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International Organizations

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Second Stage

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Part One Historical Background

Political entities historically have tended to create norms and rules for interacting with their neighbors. The many early schemes that sought methods to manage or eliminate conflicts among different parties were limited to a specific geographical area and lacked permanent institutional relationships. More than a millennium later several European philosophers began to elaborate schemes for *World Unity*. The Roman Catholic Church and its head, the pope, provided the focal point for many of these. When the European states began to challenge the religious authority, Hugo Grotius (1583-1645), an early Dutch legal scholar proposed a new legitimacy based on international law.

The Grotian tradition set up a number of fundamental principles that serve as the foundation not only for modern international law, but also for international organizations. Grotius believed that all international relations were subject to the rule of law. He rejected the idea that states can do whatever they wish and that war is the supreme right of states and the hallmark of their sovereignty. For Grotius, states, like people, are basically rational and law-abiding entities capable of achieving cooperative goals.

The Gortion tradition provided a foundation for the development of international law that is a crucial element in developing international organizations. Yet state sovereignty—the idea that states have exclusive governing authority within their border—became the cornerstone of European politics, as symbolized by the *Treaty of Westphalia* in 1648.

The Treaty of Westphalia

It was considered the most important attempt to establish something resembling world unity. It emphasized religious toleration by establishing equality between Protestant and Catholic states and providing some safeguard for religious minorities under an international guaranties. Besides, it formulated interesting rules for peaceful settlement of disputes against aggressors. Thus, the Peace of Westphalia became as model for several subsequent treaties; its rule and principals were considered, in a sense, an early precedent for articles 10,12, and 16 of the *Covenant of the League of Nations*.

Nineteen-century roots of

Contemporary International Organizations

In the nineteenth century ideas for international organizations began to bear fruit. Three major *strands* of thinking and practice emerged. The *first strand* involved the recognition of the utility of the multilateral diplomacy. Beginning in 1815, the European states participated in the **Concert of Europe**. Under the Concert system the leaders of the major European powers came together in multilateral meetings to settle problems and coordinate actions. Such a community of interest paved the way for modern international organizations.

The *second strand* involved the formation of public international unions (such as International Telegraphic Union, The Universal Postal Union –etc) that had to deal with practical problems of expanding international relations. These public unions began to develop techniques for multilateral conventions—law or rule-making treaties.

The *third strand* revolved around the **Hague System**. The Hague conference produced several major procedural innovations whereby participants included both small and non-European states. Thus, what had been largely a European state system until the end of the nineteenth century became a truly international system at the

beginning of the twentieth century. The Hague conferences also promoted the novel idea that humankind has common interests and the codifications of international law. Governments established new approaches to dealing with problems of joint concern.

The above progress arrangements of the nineteenth century, however, did not prevent war among the major European powers. The Concert system broke into two competing military alliance at the turn of the twentieth century. Hence, the outbreak of World War I reflected the weakness and shortcomings of the nineteenth-century arrangements.

The twentieth century has been marked by the progressive expansion of the international law and organizations and by the wide acceptance of multilateralism as a general practice in international relations.

Part Two

The League of Nations

WWI had hardly begun when private group and prominent individual in both Europe and the United States began to plan for the post-war era. Nongovernmental groups such as the League to Enforce Peace in the United States and the League of Nations in Great Britain were eager to develop more permanent frameworks for preventing future wars. Based on these plans, President Woodrow Wilson of the United States was able to convince other governments to create the League of Nations to Preserve and safeguard international peace and security at the end of WWI.

Structure of the League of Nations:

The Structure of the League can be explained in terms of its major organs:

Assembly: consisted of all the members and each state had one vote. It met annually but special sessions could be convened when it was needed. It was a forum where members could discuss and deliberate upon matters of common concern.

Council: the council was designed to be a body on which the great powers (The United States, Britain, France, Italy and Japan) should

have permanent seats whereas others were non permanent members elected by the Assembly.

Secretariat: consisted of an international civil service of almost 600 expert officials and headed by a Secretary General who played little or no political role. It was the administrative organ of the League.

The Permanent Court of International Justice: sometimes called World Court, was the international court of the League of Nations established in 1922. Between 1922 and 1940 the court dealt with 29 contentious cases between States and delivered 27 advisory opinions. It was replaced in 1946 by the International Court of Justice when the United Nations was organized.

