

sufficient glimmers of international revolt both at the height of the crisis and more so now as nations and the world understand more clearly our failure. There are signs that the international community can evolve and is evolving through changing state and UN practice. It appears that the UN is sufficiently robust to bend and effectively re-write or at least re-interpret the Charter and other international norms concerning internal conflicts.

However on April 6th, the perceived wisdom on conflict resolution and peacekeeping was that the most powerful countries such as the United States continued to have effective control over the success or failure of such initiatives, and in fact had the deciding say on whether they even proceeded. This perception had taken hold during the cold war when a bi-polar world moved largely to the tune of those with massive military clout. The rapid dissolution of such an international regime has not seen a commensurate change in that perception of the hidden hand of the biggest. This continued belief has been encouraged by the UN permanent 5 in what appears to be a giant confidence trick reinforced by a dated set of UN rules that govern a world community dramatically different from 50 years ago.

It appears curious that the handful of 14 middle power western nations<sup>14</sup> who at a conservative estimate have a total annual military budget of \$70 billion and a total of 1,100,000 troops, are not capable of making common cause with like-minded developing countries. Those countries may lack peacekeeping skills and equipment but give every indication of being prepared to take their place on the world stage if only given a hand. It seems a little simplistic for middle powers as well as the UN membership at large to ascribe UN gridlock to the P5 and others. All should look to themselves for solutions as the UN moves into its 50th year amid cries for reform from the governed.

In the weeks following the April 6th plane crash, debate in and around the SC made it clear that the ghost of Somalia figured prominently in the thoughts of various big powers<sup>15</sup>, most especially the US which had 18 of its soldiers killed (total of 113 UN fatalities to date), with the bodies of several abused in public.

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<sup>14</sup> Austria, Australia, Canada, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden

<sup>15</sup> Just prior to the 21 April decision of the SC to reduce UNAMIR from 2,000 to 270, the SC had considered the report of the Commission of Inquiry into the attacks on the UN in Somalia and inter alia that report recommended that: " 270. The United Nations should refrain from undertaking further peace enforcement actions within the internal conflicts of states." What was less prominent and likely attracted less notice was a small clause at the end of the next paragraph, "271. The United Nations should, where necessary, continue peace-keeping operations of the traditional type under its Charter, but with increased emphasis on preventive diplomacy, assistance in peaceful nation-building efforts and preparedness to respond quickly to emergencies." (emphasis added), see A/1994/653 1 June 1994. At this point it appears that the UN may yet be forced to undertake peace enforcement action within the internal conflict of Rwanda because in those weeks following April 6 the UN was unwilling to respond quickly to the emergency.