

exercising this power, the Security Council has created a new discourse of *global insecurity* which has enabled it to push at the boundaries of its *Charter* powers in a number of ways. For example, the expansion of what might constitute a threat to global security to include social, economic, humanitarian and ecological causes of instability suggests an almost boundless competence of the Security Council to sanction the use of force under chapter VII and not be limited by the principle of state sovereignty.²⁹ Christopher Greenwood has observed that the requirement that the Security Council determine the existence of a "threat to international peace and security" before invoking its Chapter VII powers is increasingly treated as a procedural rather than substantive prerequisite.³⁰ This creates a new sense of the indispensability of the Security Council and legitimates the Council's assumption of a policing role in areas which, as Martti Koskenniemi points out, the *Charter* originally envisaged would fall within the competence of the General Assembly.³¹

Further, despite the new rhetoric of tackling the underlying *causes* of insecurity, the Security Council's discourse of global insecurity functions to resolutely conceal them. One way in which this masking is achieved is by characterizing the majority of contemporary conflicts as essentially civil disputes associated with local ethnic or tribal differences which have random and even primitive origins. This construction suggests, falsely, that civil wars and ethno-nationalist violence present a *new* set of circumstances which necessitate Security

²⁹ *UN Charter*, art 2(7) creates an exception to the principle of state sovereignty when enforcement actions under chpt VII are being applied.

³⁰ Mats R Berdal, "The Security Council, Peacekeeping and Internal Conflict after the Cold War" (1996) 7 *Duke Journal of Comparative and International Law* 71, 76 referring to Christopher Greenwood, "Legal Constraints on UN Military Operations", IISS Strategic Comments, 22 March 1995.

³¹ Martti Koskenniemi, "The Police in the Temple, Order, Justice and the UN: A Dialectical View" (1995) 6 *European Journal of International Law* 325.