Besides these organs, the League established various technical agencies, commissions, and advisory committees that looked after particular matters of international concern.

Evaluation of the League

The failure of the league can be attributed to three main weaknesses.

Constitutionally, the Covenant of the League did not outlaw war as a tool of national policy, it only restricted the ability of the

members to go to war. *Structurally*, the presence of some great powers, and the absences of others made the League ineffective as a peacekeeper organization. The rate of withdrawal of state from membership reflected the progress of a fatal disease. Germany was admitted in 1926 and withdrew in 1933; and the Soviet Union was admitted in 1934 and expelled in 1939. *Politically*, the ability of the League to prevent war was depended upon the cooperation and good will of its members. When these states harmonized their differences and unified their wills, the League machinery proved effective; when the conflict of national goals were primary, League action was paralyzed.

Although the League of Nations failed to accomplish its political objectives, it nevertheless made great contribution towards the promotion of international cooperation in the economic, cultural, technological and humanitaration fields. Perhaps, the League's greatest achievement was that of having been the forerunner of a more advanced international organization the **United Nation**.

The end of the League of Nations

At the end of the war, 43 States were still Members of the League of Nations, though for all intents and purposes it had ceased to exist. However, the formal termination of the organization was necessary. A final and official disposition had to be taken

concerning the transfer of the League of Nations' properties to the United Nations.

In 1945, the San Francisco Conference set up a Preparatory Commission that met in London with the Supervisory Commission of the League of Nations in order to do this. At the initiative of the British Foreign Office, the last Assembly (the twenty-first) was held in Geneva on 8 April 1946.

The final act of transfer was signed in Geneva on 18 April 1946 by Sean Lester, the last Secretary-General of the League of Nations, and Włodzimierz Moderow, the representative of the United Nations.

Thus, having handed over all of its assets to the United Nations, and having granted the new Secretariat full control of its Library and archives, the 43 Members attending this last Assembly declared by unanimous vote that as of 20 April 1946, the League of Nations would cease to exist.

Part Three

The United Nations

The creation of the United Nations

Although the League of Nations did enjoy some remarkable politics success in the 1920s, the increasing economic strife and militant nationalism which characterized the 1930s led not only to the breakup of cooperation between States but also to several conflicts which could not be easily resolved.

Powerful States such as Germany, Italy, and Japan left the organization, and by the time the Second World War broke out in 1939, many had abandoned the League of Nations and its unfulfilled promise of collective security, and had instead returned to the traditional system of defensive alliances and power blocs.

However, the efforts of the League of Nations were not completely in vain; during the intervening war years, the Allies established plans to create a new organization, the United Nations. Signed on 26 June 1945 in San Francisco, the Charter of the United Nations came into force on 24 October 1945.

Similar in many ways to the League of Nations, the United Nations sought to continue many of the operations already in place. For example, economic activities were transferred to the new Economic and Social Council; the Health Organization evolved

into the World Health Organization (WHO); the Nutrition Committee became the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); the Committee of Intellectual Cooperation became the Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); the Permanent Mandates Commission was replaced by the Trusteeship Council; and the work of the Nansen Office was continued by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Approaches to the study of U.N:

1- The *Realist school* sees the UN as an instrument of national foreign policy. Member states use the organization as channels for advancing their national self-interests policies. Thus, the UN, according to this line of thinking, can be no more than the sum of its members. Its processes reflect the relative anarchy of the international system at large.

2- The *Function school* believes that the UN is actually greater than its members, and that the organization influence national policies almost as much as it is influenced by them. The functionalists acknowledge that states tend to exploit the UN to serve their national interests. However, they argue that the

communication channels that the UN provides also influence national foreign policies by making them more flexible, and often more moderate than they might otherwise be.

3- The *World federal* school demands more from the UN. It believes that the UN Charter and institutions should represent steps towards the constitutions of a *World Government*. Central World Government would regulate, control, and police relations among states that would perhaps remain as administrative units. Thus, the UN, according to this school, must be evaluated in terms of its contribution to and progress towards the ultimate goal of *World Governments*.

Principals and Purposes

The charter defines the purposes of the UN in Articles 1.

