

Governments and international secretariats are so preoccupied with the crisis of the moment - indeed the many crises of the moment - that they rarely have the time or patience for future-oriented analysis. Moreover, the idea that the people of this world could deal with each other without reference to their nation states, or the idea of a transformation of the United Nations to operate on any other basis than the principle of one-nation-one-vote, seem beyond the reach of the present generation. But let us be reminded that the decolonization process of the 1950s and 1960s was a quite sudden reversal of a strong and widely held belief that such changes would take many generations.

We have seen over the past year that the United Nations is capable of taking some basic steps in its own administrative and budgetary reform. Is it capable, and are we - its members, capable of transforming the organization to better suit the needs of the global city of the next century? I do not for a moment believe that our present U.N. is doomed, like its predecessor the League of Nations, gradually to outlive its usefulness. But surely there is scope and a need for further evolution. It should be the national societies, such as those which comprise this World Federation, that ought to examine such issues and propose new ways of improving the organization we are dedicated to upholding, and upon which we are depending to assure the future well-being of humanity.