

(Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia), Russian Fed./Chechnya, Great Lakes (Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Zaire), Iraq, DPR Korea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Tajikistan. In addition to these 19 states, there is information on (short-duration) natural disasters.

30. ReliefWeb provided information about on-going emergencies and crises in the following states/regions (as of 28 February 1997): Afghanistan, Angola, Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia), Russian Fed./Chechnya, Great Lakes (Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Zaire), Iraq, DPR Korea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Tajikistan. In addition to these 19 states, there is information for (short-duration) natural disasters events such as (in February 1997): floods in Bolivia, Mozambique, Malawi; mudslides in Peru; droughts in Ecuador and Kenya; an earthquake in Iran; and a typhoon in Viet Nam.

31. However, a section of ReliefWeb is now being created for West Africa. At present, it only points to other Internet sites. The establishment of an Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN) for West Africa, modelled after the IRIN for the Great Lakes, is also being considered.

32. The Hot Line fax number in Geneva, Switzerland is 41-22-917-0092.

33. Mr. Ayala Lasso, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, quoted in UN Doc. DPI/1550/HR of September 1994.

34. The composition of the I&R unit, consisting only of seconded nationals from the permanent five members of the Security Council, does create the potential problem that incoming information may be biased towards the interests of the UN's most powerful states. In practice, however, such natural biases can be taken into account and found acceptable because more information is generally better than less.

35. UN Secretary-General, "50th Anniversary Report on the Work of the Organization", United Nations, 1996 (UN Sales No. E.96.I.19)--see section on "preventive diplomacy and peacemaking", p. 193. DPA was created in March 1992, and officially given responsibilities for preventive diplomacy and peace-making one year later. Prior to that, such functions were performed by the Executive Office of the Secretary-General. (See General Assembly resolution A/47/120 for the mandate of the Department of Political Affairs.) A good summary of DPA responsibilities is provided in "DPA overview" ("<http://www.un.org/smlogo.gif>"):

"The DPA has five main responsibilities in support of preventive action and peacemaking. First, it must monitor, analyze and assess political developments throughout the world. Next, the Department identifies potential or actual conflicts in whose control and resolution the United Nations can play a useful role. It then prepares recommendations to the Secretary-General about appropriate actions in such cases. Fourth, the Department executes the approved policy when it is of a diplomatic nature. Finally, it assists the Secretary-General in carrying out political activities decided by him and/or mandated by the General Assembly and the Security Council in the areas of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peace-keeping and peace-building, including arms control and disarmament."

36. UN Secretariat, "Department of Political Affairs Overview" at <http://www.un.org/smlogo.gif> (as of March 1997). Italics added.

37. In fact, the previous Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, wrote in his "Supplement to an Agenda for Peace", submitted to the General Assembly on 3 January 1995, that "in an international bureaucracy interdepartmental cooperation and coordination come even less naturally than they do in a national environment."