

prefers that states take the initiative in sounding the alarm because they will then be more motivated to mount a response. This does not mean that his early warning role is unimportant, but rather it shows that it can be difficult to implement.

The difficulties in obtaining unique information and fostering political will can, again, be illustrated by historical cases. In Korea (1950), the Secretary-General received the initial information about the invasion from the US, and so from the beginning was behind on knowledge about events. Even the UN Commission on Korea (UNCOK), stationed in Korea, drew most of its information from US diplomatic and military staff in the country. When originally informed of the invasion, the Secretary-General did offer to invoke Article 99, apparently feeling confident enough about the authenticity of the US information, but he was told that the US itself was planning to call an urgent Council meeting. While little new information was provided by UNCOK, its confirmation of the attack was itself quite useful, because it was a neutral international observer stationed at close hand to the conflict.

In the East Pakistan/Bangladesh conflict (1971), the Secretary-General, after waiting months for states to raise the issue in the Council, sent a memorandum to try to push the Council into deliberation. He did not want to call a formal meeting of the Council but rather sought to "nudge" the Council towards deliberations and action. But there was no political will in the Council to initiate discussions until the war broke out some five months later. In the Korea case, the Secretary-General was limited by a lack of information. In the East Pakistan/Bangladesh case, it was the lack of political will (both on his part and on that of the Council) that prevented the Secretary-General from invoking Article 99.

Knowing that the keys to early warning are good information and strong political will, we can identify various means to improve the UN's early warning system. It is apparent that the information should be clear and convincing in identifying an emerging threat. This entails not only the gathering of information from the field but also a substantial means for analysis. Within the UN there must also be a consultation process to consider the results of such analysis and a means to move critical information quickly "up the ladder" to the Secretary-General. In addition to sharing information with the information to Council members, it may also be necessary to disseminate further in order to promote action.

1. Information Gathering

Where does the Secretary-General obtain his information about emerging crises? The main information sources are members states, UN agencies/personnel, the media and non-