they could and should have. Nevertheless, and although they have further to develop, they too have the potential to play a substantial and independent role in conflict prevention, conflict management, and conflict resolution.

This is not to deny that there are core international decisions that must remain political. But, as countries increase their trust in the capacity of the UN Secretariat, UN agencies, and nongovernmental organizations such as the ICRC or Oxfam, the more they will be prepared to delegate responsibility. This evolution occurs in any maturing democratic system, and is merely the acceptance of the inherent limitations of political decision making. The UN member states need to recognize their functional limitations and delegate greater authority and tasks to those parts of the UN and international society best able to handle them.

Both Rwandans and the international community abjectly failed to prevent widespread genocidal massacres and massive refugee flows. The international community partly mitigated its failure through rapid and effective humanitarian assistance. There are cautious grounds for optimism that some have learned from the Rwandan catastrophe, and will be better prepared to prevent similar cataclysms that threaten both Africa and the world. There is real potential for improvements in international crisis response and conflict resolution if states are prepared to allow the UN and other international structures to play their part.