

effective regional political-security cooperation mechanisms, yet they remain among zones of tensions of the world.⁴ Finally, it should not be lost that in certain cases the universal values embodied in the UN may not be entirely compatible with the perceived role-conception of certain regional bodies. For example, there is a strong and historical human rights component in the Inter-American system which complements the UN role in that field. Neither ASEAN, the OAU nor the Arab League can be considered particularly dynamic agencies in this regard.

At least three basic conceptions of regional security organizations can be distinguished in the postwar period. The first one is rooted in Chapter VIII of the UN Charter and is represented by such classic multipurpose regional organizations as the OAS, the Arab League and the OAU.⁵ Such organizations represent the original 'building block to world order' conception of regionalism promoted in the UN Charter. Although such bodies were structured very differently, one of their principal objectives - along with non-interference in regional matters and respect for territorial integrity - was the prevention and settlement of intra-regional disputes between member states. To achieve this, the so-called Chapter VIII regional organizations relied mostly on traditional pacific settlement of disputes methods (i.e. good offices, mediation, arbitration, etc). Measures requiring the deployment and/or use of military force were considered to be either the domain of the UN Security Council or were enshrined in various collective defense arrangements.⁶

⁴ Although there have been consultations held under its aegis, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) does not at present constitute an effective framework for regional cooperation and security.

⁵ Since 1992 the OSCE has been recognized as a Chap. VIII organization. Russian authorities now claim that the Commonwealth of Independent States constitutes a Chap. VIII organization. Since there are no specific hurdles to recognition as a Chap. VIII organization, this assertion is likely to remain a contentious issue for some time, particularly in light of the controversial peacekeeping record of the CIS.

⁶ Under its Joint Defense Pact (1950), the Arab League set up a Permanent Military Commission and a Joint Defense Council to draw up plans for 'collective defense' against Israel. Practical implementation of the Pact remained as elusive as Arab Unity itself, however, and it is considered today to be inoperative. Interestingly, Libya called for its reactivation in early 1995. As for the OAS, the 1947 Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance - otherwise known as the Rio Pact - straddled the line between Ch. VIII and Art. 51 of the Charter. It was an outward-oriented collective defense pact linked to a Ch. VIII arrangement. The Rio Pact was perceived as an instrument of American hegemony by many Latin countries. When in 1982 Argentina invoked pact provisions during the Falklands/Malvinas war the United States refused to consider the case as a legitimate one and