

- 2.3 The Committee favours the establishment of clear and consistent criteria for UN intervention, and a closer integration of political, economic and military measures at each step of any UN peace operation, with the emphasis on prevention. It also favours strengthening the capability of the Secretariat to provide early warning and to co-ordinate the national force contributions and other participants in peace operations. At the same time, it would welcome the decentralization of peace operations regionally where possible, so that if the Security Council decided that intervention was necessary, it could authorize a regional organization to undertake a specific operation under UN auspices.

Response

The Government agrees. Canada is committed to reforming the UN system in a way that will permit the organization to respond more effectively to emerging threats to peace. Until now effective UN action has been constrained. There has been little consensus on the basis for timely intervention; indeed, the UN has been called on to respond to diverse situations, and that diversity underscores the difficulty of identifying hard and fast criteria. Nevertheless, the Government recognizes the need to work with our UN partners in developing workable principles that will guide UN action. The Government set out similar considerations in the 1994 Defence White Paper.

A second problem for the UN has been that once the decision to intervene has been taken, the means for implementing UN objectives have only rarely been readily available. Of particular concern is the need for prompt deployment of suitable forces at the outset of a mission as well as the need for adequate numbers of properly equipped forces in theatre, as the mandate of UN missions changes. In addition, the UN continues to suffer from the lack of adequate and readily available financial resources.

The Government believes that all of these problems require prompt attention. We are advancing proposals to provide the UN with financial resources that do not depend on contributions from member governments.

In April 1994, Canada organized a brainstorming session for senior UN officials and representatives of the major troop-contributing countries to sketch out further ways of improving the planning, preparation and conduct of UN peacekeeping operations. As announced by the Minister of Foreign Affairs at the United Nations General Assembly in 1994, Canada is now leading a major study of options for enhancing the UN's rapid-reaction capability. The study will be tabled at the General Assembly in the fall of 1995.

The Government also agrees fully on the need for greater efforts on early warning and, especially, prevention. The international community must be able to anticipate conflict if it is not always to be condemned to coping with its consequences. We must find innovative ways of providing early warning and then heading off crises. In this regard, Canada has submitted