

The Secretaries-General, similarly, have complained about the lack of interest on the part of member states in receiving early warnings.

In principle, governments are in support of early warning by the Secretary-General. The Security Council and the General Assembly have passed several resolutions to promote early warning and have encouraged the Secretary-General to employ Article 99. They did so in relation to the Secretary-General's 1992 Agenda for Peace⁴¹. The General Assembly did so in its resolutions on the "Protection and Security of Small States"⁴², and through various declarations it has approved.⁴³ In the 1992 Declaration on UN Fact-finding, the General Assembly endorsed an even expanded mandate:

28. The Secretary-General should monitor the state of international peace and security *regularly and systematically* in order to provide early warning of disputes or situations which might threaten international peace and security. The Secretary-General may bring relevant information to the attention of the Security Council and, where appropriate, of the General Assembly. [emphasis added]

Unfortunately, a regular and systematic forecasting system, producing periodic reports on potential or actual threats to the peace, has not been created within the Secretariat.

The crux of the problem for early warning and Article 99 invocations has been that the major powers will themselves alert the Security Council to threats to the peace if and when they see the need; if they do not bring such matters up, it usually means that they do not want it brought up. If the Secretary-General "forces" the matter on the agenda of the Council by invoking Article 99, he risks raising the ire of one or more members of the Council. He may be dissuaded by them in advance or may simply fear that there will be little chance of action, since the Council members have already decided not to handle the matter. The only case where the Secretary-General can claim to have special privilege is when he possesses unique information, not available to the major powers, which will galvanize the Council to action. But it is rare that the Secretary-General will know about a new dispute before the major powers.

The "solution" of this political problem is to develop a new norm for early warning, in which the Secretary-General regularly draws attention to potential conflict at an early stage in spite of the reluctance of some members of the Council. This would be a natural exercise of Article 99 and has been requested by nations (e.g., in the 1992 UN Fact-Finding Declaration). Such early warning entails a more proactive approach on the part of the Secretary-General, even when a UN response is not immediately possible. It also requires that the current early warning system be augmented, so that better information and analysis is available to the Secretary-General. A number of possible means of improvement are included in the next (recommendations) section.