

OPINIONS

The end of the UN

Like the League of Nations before it, the United Nations have now become the useless bureaucracy of the late 20th century.

The demise of the UN was apparent months ago when it became clear the secretary-general had no real power and was merely acting as a justification to US force around the globe. Although its many sub-agencies such as UNICEF, may still be of great use to the world, the UN body itself has lost all credibility and respect.

Last week many national leaders hid behind the statement "we must wait for UN mandate" in relation to the disgusting events in East Timor. Whether you agree with the Kosovo bombings or not, you must admit to seeing the hypocrisy of this statement next to NATO's "we cannot wait for UN mandate." When the events in the former Portuguese colony began to unfold, the response was to organize a meeting "within the next few days." The night of the 1967 Six-Day war in the Middle East, the UN conducted an all-night debate of the issue. Again, whether you agree with the Kosovo approach or not, we cannot avoid the fact of our "humanitarian" actions setting a precedent which, if not applied elsewhere, smacks of continental discrimination, if not colonialism, or even racism.

To fail to act in East Timor as in Rwanda tells two-thirds of the world that they still don't belong in the big-boys club of advanced Western maturity, protection, and humanitarian worth. One has to wonder if the US/UN only acts against nations for whom they do not outfit their

military. Yugoslavia and Iraq were supplied by Russia to some extent. Indonesia and Turkey are supplied by the US and Canada among others. I honestly do not understand what Indonesia has which is so important that we aren't piss them off.

And finally, the deciding body of the security council has no members from South America, Africa, or the South Pacific. Do they represent anyone else's security other than their own?

The UN is continuing to stall. Any further delays and I would call for Australia to do what it should have done over a week ago — mount an independent humanitarian protection force to oversee the peaceful transition to East Timorese democracy. Yes, their would be outcries from the West, but the opposition would be drowned by the overwhelming support. When our foreign minister explains that Indonesia does not belong to an organization like NATO, then I have to ask Australia to set up its own (the South Pacific Treaty Organization — SPTO?).

As for the UN, perhaps the time has come for its dismantling. I have no replacement to suggest until the "white West" decides they are not as mature as they think, that they are valid targets for indictments for warcrimes, and that all nations must adhere to a basic standard despite labels of "Industrial," "Developing," or "Third World." The lives of human individuals have no value if not protected universally.

Tristan Stewart-Robertson



Men at work: the UN website Kosovo photo archive is heavy with suits, light on scenes from the troubled land - "The Security Council adopts resolution 1244 (1999). (UN Photo 200749C)"



Happy days: when UN crew and Indonesian police were still friends. UN archive photos of East Timor are like the family album, just the good times. - "UN Civpol Officers and Indonesian police in Liquisa, 17 July 1999 (UN Photo archive)"

NEED A JOB?

The Gazette
needs editors for

- Opinions
- Dalendar
- Sports

POSITIONS WILL BE HIRED ON MONDAY
SEPTEMBER 20. COME TO THE MEETING
AT 4:30 IF YOU'RE INTERESTED, RM 312
SUB, INFO 494-2507

THE GAZETTE

WANTED

WRITERS
PHOTOGRAPHERS

CONTRIBUTE TO YOUR
STUDENT PAPER

MEETINGS EVERY MONDAY AT 4:30
RM 312 SUB, INFO 494-2507

THE GAZETTE