headquarters in Haiti in 1993, it is quite possible that UN forces could have coped with the situation. Haiti's democratic government might then have returned 18 months earlier, with vastly less suffering during the ensuing period.

What has not changed and what is not new in the post-Cold War era is the importance of leadership at times of compelling need. Expectations of the UN run high. Governments look to the UN to present solutions or at least to address problems. The result is a paradoxical situation identified recently by the Independent Working Group on the Future of the United Nations in its study, *The United Nations in its Second Half-Century.* "In virtually all of its activities, from peacekeeping to development, from human rights to environmental accords," the report argues, "the United Nations is being asked to play a larger role and to assume fresh responsibilities at a time when governments are increasingly anxious to reduce their financial contributions, and increasingly reluctant to provide the necessary political, military and material support."[3] If the only global institution of international security is incapable of mounting an effective peace operation, the logical consequence is that our Charter commitment to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war will ring increasingly hollow.

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The Humanitarian Imperative

The new realities of the emerging international system suggest a pattern of conflict, sometimes along ethnic, religious or tribal lines, which will have important humanitarian repercussions throughout the world. Two long-time senior UN officials, Erskine Childers and Sir Brian Urquhart, have characterized the phenomenon as "the continuous human emergency"[4] and identified the following causal factors:

> Economic stagnation, absolute poverty, over-population, environmental degradation, use of military force, and human rights violations crowd the list of factors likely to trigger future humanitarian crises.[5]

These scourges will continue to capture the attention of the media and arouse the conscience of much of the world. Some claim that repeated disasters will lead to a new apathy and complacency - a type of "donor fatigue"- which would dull the sensibilities of some publics and make them more resistant to claims to humanitarian assistance. But this prognosis has not been borne out by recent events. In effect, an opposite reaction has taken hold in recent years. Graphic depictions of international tragedies have led to increased demands for more ambitious efforts in meeting humanitarian challenges and making the international system more responsive to humanitarian needs.

In many of these cases, a rapid response to crisis is needed. The example of Rwanda illustrates the problem in bold relief. Despite various signals that a crisis was imminent, even a minimal response had to await the onset of crisis. The Arusha peace agreement, the basis of the peacekeeping operation, was signed in August 1993. But the Security Council waited some two months before authorizing the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR). Troop deployments took place months after they were officially committed. The operational plan called for 4500 troops, but only 2600 troops were ever deployed. Of the troops provided, only the Belgians were