

to inform the current Security Council approach to conflicts such as Bosnia, Cyprus, and Georgia.

V. Session Four: Future Perspectives for the Security Council

The ability of the Security Council to provide global leadership for the maintenance of international peace and security, as laid down in Article 1 of the Charter, is central to the future effectiveness and credibility of the UN. Canada and other member states continue to be deeply concerned with upholding the UN as the cornerstone of multilateralism and with the future role of the Security Council. Current reluctance on the part of the Council to address emerging crises such as Burundi raises questions about who will carry out the Charter mandate. The risk today may not be that the Security Council is *over-extended*, but that it will revert to *under-utilising* its powers.

Five issues can be raised here. The first relates to the pressing need to reform Security Council *operations*. While progress has been made on increasing their transparency, more should be done to institutionalise openness, e.g. enhancing routine consultations with major troop-contributing countries. The Council should also take stock again of the global security situation at the political level, as was done in January 1992. The P-5 veto will continue to be a contentious issue, but Members should work to limit its use in practice to Chapter VII items only, and not for such matters as the selection of the Secretary-General. The Council has sometimes failed to match resources with stated goals, and has missed opportunities for preventive intervention. It will have to learn from these errors, often perceived as "failures" of the UN.

The innovation of "Groups of Friends" is a positive development that will allow the Secretary-General to exercise greater flexibility and leadership, as well as obtain advice from troop-contributing countries. Such advice is particularly critical when dealing with the military aspects of peacekeeping. Non-permanent members of the Security Council are often left without the benefit of such advice and information, which the P-5 often control and filter. One participant suggested that the Security Council be required to receive formally and publicly all necessary military advice before passing any resolution to establish a new peacekeeping mission and to ensure that the mandate proposed by the Council is achievable with the available resources. The U.S. proclivity of withholding important intelligence from the Council greatly impairs the Council's ability to act in an early and preventive manner.

The second issue is that of *enlarging the membership* of the Security Council. Given its rather unrepresentative and outdated structure, the credibility of the Council may well be called into question. But enlargement should not be viewed as the panacea, as it is also true that a fully representative Council would be totally unable to make decisions. The growing demand for regional representation often ignores that the fact that some of the most troubling conflicts today are between regional neighbours, e.g. India and Pakistan. Non-permanent membership should be extended on the basis of Article 23, which calls for UN "good citizenship" as the key criterion, and only secondarily for geographic considerations. Should resources and size of UN contribution be the only alternative criteria? The debate over reforming Council membership is becoming protracted and complex, and an outcome is not likely in the near future.