The four purposes, briefly are to:

- 1- Maintain international peace through collective security.
- 2- Develop the principle of equal rights and self determination of peoples.
- 3- Solve international problems of an economic, social, culture, or humanitarian character, and to promote human rights and fundamental freedom without distinct as to race, sex, language, or religion.

4- Be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations for these common ends.

Article 2 specifies the **principles** which would govern that activities of the organization. The Charter requires the member to:

1- Fulfill their obligations in accordance with the charter.

2- To settle their disputes by peaceful means.

3- To refrain from the use or threat of force in international relations and to respect the territorial integrity and political independence of other states.

4- To provide all assistance to the UN in its activities and actions and to refrain from assisting any states against which the UN is taking enforcement action.

5- To refrain from interference in the *internal* affairs of other states.

This last provision has raised many problems due to the lack of definition of what matters belong to domestic jurisdiction. Some states tend to claim internal jurisdiction over matters which are normally not considered to be so. At the same time others have raised matters which are normally considered to be within domestic nature.

Members

The UN is operated according to the principal of sovereign equality of all its members. The Charter, like the earlier Covenant, created two classes of members:

The original members are 51 states at San Francisco which signed and ratified the Charter. All other states are elected members. UN membership, according to the charter, is open to all "peace loving state" that accept the obligations of the UN Charter, and in the judgment of the organization, are able and willing to fulfill these obligations. The General Assembly determines admission upon recommendation of the Security Council. As of April 2004, there have been 191 members, of which more than two-third are developing countries. The Covenant of the League of Nations recognizes the right of a member to withdraw from the organization. The Charter makes no provision for withdrawal, although it is understood that the right exists.

Part Four

UN Main Organs

The General Assembly

All UN member states are represented in the General Assembly. It convenes in regular session once a year, but special session can be convened when a situation so requires. Voting in the General Assembly on such key issues as international peace and security, admitting new members, and the UN budget are decided by two-thirds majority.

Other questions are decided by simple majority. Each member state has one vote. However, the decisions reached by the General Assembly only have the status of recommendations, rather than binding decisions. One of the few exceptions is the General Assembly's Fifth Committee, which makes decisions on the budget that are binding on members.

The power of the General Assembly is broad and it can discuss any matter within the scope of the Charter. It considers and approves budgetary matters, hears annual reports from other organs and specialized agencies, can initiate studies and make recommendations, promotes human rights, and further international economic, social, cultural, and educational programs. As the only organ in which all members are represented, the

Assembly, in effect, is the supervisory and policy-making organ of the UN. Since the General Assembly resolutions are non-binding, they cannot force action by any state. However, its recommendations are an important indication of world opinion and represent the moral authority of the community of nations.

The Security Council:

The S.C is the most powerful organ of the UN. It has the power to make decisions which member states must carry out under the UN Charter.

The UN Charter gives the Security Council main responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. It was made up initially of 11 states, and then, after 1965 of 15 states. It includes five permanent members, namely the USA, Britain, France, the Soviet Union (later Russia), and China, as well as 10 non-permanent members were to be elected by the Assembly for two-year terms. Unlike the League, the decisions of the Security Council are binding, and must only be passed by a majority of nine out of the 15 members, as well as each of the five permanent members. These five permanent members therefore have **veto power** over all Security Council decisions. The five permanent members of the Security Council were seen as the major powers when the UN was

founded, and they were granted a veto to reduce the likelihood of a direct confrontation between them.

When the Security Council deals with a threat to international peace, it first explores ways to settle the dispute peacefully under the terms of *Chapter Six* of the UN Charter. It may suggest a plan or undertaking mediation. In case of an actual fighting the Council seeks to secure a ceasefire. It may send a **peacekeeping** mission to help the parties maintain the truce and to keep opposing forces apart.

The Council can also take measures to enforce its decisions under *Chapter Seven* of the Charter. It can, for instant, impose economic sanctions or order an arms embargo.

On rare occasions, the Security Council has authorized member states to use “**all necessary means**”, including collective military action, to see that its decisions are carried out. The Council also makes recommendations to the General Assembly on the appointment of a new Secretary-General and on the admission of new members to the UN.

