



**25. The Secretary-General could examine the political and technical feasibility of establishing a small UN Standing Emergency Group. As a first step, the Secretary-General could solicit views on this concept and report accordingly to the General Assembly and the Security Council.**

## **Financial Issues**

Over the long term, the UN will need a rapid-reaction capability which is both effective and reliable. Effectiveness can be established in many ways, and earlier chapters have developed a number of potentially useful ways to achieve this objective. Reliability, however, is a more difficult proposition. As long as sovereign states retain the right to decide on the deployment of their national units, there will never be complete assurance that a UN force can meet an urgent situation on time or with sufficient capacity. As we consider the future of the UN over the long-term, therefore, it makes sense to continue debate on how we can better equip the UN so that it can have the permanent, standing capabilities it needs to meet reasonable requirements.

Financial issues will continue to be a key element of that debate. As long as the UN remains wholly dependent for its financing on Member States, some of whom have huge arrears in payments, the UN will never have the resources essential to doing its job. It will continue to be trapped by the paradoxical situation that it cannot do its job without resources, but it cannot acquire the needed resources until it demonstrates its ability to perform more effectively. A number of ideas for securing an independent source of revenue for the UN have been advanced. Some have been widely discussed, including a tax on currency transfers and a surcharge on airline tickets. There has been some technical debate about the likely revenues to be generated and the systems which are required to ensure the collection of money. But none of these ideas has commanded much international support. Moreover, as a report of the InterAction Council noted, "all such innovations will need full public support and care should be taken to avoid an erosion of the present level of general support for the United Nations. Eventually, a specific facility with appropriate decision-making and voting procedures might need to be established to administer and apportion the funds thus raised to the various programmes - and not financing everything the United Nations is doing today or intends to do."<sup>41</sup>

UN peace operations must be based on sound financing. The current situation is clearly untenable. For that reason, the idea of generating independent revenues for the UN continues to be attractive and should merit further study, notwithstanding current obstacles. An independent source of revenue, while undoubtedly posing political and technical difficulties, is the best way of assuring a stable funding base for an Organization whose work is crucial to international stability. A process should be put in place to consider the many proposals which have been put forward in this area and to assess next steps. It is important that the momentum towards finding imaginative solutions to the UN's financial problems not be lost.

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