

Release of information as to where the information was obtained might severely damage the sources' ability to carry out their primary functions, their ability to gather further intelligence, or even the sources' position within their parent organization. Just the release by the HRO of a piece of intelligence itself might compromise the source. It would be obvious for example that only UNHCR or the ICRC was present in location "x", and only they could have passed on the information. In reverse, it might damage the UN if it were known that they were using information gathered by certain member countries' intelligence agencies.

If the HRO can open up and nurture such informal contacts, the flood of information could prove staggering. There are large numbers of UN and non-UN field staff who would be relieved, and even anxious, to pass on intelligence to an HRO rather than see their internal reports on human rights violations gathering dust in their respective HQs. Equally, many HQs will also be relieved, but will not want to officially know, that such information is getting to the right place so as to further human rights protection.

*Recommendation #47*

**It is recommended an HRO develop the skills and strategy to play a key role in encouraging, receiving, analysing, and disseminating human rights intelligence.**

## **7.2 Tactical and Strategic Nature of Human Rights Intelligence**

The UN traditionally uses human rights intelligence in the protection of human rights per se, eg. resolutions criticising violations, mandating HROs, funding human rights capacity building, etc. What is less recognized, is the usefulness of human rights intelligence to the other tactical and strategic objectives of the UN and its field operations.

Premising military peace-keeping strategy on the assumption that the parties are merely trying to capture a strategic hill top town rather than the real knowledge that they are out to ethnically cleanse that town, can only hamper the development of appropriate peace-keeping tactics. Another example is UN negotiators carrying out mediation. If they proceed on the assumption that two opposing leaders are not in full control of the troops who are raping and torturing, rather than on an actual situation of systemic violations that are centrally planned and condoned, they invariably will negotiate a charade that will not endure.

Human rights violations are indicative of the parties' commitment to peace and the resolution of the conflict. Systemic violations are a sign of centrally planned or condoned violence. Random violations are possibly a sign of a lack of central control or troop discipline. These and other patterns of violations are indicative of the fundamental causes of the conflict.

More work needs to be done in identifying how human rights intelligence can successfully inform UN operations in areas other than human rights per se, eg. political or military peace-keeping objectives. This will not only benefit those non-human rights objectives, but will have