

"leads" provided in the general information-gathering process. Those who plot an escalation of violence usually try to hide their plans and preparations. Hence, it may require some keen "detective work" to uncover even the general nature of such plots. Two important indicators are the importation of armaments (usually done secretly or illegally) and the control over resources (e.g., mining activities or the drug trade). The UN has a poor monitoring system for such indicators, perhaps reflecting its fear of infringing on "internal affairs." It is also important to identify the vested interests economically within the country as well as outside. For example, in Katanga in 1960-62 it was vital for the UN to know the policies of the mining firms which backed Katangan succession.

In order to carry out early warning and contingency planning, the UN needs to constantly develop scenarios for potential outcomes of both international and internal situations in the short and long-term. Most armies have contingency plans for all kinds of threats, from conventional wars to nuclear holocaust, so it is only reasonable that the UN should develop contingency plans to respond to armed conflicts. Unfortunately, the UN has not yet developed a system for scenario-building. Now that the need for greater emphasis on conflict prevention is recognized by nations (at least on paper), the time has come to develop realistic mechanisms. Analysis is needed not only to spot negative developments but also to identify positive developments which are to be reinforced.

The strongest analytical capacity, of the type needed for early warning, exists in the Information and Research (I&R) Unit of the Situation Centre, which is part of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations (DPKO). Though small, with only four officers, it has the greatest "reach" in terms of information gathering and analysis because these officers are "connected" to national intelligence systems, having been seconded from them. Created in 1994 with only a US intelligence officer, the unit now has officers from four of the five members of the Security Council (France, Russia, UK, USA but not China).³⁴ The officers are not limited to peace-keeping operations and regularly provide assistance to other departments and the Office of the Secretary-General. They have produced important information/intelligence reports which have gone well beyond the scope of regular UN reports. They have included information on arms flows and other covert assistance from States. They have evaluated the motivations of parties, prepared threat assessments and other forecasts. Unfortunately, the I&R unit does not have a specific mandate for early warning and so it does early warning only in an ad hoc fashion.

3. Shared Responsibilities and Consultations

Before information reaches the Secretary-General, it is usually received and "processed" to some