The Trusteeship Council:

The Charter established an international trusteeship system to provide an international supervision for non-self governing territories “Trust Territories” and to ensure that adequate steps

were taken to prepare the territories for self-government or independence. By 1994, all Trust Territories had attained self-government or independence, either as separate nations or by joining neighboring independent countries. Its mission fulfilled. The Trusteeship Council now consists of the five Permanent members of the S.C.

The International Court Of Justice

Also known as the *World Court* is the main judicial organ of the UN. Consisting of 15 judges elected jointly by the General Assembly and the Security Council, the Court settle disputes submitted to it by states and gives advisory opinions to the General Assembly and the Security Council upon request. Each of the five permanent members of the Security Council (the United Kingdom, France, China, Russia, and the United States) has always had a judge on the Court. Issues before the Court are decided by a majority of judges present. In theory "so far as the parties to the case are concerned, a judgment of the Court is binding, final, and without appeal," and "by signing the Charter, a state member of the UN undertakes to comply with any decision of the International Court of Justice in a case to which it is party."

However, in practice the Court's power has been limited by the unwillingness of the convicted party to abide by the court's ruling,

or by the Security Council unwillingness to enforce decisions. A good example is the 1984 Court's judgment which called on the US to "cease and refrain" from the "unlawful use of force" against the government of Nicaragua. The Court ruled that the US was "in breach of its obligation under the customary international law not to use force against another state" and was ordered to pay reparations, although it never did.

The Secretariat

Is the principal administrative arm of the UN. It is headed by the UN Secretary General, and assisted by a staff (7,500 personnel) of international civil servants worldwide who are involved in the political, economic, social and technical operation of the UN. The Secretary-General is appointed by the general assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council. Beside administrative responsibilities, the Charter entrusted the Secretary-General with political responsibilities. He may bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of world peace and security.

The Economic and Social Council

The Charter speaks of the UN's determination to promote high standards of living and to create conditions for economic and

social advancement and development. Under the overall authority of the General Assembly, the ECOSOC is intended to coordinate the economic and social work of the United Nations and the UN family of organizations.

As the central forum for discussing global economic and social issues, the Council plays central role in advancing international cooperation and promoting respect for and observance of fundamental *Human Rights*. The activities of the *Council's Commission on Human Rights* have been particularly significant. Its draft of a Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the General Assembly. The *Commission* also is authorized to investigate and monitor violation of Human rights throughout the world.

The ECOSOC has other subsidiary bodies that deal with wide range of issues such as social development, the status of women, crime prevention, narcotic drugs and environmental protection.

The Council has 54 members elected by the General Assembly for three-year terms. Each member of the Council has one vote and decisions are adopted by a majority of the members present and voting. It should be noticed that the ECOSOC was not given the necessary management powers. It could only issue recommendation and receives reports from the Specialized Agencies.

The UN system

Consists of a dozen independent organizations known as "Specialized Agencies" that are linked to the UN through cooperative agreements. These agencies, among them the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), are autonomous bodies that have their own constitutions, budgets, executive heads, and assemblies of state representatives. They are self-contained constitutionally, financially, and politically, and not subject to the management of the central system. They have wide-ranging international responsibilities in the economic, social, cultural, educational, and health fields. Together with the UN, they are known as the UN SYSTEM.

The perform of the Security Council

The composition and decision-making procedures of the S.C. were increasingly challenged as membership of the UN grew, particularly after decolonization. Yet the only significant reform of the S.C. occurred in 1965, when the Council was enlarged from 11 to 15 members and the required majority from seven to nine votes. Nonetheless, the veto power of the permanent five (P-5) members was lefts intact.

The S.C. does not reflect today's distribution of military or economic power, and does not reflect a geographic balance. Germany and Japan have made strong cases for permanent membership. Developing countries have demanded a better reflection of their numbers in the S.C., with countries such as India, Egypt, Brazil, and Nigeria making particular claims. Should the European Union be represented instead of Great Britain, France and Germany individually? How would Pakistan feel about India's candidacy? How would South Africa feel about Nigerian seat? What about representation by an Islamic country? These issues are not easy to resolve. Likewise, it is very unlikely that the P-5 countries will relinquish their veto.

Nonetheless, while large-scale reform has proved impossible, there have been changes in S.C. working procedures that have made it more transparent and accountable.

