

generally focused only on certain parts of early warning analysis, such as quantitative/qualitative models and data systems, without fully attempting to bridge the quantitative/qualitative gap, the organizational issues and the analyses/response linkages. This conference bridged these gaps.

Initial early warning efforts, particularly in the eighties, focused on humanitarian disasters and concentrated on the collection and analysis of information for the purpose of foreshadowing conflicts with the final goal of mitigating the humanitarian consequences. Early warning was aimed at collecting information to provide adequate emergency relief. The current focus of early warning is on prevention rather than strictly forecasting, on conflict management rather than humanitarian relief, and on analyses and the development of strategic options rather than just information collection. As such, humanitarian early warning requires a detailed analysis of three major dimensions: actors, situations, and contexts. Successful early warning also requires a suitable organizational structure and a specific focus on realistic strategic options.

Numerous efforts are underway worldwide to develop early warning models. Some utilize indicators and quantitative models. Others are based simply on sharing field information available from UN agencies and NGOs. Participants in this conference utilized different methodologies and approaches (qualitative analysis versus quantitative computerized coding) in such areas as humanitarian crises, major armed conflicts, genocide/politicide, refugee migrations, and human rights. Much less developed, however, is research on linking responses to early warning signals. This conference tried to bridge this gap by focussing for two days exclusively on the link between research and viable policy options.

Participation

The conference brought together leading academics, policy makers, and representatives of relevant international organizations and NGOs from all over the world. The integration of policy responses and analysis was intended to increase the capacity of early warning analysis to be sensitive to the needs of policy makers and provide them with specific tools and options.

Due to geographical reasons of the location of the conference, North American participants predominated (although there was attendance by Europeans). Budgetary constraints, unfortunately, limited the participation of individuals from soft-currency countries, particularly Africa, since we were unable to provide travel assistance.

There were a total of 119 participants from 15 different countries: 40 percent Canadians; 44 percent Americans; 14 percent Europeans; 3 from Africa (Egypt and South Africa); 4 from Russia; and 1 each from Australia, Israel, and South Korea. Among the listeners, Canadians predominated, accounting for 67 percent.

Academics dominated the conference with 39 percent, but the participants also included 27 percent government, 14 percent government, and 6 percent UN delegates. In addition, student participation was 13 percent, with the majority playing an active role. 71 percent of all participants appeared on the program in the role of speaker, chair, discussant or rapporteur. Table 1 and 2 provide a more detailed overview of the diverse participation by region and affiliation.