

It won't end weapons sales. But it could agree to make them transparent. So that we all know what is going on.

We could agree to restraint and reduction; to openness, rather than the convenience of the blind eye, not just to obvious arms, but to technology whose use is dual.

Last autumn, there was a World Summit on Children held at the United Nations in New York. Two days, to make some fundamental political commitments to build a better world for children. Only heads of government or state could participate: 82 did because, politically, they could not stay away.

It was a success because it galvanized action. The most significant problem is the absence of means.

The parallels between the two summits are far from complete. But the Children's Summit is relevant to an Arms Summit for two reasons. One, summits can work. Two, the means to save children are in the savings to be made from arms.

Does this call for controls, for bureaucracy, for interference? If it did, I'd still be in favour, but it doesn't. It calls for responsibility and the recognition that all states are in this together.

The institution all states share together is the United Nations.

Surely this -- the need to deal now with arms control -- and the need to promote the United Nations, these are among the great lessons of the Gulf crisis.

We must improve the UN. The original concepts of a genuine international civil service must be restored. The authority of the Secretary-General's Office, which Mr. Perez de Cuellar has restored with courage, must be reinforced. The large powers must see such steps as being acts of realism.

Even if this is not a war to end all wars, let us make it the war to begin a new and better peace. Potential aggressors will know that the UN no longer cries foul and then cries wolf, that it means what it says. Powerful countries will not be able easily to discard later the precedent they declare is now being created or the principles of common consent they now claim to defend.

If the UN succeeds here, it can succeed elsewhere. If it fails here, it will succeed nowhere. A United Nations which can win this war and build this peace will be a United Nations which can turn, confident and empowered, to the other problems which plague this planet, the new challenges to global security