Part Five

The UN maintenance of international peace and security

Maintaining peace and security was and is the primary purpose of the UN. The founders of the UN recognized that the organization they were established was not going to abolish war for all time. Yet they believed it was the best mechanism, could be devised at the time, for maintaining international peace and security. In pursuit of that goal, the UN has been involved in a broad array of peace and security issues. The General Assembly played an important role regarding the question of decolonization by peaceful means, leading to the independence of many Asian and African states. Old and new territorial disputes have been subjects of litigation in the international Court of justice. The UN treaty-making powers have been utilized to demilitarize Antarctica and outer space and to control the spread of weapons of mass destruction by banning nuclear proliferation and chemical and biological weapons. UN-organized military contingents intervened in regional disputes during the cold war era, establishing the practice of peacekeeping. On a few occasions the international community embodied in the UN took direct military action against aggression.

UN approaches to preventing and managing conflict

Collective Security: Theory and practice all states thwart an aggressor state by joining together against the aggressor. Attempts to prevent the outbreak of conflict, but if attack occurs, aggression is met with force. Associated with the League of Nations.

Preventive Diplomacy: Practice of engaging in diplomatic intervention before the breakout of conflict and monitoring hot spots through the use of peacekeeping forces or surveillance technology.

Peaceful Settlement: Various techniques by which disputes are settled, such as adjudication, arbitration, mediation, conciliation, and good offices.

Peacemaking: Efforts that are designed to bring hostile parties to agreement, essentially through peaceful means.

Peacekeeping: Use of multilateral forces to achieve several different objectives: observation of truce and ceasefire lines; promotion of law and order, provision of humanitarian aid and intervention.

Peace-building: Post conflict activities to strengthen and preserve peace such as development aid, civilian administration, and human rights and election monitoring.

Enforcement measure: Direct actions taken to ensure compliance with UN measure, such as imposition of economic sanction, banning of air flights or communications, and use of force.

Arms control and disarmament: Efforts to persuade states to limit, reduce, or eliminate specific types of weapons.

Two cases of collective security

Korea: The sanctioning of UN forces to counter the North Korean invasion of South Korea in 1950 was made possible by the temporary absence of the former Soviet Union from the Security Council in protest against the UN's refusal to seat the newly established Communist governments of the People's Republic of China. The UN provided the framework for legitimizing U.S. efforts to help South Korea and mobilizing other states assistance. An American general was designated as the UN commander, but he took orders directly from Washington. About fifteen states contributed troops during the three-year war.

The Gulf War: Iraq's occupation of Kuwait in the summer of 1990 triggered a period of unprecedented activity by the UN Security Council as members sought ways to respond effectively to this problem. Unity among all five permanent members including

the former Soviet Union, facilitated the passage of twelve successive resolutions over a four months period activating Chapter VII of the Charter. These include, most importantly, resolution 678 of November 1990, authorizing member states "to use all necessary means" to reverse the occupation of Kuwait.

The US-led military operation launched under the umbrella of Resolution 678 did not strictly qualify as a collective security action under article 42 of the Charter, though it has been frequently portrayed as such. Most UN members had no say in the operation because it was conducted under U.S. not UN, command. Many developing countries, while supporting the action, were also troubled by the autonomy of the US-led operation.

For most conflicts and threats to peace since WWII, however, collective security has not been a valuable option. The UN could not deal with the Cold War conflict itself, or with any situation directly involving the major powers. It found its primary peace and security role in dealing with regional conflicts.

Peacekeeping

Peacekeeping, first developed to provide observer groups for cease-fire in Kashmir and Palestine in the late 1940's, has taken a number of different forms in the varied circumstances in which it

has been applied. With no Charter provision, a set of customs, principles, and practices have emerged from experiences providing basic guidelines for all subsequent operations. Thus, the UN refers to peacekeeping as “an operation involving military personnel, but without enforcement powers, undertaken by the UN to help maintain or restore international peace and security in areas of conflict.”

What do peacekeepers actually do?

