

In conclusion, Senator MacEachen argued that there is a real potential for ICG and similar organizations to produce change. All that is needed is to ensure that they are able to operate properly and are rendered capable of producing change.

Discussant

Professor Janice Gross Stein, Harrowston Professor of Conflict Management and Negotiation, University of Toronto, argued that the media and NGOs are absolutely critical players in the area of early warning and response. Order is the enemy of good warning and response. Paradoxically, improved organization and co-operation among NGOs could *diminish* the effectiveness of their early warning and response roles. Assessment efforts within the U.S. Government provide a good example of the possible disadvantages of a large, integrated bureaucracy. The U.S. Government possesses valuable intelligence assets but the overall system is of less use than it might be because it lacks multiple voices. The U.S. intelligence community tends to produce integrated reports, but trying to reach such a consensus will result in washing out all the potential criticism and dissident voices that can aid warning. Thus, one should be wary of efforts to create a global and integrated early warning system.

Professor Stein stated that she disagreed with the argument that the problem does not appear to be with early warning but rather with the response. The warning process remains problematic, e.g. with regard to questions such as how to determine what information political leaders require; how it can be ensured that information reaches them; and where and in what way limited early warning resources should be committed.

There is a need to differentiate between "inside" and "outside" systems. In the "inside" system comprised of the UN and governments, there is a clear advantage to coordination across departments and organizations. But in the "outside" system of NGOs and the independent media, there is a greater likelihood of success if the system is decentralized. Professor Stein emphasized that one needs to be careful in sharing intelligence and must recognize the political constraints that exist on sharing information that originates from "inside" sources, e.g. the UN or governments. If information provided in confidence to the UN is then disseminated widely outside, the information available to the UN could diminish in value over time as a result. The NGOs and the media, as "outside" groups, face no such constraints and so can preserve their capacity to disseminate information freely, and to circulate warnings based on that information. They can also give voice to information or warning that originate from within the "inside" system, and so perform a valuable advocacy function.

Professor Stein also stated that one must be realistic in his expectations while also assisting the UN and other bodies in improving their early warning capacity. Higher standards of behaviour by the UN than those placed on governments should not be expected. It was not just the UN that failed in Rwanda, but Member States too.