

Further, when pursued solely in the quiet, official fora of international politics, an incremental and piecemeal approach also tends to be insufficient for attracting a broad constituency or inspiring more ambitious steps. Notably, few efforts were made to build a coalition among NGOs, related agencies and the interested public, effectively limiting the leverage and political pressure that would be needed to launch further reforms.

Irrespective of the modest, short-term success, public and political expectations have yet to be met. In this respect, it appears that two distinct but complementary objectives have compounded frustration and confusion.<sup>93</sup> Initial interest in developing a rapid-deployment capability was premised on the need to improve peacekeeping. But expectations were also raised at the prospect of a mechanism which would be capable of prompt, decisive responses to desperate situations, even those which necessitated humanitarian intervention and limited enforcement. In the near term, these latter hopes are unlikely to be fulfilled. Moreover, in the absence of a compelling vision, there is little chance of satisfying either interest.

It should be acknowledged that there are also far more ambitious aspirations similar to those outlined in the UN Charter, including the development of a UN standing force, a dedicated UN Legion of professional volunteers or a composite UN Standing Emergency Capability. Notably, both Canada and The Netherlands announced in-depth studies into the requirements of a UN standing force, as well as a commitment to maintain efforts over the long-term. This was hardly a novel development. In the latter stages of World War II, the statesmen who founded the United Nations strove to create an Organisation that might give us a second, and perhaps final chance -- to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Their collective vision was that of an empowered United Nations; one that might help transform a war-prone international system through collective security, committing all member states to assist in war prevention, with the provision of adequate forces, if necessary. That vision was premised on the assumption that the 'international community' had learned a critical lesson: that security, if not survival, in the future would require a far more cooperative system supported by a legitimate, universal institution. Both were viewed as prerequisites for a wider disarmament process that would gradually free up resources for other pressing problems. Clearly, it did not transpire as hoped.

After fifty years, similar objectives continue to motivate both the human security agenda and the more ambitious proposals for a rapid deployment capability that might gradually empower the UN. Unfortunately, at the official level, these ideals remain largely ignored with bold proposals