

It was noted that a truly interdependent world means that no single government could attain its objectives unilaterally -- i.e. states could not attain total security by reliance on unilateral measures. Given that states were unwilling to rely on collective security for their national defence the reality of today's world meant a balance between the two -- a growing reliance on multilateral institutions with a growing consciousness of the effect of one's unilateral actions on others. The further refinement and enhancement of international institutions was seen as essential in dealing with conflict resolution. Some were, for example, critical of U.S. actions in regard to the World Court. It was suggested that the UN's inability to provide collective security had left Third World countries in something of a defence vacuum -- having to rely on one or other superpower for "security."

Whilst the view was also expressed that, despite nuclear weapons, military force remained the last resort of politics, others suggested that there was no security in arms or the use of force. In order to work toward a broader definition of security it was believed that the focus would have to shift from an emphasis on national security -- which has narrowed perceived policy options -- to notions of individual security in which military options would seem less appropriate.

In concluding the discussion of concepts of security, it was recalled that in many countries military expenditure was deemed necessary in order to maintain existing regimes and to reinforce established power bases. As well, in the Third World there were serious, longstanding historical differences and enmities which would not easily be forgotten.

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