simply provide a shopping list of the usual suspect causal factors. Specific measures at the policy/project level should be related to the key early warning categories that track conflict escalation. In other words, there should be an effort to link a conflict indicator with a focused preventive policy response, keeping in mind that these factors are interrelated and interact. This then demands an *integrated and systematic approach* to conflict prevention based on early warning analyses that recommend such integrated options for policy-makers. There is also a need to differentiate between types of conflict. One could suggest that early warning should be oriented towards the factors which produce *protracted* identity-based (e.g. ethnic) conflicts over core values such as identity and group security. A structured analytical framework that looks for patterns of deprivation and discrimination will go some way towards such differentiation, separating out non-protracted conflicts and violence such as riots. An exclusive focus on cases of "state failure", which has animated some recent academic research projects, is too narrow and seems to presuppose late-phase intervention.

Some recent studies on early warning have argued that the UN should stand at the centre of any global early warning network.[8] The desirability of having an effective political early warning system (PEWS) located in the UN Secretariat is without question, even given the serious resource and political constraints the organisation currently faces. Like-minded countries should continue to push for this. The fact remains, however, that there is vigorous opposition from the G-77 to any PEWS capability within the UN, and that is not likely to change in the near future. As a result, conflict analysis for early warning purposes will continue to be a decentralised, ad hoc, desk-level exercise within the political departments of DPA and DPKO. The Humanitarian Early Warning System (HEWS) in DHA has some elements of political early warning, but the orienting purpose of the HEWS database remains humanitarian intervention rather than a focused and standardised tracking of political instability. There has also been some recent effort to improve the early warning capacity of the DPKO Situation Centre, but here again the operational goal (support to ongoing peacekeeping operations, or perhaps preventive deployment) is limited and linked to later phases of conflict escalation. Early warning advocates are thus left with having to consider alternative approaches, and the regional organisation option would appear to hold significant promise, particularly where this can be coupled with cooperative project delivery by regional and local NGOs, backed up with international technical expertise and ODA. Such a proliferation of regional early warning approaches would appear to be more likely at this time than a single comprehensive and authoritative system.

II. Towards an Early Warning Analytical Framework

In the absence of a systematic conflict early warning capacity in the UN Secretariat, and in view of the long period that would precede the actual implementation of early warning centres in regional organisations, it may be proposed that government