- They observe:
 - Cease-fires
 - Withdrawals of forces
 - Elections
 - Human rights
 - Arm control

- They separate forces:
 - Establish buffer zones

- They maintain law and order:
 - rebuild and train police
 - establish civil administration

- They use limited force:
 - restore peace deliver aid

- They intervene in humanitarian situations:
 - Open supply lines
 - Guard supplies
 - Protect aid workers, protect refugees
 - Create safe havens

Chapter VII and Enforcement

Chapter VII of the UN Charter outlines a variety of enforcement mechanisms—including economic, military, diplomatic, and financial sanctions as well as direct military intervention—to prevent or deter threats to international peace or counter acts of aggression.

During the Cold War these Chapter VII provisions were used only twice: to impose economic sanctions on the white minority regime in southern Rhodesia and to impose an arms embargo on South Africa in 1977. Since the Cold War's end, the Security Council has frequently invoked its authority under Chapter VII to intervene in situations deemed threatening to international peace and security. Its enforcement actions have included the 1990 economic sanctions against Iraq, the arms embargo against Yugoslavia in 1991, the air and arms embargo against Libya in 1992, and the arms embargo against Rwanda in 1994.

Part Six
Changes in the United Nations

Increased Attention to Conditions within States

Through its peacekeeping efforts the UN has increasingly tended to intervene within states. Many people came to the realization that the international community, working through the UN, should address individual political and civil rights, as well as the rights to basic provisions like food, water, health care and accommodation. This challenged the traditional belief that diplomats should ignore the internal affairs of states in order to preserve international stability. Thus, a lack of internal justice, it is argued, may risk individuals, or ensuring human security, is an aspect interest.

For some states (like Canada) reputation in the UN has become an important national goal.

The UN new orientation regarding the relationship between order and justice was a product of particular circumstances. After the Cold War, it was felt that threats to international peace and security did not only emanate from aggression between states. Rather, global peace was also threatened by civil conflict (including refugee flows and regional instability), humanitarian

emergencies, violation of global standards of human rights, and other conditions such as poverty and inequality.

The United Nations and Intervention within States

By the mid-1990s the UN had become involved in maintaining international peace and security in three main ways: by resisting aggression between states, by attempting to resolve disputes within states (civil wars), and by focusing on conditions within states, including economic, social, and political conditions.

The increasing UN tendency to interfere within states (to maintain standards for and protect of individuals) has run against the doctrine of non-intervention. Intervention was traditionally defined as a deliberate incursion into a state without its consent by some outside agency, in order to change the functioning, policies, and goals of its government and achieve effects that favour the intervening agency.

At the founding of the UN, **sovereignty** was regarded as central to the system of states. States were equally members of international society, and were equal with regard to international law. Sovereignty also implied that states recognized no higher authority than themselves, and that there was no superior jurisdiction. The governments of states had exclusive jurisdiction within their own

frontier, a principle which was enshrined in article 2(7) of the UN Charter. Intervention in the traditional sense was in opposition to the principle of international society, and it could only be tolerated as an exception to the rule.

On few occasions the UN justified its interventions within states on the ground of protecting individual's rights. The justifications in **Kosovo** represented a break from the past in that it included a clear humanitarian element. Kosovo was arguably the first occasion in which international forces were used in defiance of a sovereign state in order to protect humanitarian standards. The **Iraq** war in 2003 was questionably another case, although the legality of intervention under existing Security Council resolutions is contested, especially in view of the failure to obtain a second UN Security Council resolution to give an explicit mandate for action. The U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 is an exceptional case in which the UN Security Council acknowledged the right of a state which had been attacked—referring to the events of 11 September 2001 in the U.S.—to respond in its own defense.

In summary, an increasing readiness by the UN to intervene within states in order to promote internal justice for individuals would indicate a movement toward global governance and a way from unconditional sovereignty. There have been some signs of movement in this direction, but principles of state sovereignty and

non-intervention remain important. There is no clear consensus on these points.

Intervention and the responsibility to protect

In response to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's request to the international community to find a new consensus on issues of external military intervention for human protection purposes, the *International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty* was established by the Government of Canada in 2000. Its report entitled *the responsibility to protect*, was presented to the Secretary-General in 2001. The central theme of the report is that sovereign states have a responsibility to protect their own citizens from avoidable catastrophe such as mass murder, rape, and starvation, but when they are unwilling or unable to do so, that responsibility must be born by the broader community of states. Where a population is suffering serious harm and the state in question is unwilling or unable to halt it, the principle of non-intervention yields to the international responsibility to protect.