

eager to intervene for free. Others in similar situations may not behave as uprightly as did the Australians, but there are hopeful signs. Whereas in the past many regional players took advantage of a kind of geopolitical *schadenfreude*—exploiting the weakness of their neighbors at war—with their national economies becoming increasingly regionalized, few governments now want to risk the economic dislocation and refugee flows that are the major byproducts of nearby conflict. Hence the growing strength of regional organizations across the globe, from the Regional Forum of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to the once-toothless Organization of American States (OAS). Many of these groups began as economic bodies but have since developed security arms.

And regionalism addresses still another problem that has long bedeviled U.N. peacekeeping: how to command and control polyglot troops who often, in Babel-type confusion, follow different military customs and work at cross-purposes. Finally, U.S. presidents and other major-power leaders who now have trouble prying U.N. funds from their legislatures could, in the future, disguise money for regionalism as bilateral aid.

NOW THE BAD NEWS

Of course, there are plenty of places where U.N.-approved regional solutions would prove impossible, or problematic at best. The Security Council's permanent five members, with their sacrosanct vetoes, are obviously immune. Nor do local solutions always make things easier. For what regional power could intervene between India and Pakistan? China? Afghanistan? There is no one nation trusted enough to

play the part. Meanwhile, the newly cooperative Nigeria, freed from its rogue past, could conceivably become the U.N.-legitimized regio-cop of western Africa. But no one in the east of the continent wants the recalcitrant Ethiopians or the Kenyans, the dominant powers of that region, moving in to solve their problems any time soon. As for central Africa, the regional powers there are already doing battle in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. And in South America, Chile, Argentina, and Brazil co-exist in simmering mistrust of each other's militaries. All these situations show that the need remains for a strong peacekeeping capacity within the U.N. as well. And unlike U.N. troops, regional powers rarely stay committed to peacekeeping for long periods—the Australians, for instance, had to introduce a special tax to fund their East Timor adventure and left after just five months on the ground.

But there are regional paths out of many of these nettles—most of them depending on U.S. aid, support for regional organizations and, mainly, the kind of long-term assiduousness that has been lacking in the Clinton administration's foreign policy. Washington has pushed Buenos Aires, for instance, to develop a peacekeeping role (and gave Argentina a small role in the Haiti intervention). But the Pentagon could make its extensive joint military exercises in Latin America far more contingent on regional cooperation under the auspices of the still-teething OAS—which ably preempted a war between Ecuador and Peru in the mid-1990s and recently took Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori to task for election fraud. In Southeast Asia, it is conceivable that the ASEAN Regional Forum could gain more