

On the surface, there is little to distinguish processes taken under the heading of preventive diplomacy from those under peacemaking. The activities described in the UN Charter as peacemaking could all be exercised in the conduct of preventive diplomacy, and often are, but in the hierarchy of conflict resolution, the difference is that peacemaking *follows a conflict* while preventive diplomacy, for the most part, precedes and, ideally, avoids conflict.

The existing processes can be exercised by any individual or organization, with the exception that judicial settlement would usually be under the auspices of the World Court, and, of course, regional agencies and arrangements would apply only in the relevant region. It should be noted that the Secretary-General of the UN now often creates civilian observer missions for appropriate tasks (military observer missions are covered in the next section) as well as "Groups of Friends" or "Friends of the Secretary-General" to assist him in his peacemaking tasks. In some cases, this has been done on a co-operative basis with a regional organization, for example, with the Organization of American States with respect to the crisis in Haiti. The civilian observer missions are often made up of individuals in their own capacity, while "friends" are linked with states; however, the beauty of these approaches is that they are flexible and not locked into any particular status or process.

The UN "embassies" idea mentioned in the previous section is certainly applicable in the context of peacemaking, even if the "embassy" might have "failed" in its preventive diplomacy role. The advantage the embassy would have over an observer mission or "friends" would be intimate knowledge of the situation and the players on the ground, and it would be invaluable in assisting the deployment of a peacekeeping, humanitarian or disaster relief mission.

Peacekeeping

Peacekeeping, as defined by the United Nations, is the deployment of a (United Nations) presence in the field, *hitherto with the consent of all the parties concerned*, normally involving United Nations military and/or police personnel and frequently civilians as well. Peacekeeping is a technique that expands the possibilities for both the prevention of conflict and the making of peace.⁸ This is the best known of the peace operations in the UN sense, although the term has become one of convenience in many cases. (For example, the actions of the Russian Federation in certain parts of the former Soviet Union are referred to by them as peacekeeping—not all those involved would agree!)

The question of definition has come to plague the United Nations as it attempts to define what it is trying to do in the new world situation, while, at the same time, it tries to remain loyal to its history and to a technique that it invented, has great experience in and with which it feels comfortable. Although "peacekeepers" can be used in a preventive posture, as discussed earlier, "peacekeeping" is after the event, after the parties to the conflict have consented to a role for, and the presence of, the peacekeepers. The roles can be, and are, varied. The consent of the parties can include the traditional ceasefire, disengagement, limitations on forces and armaments issues as well as more recent aspects such as the delivery of humanitarian assistance, the protection of human rights, the holding of elections, etc.

The post-conflict scenario, consent of the parties, use of force only in self-defence, transparency and the absolute neutrality of the peacekeepers are among the characteristics that clearly identify a peacekeeping operation from other peace operations such as preventive deployment, establishment of pre-conflict demilitarized zones and peace enforcement.

⁸ See also the definition of peace enforcement (which came along after *An Agenda for Peace*). Obviously the UN will want to clear up the distinction.

