

area give some reason for hope. The release of most foreign hostages in the region, and the associated indications of a more pragmatic approach to international relations by the prevailing authorities in Iran, is another positive change.

In other regions, the UN-sponsored transition schemes in the Western Sahara and Cambodia, having finally achieved the support of the key parties concerned, remained generally on track, but fragile, and some further progress toward general peace has also been realized in Central America. In spite of huge continuing obstacles, discussions between the two Koreas also began to yield some concrete results, raising hopes that the spectre of a nuclear-armed North Korea can be averted, together with the possible need for some new NATO-like structure to contain such a threat.

In South Asia, little or no progress was made in attempts to bring to bear any process of regional cooperation and security to cope with the numerous inter-state tensions which interact with secessionist, communal, and partisan animosities to create highly volatile dangers. The assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, apparently by Tamil militants, and the continuing violence in Kashmir, underlined the urgency of defusing conflicts in the South Asian region.

In various parts of Africa, meanwhile, wars and the legacies of wars continue to afflict huge numbers of people within and across borders, too often unnoticed or unremarked because the agony has endured so long as almost to become expected. The liberation of South Africa from apartheid, and its hoped-for integration as a dynamic force for regeneration of the continent, must first survive the difficult negotiations and the chronic internal violence which plague that country itself.

More broadly, the mood of the Third World remains angry at the relative neglect of most of its problems after the crisis in Kuwait had passed; cynical about some of the high ideals and objectives proclaimed by the West at the time; anxious about the loss of the perceived Soviet foil to American power; concerned about the potential for intervention, overriding state sovereignty, in the name of what are often seen as "Western" values and interests. It is clear that the response to the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait, while a necessary condition for any new world order to replace that of the Cold War, was far from a sufficient condition in the eyes of the majority of the world's people, living in the Third World. Most of the smouldering issues of North-South relations in the world, as