

## VIII Practicalities Associated with Achieving CITA

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### Introduction

CITA as proposed in this study could affect the development of policy and the operation of the UN at several levels. The mere fact that the Secretary-General (and by extension the Security Council) would have access to information from a new and internal source would add another dimension to decision making in the UN.

It is important to identify the main issues and policy areas that might spark contention among established stakeholders inside and outside the UN organization, so as to address and reduce frictions before CITA is established.

Friction is a normal feature of reforms that introduce significant change to complex organizations. Although friction may appear to some as resistance, it ought to be seen as part of the normal process of discovery that eventually allows new systems and organizations to find a place in established structures. Challenges to reforms, among other things, can help to identify organizational weaknesses, overlapping authorities and unintended consequences. They should, therefore, be considered as a positive part of any systems change.

### Transparency and National Security

A source of resistance to creation of an international agency for assembly, analysis and dissemination of information, and to the training necessary for the efficient discharge of these functions, could come from the concern of nations over the protection of information which they regard as vital for their national security or commercial interests. This very natural and justifiable concern is in direct opposition to the global need for transparency of information regarding armament stockpiles, compliance with the provisions of treaties and possible aggressive preparations. A prime objective of transparency is to build confidence regarding the motives and actions of states considered to be potential enemies. If past adversaries do not, in fact, harbour any intentions against each

other, mutual confidence can best be built in an atmosphere of transparency. Conversely, reluctance to improve transparency is likely to raise suspicions and diminish confidence, perhaps with good reason. Such reactions could be an item for CITA's Analysis Division in its role of providing early warning for the Secretary-General.

Another source of reluctance to share information is the well-established belief that "knowledge is power," which makes those states which have the national means to collect intelligence anxious to retain sole possession of it, or to trade it as a quid pro quo for similar information possessed by close allies. Also, and particularly relevant to the efforts to control the proliferation of technology, industrial firms wish to retain exclusive control of information and techniques which give them a commercial advantage.

As a result of these attitudes, the United Nations has never been able to institute any body whose function could be related to the collection of "intelligence," a deficiency which has made it far more difficult to foresee crises and to deal with them when they arise.<sup>45</sup>

However, the awesome destructive power of weapons of mass destruction and the global reach of aircraft and ballistic and cruise missiles suggest that security is becoming more of a global than a national problem. The security of each is inseparable from the security of others. Increased transparency on a global scale could do more for the security of individual nations than would be lost by release of some of their confidential information. They could continue to collect and analyze intelligence for their own purposes, and retain particularly sensitive items for national eyes only or for sharing only with trusted allies, but make the rest of the information and judgments available to CITA.

A question which will have to be faced concerns the handling of information collected by CITA. Nations with advanced intelligence-collecting

\* The author wishes to acknowledge the contribution of Dr. Bland to this chapter.

45 "Contemporary operations have shown, however, that in politically fluid and militarily complex situations, more advanced resources and procedures for collecting, assessing and distributing intelligence within a peace-keeping mission may be required." "In particular, recent operational experience underscores the need to

develop local intelligence sources." "The lack of independent means of verifying information provided by warring factions effectively prevents UN forces from carrying out tasks entrusted to them." These quotations have been extracted from Mats R. Berdal, "Whither UN Peacekeeping?" *Adelphi Paper* 281, (London: IISS, October 1993), p. 44. See also: Hugh Smith, "Intelligence and UN Peacekeeping," *Survival*, Autumn (1994), pp. 174-192.

