

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

The United Nations Today

asdf

United Nations
New York, 2008

Note: Every effort is made to keep basic information current up to the date of publication, including responsible officials, contact information, treaty ratifications, etc. All other data is current as of July 2007, unless stated otherwise.

Published by the
United Nations Department of Public Information

Printed by the Publishing Section/DGACM
United Nations Headquarters
New York, NY 10017
www.un.org

ISBN 978-92-1-101160-9
United Nations Publication
Sales No. E.08.I.6
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Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations

***We the peoples of the United Nations
determined***

*to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war,
which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow
to mankind, and*

*to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights,
in the dignity and worth of the human person,
in the equal rights of men and women
and of nations large and small, and*

*to establish conditions under which justice and respect
for the obligations arising from treaties and other
sources of international law can be maintained,*

*and to promote social progress and better standards
of life in larger freedom,*

and for these ends

*to practice tolerance and live together in peace
with one another as good neighbours, and*

*to unite our strength to maintain international
peace and security, and*

*to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the
institution of methods, that armed force shall
not be used, save in the common interest,*

*and to employ international machinery for the promotion
of the economic and social advancement of all peoples,*

***have resolved to combine our efforts
to accomplish these aims.***

*Accordingly, our respective Governments ...
have agreed to the present
Charter of the United Nations
and do hereby establish an international
organization to be known as
the United Nations*

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UNITED NATIONS WEBSITES

United Nations: www.un.org

United Nations system: www.unsystem.org

United Nations Programmes and Offices:

International Trade Center (UNCTAD/WTO): www.intracen.org

Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS: www.unaids.org

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF): www.unicef.org

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD): www.unctad.org

United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM): www.unifem.org

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP): www.undp.org

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP): www.unep.org

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights: www.ohchr.org

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR): www.unhcr.org

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT): www.unhabitat.org

United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR): www.unidir.org

United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR): www.unitar.org

United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the

Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW): www.un-instraw.org

United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI): www.unicri.it

United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS): www.unops.org

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC): www.unodc.org

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA): www.unfpa.org

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA):
www.un.org/unrwa

United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD): www.unrisd.org

United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC): www.unssc.org

United Nations University (UNU): www.unu.edu

United Nations Volunteers (UNV): www.unv.org

World Food Programme (WFP): www.wfp.org

United Nations Regional Commissions

Economic Commission for Africa (ECA): www.uneca.org

Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP): www.unescap.org

Economic Commission for Europe (ECE): www.unece.org

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC): www.eclac.org

Economic Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA): www.escwa.un.org

United Nations Specialized Agencies:

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO): *www.fao.org*

International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO): *www.icao.org*

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD): *www.ifad.org*

International Labour Organization (ILO): *www.ilo.org*

International Maritime Organization (IMO): *www.imo.org*

International Monetary Fund (IMF): *www.imf.org*

International Telecommunication Union (ITU): *www.itu.int*

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO):
www.unesco.org

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO): *www.unido.org*

Universal Postal Union (UPU): *www.upu.int*

The World Bank Group: *www.worldbank.org*

World Health Organization (WHO): *www.who.int*

World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO): *www.wipo.int*

World Meteorological Organization (WMO): *www.wmo.ch*

World Tourism Organization (UNWTO): *www.world-tourism.org*

Related Organizations:

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA): *www.iaea.org*

Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW): *www.opcw.org*

Preparatory Committee for the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO):
www.ctbto.org

World Trade Organization (WTO): *www.wto.org*

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CEB	United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination
CTBTO	Preparatory Committee for the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DGACM	Department for General Assembly and Conference Management
DM	Department of Management
DPA	Department of Political Affairs
DPI	Department of Public Information
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DFS	Department of Field Support
DSS	Department of Safety and Security
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
EOSG	Executive Office of the Secretary-General
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank Group)
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICJ	International Court of Justice
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICSID	International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (World Bank Group)
IDA	International Development Association (World Bank Group)
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFC	International Finance Corporation (World Bank Group)
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund

IMO	International Maritime Organization
ITC	International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
MIGA	Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (World Bank Group)
NGLS	United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services
OLA	Office of Legal Affairs
OPCW	Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
PFII	Permanent Forum on Indigenes
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFIP	United Nations Fund for International Partnerships
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNICRI	United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute
UNIDIR	United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for women
UN-INSTRAW	International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
UNMOVIC	United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission
UNODA	Office for Disarmament Affairs
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOG	United Nations Office at Geneva

UN-OHRLLS	Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States
UNON	United Nations Office at Nairobi
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNOV	United Nations Office at Vienna
UNOWA	Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UNSSC	United Nations System Staff College
UNU	United Nations University
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
UNWTO	World Tourism Organization
UPU	United Nations Postal Union
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
-----	World Tourism Organization (see UNWTO)
WTO	World Trade Organization

FOREWORD

The world is changing in the United Nations favour, as more people and governments understand that multilateralism is the only path in our interdependent and globalizing world. The United Nations advocates values that are the cornerstone of this emerging era: freedom, justice and the peaceful resolution of disputes; better standards of living; equality and tolerance and human rights. Globalization can work only if these values are paramount.

In fact, a world of complex and global challenges is exactly the environment in which the United Nations should thrive, because these are challenges that no country can resolve on its own. Terrorism and organized crime transcend state borders. Diseases such as AIDS are spreading globally, destroying human lives and disrupting economic activities. Climate change and environmental degradation pose major challenges and not only to future generations. Inequality and poverty can lead to instability and conflict that can quickly engulf entire regions.

The UN is the only Organization that has the worldwide membership, the global reach and universal legitimacy needed to successfully address these trends. The UN stage enables political leaders to reach out to one another in ways they may be unwilling or unable to otherwise. The UN's impartiality allows it to negotiate and operate in some of the toughest places in the world. When a disaster strikes, like the tsunami in south-east Asia, our workers are already on the ground ready to respond. And more than 100,000 UN peacekeepers on four continents perform their duties more effectively and with far less money than what any government can do on its own.

Today, the United Nations is doing more to translate its ideals into real, measurable change than ever before. That is why, as the world looks to the United Nations for solutions, we must, in turn, find new and better ways of working. We must find ways to deliver more fully on our promises. We must be open to new approaches and ideas, and have the courage to question our traditional way of doing things. And, above all, we must get ordinary people everywhere to trust our Organization, and to become more engaged in its work.

The United Nations Today seeks to promote understanding of the UN's worldwide activities, and it invites you, the reader, to participate in them. It is meant as a concise yet invaluable reference tool for the seasoned diplomat as well as the interested lay-person. It is designed to demystify the many acronyms that populate the UN system, and to associate them with the daily work performed by UN agencies and entities. It seeks to describe reforms to the Organization, from changes to our peacekeeping operations to rethinking our human rights machinery, while also supplying insights into the forces driving these changes.

I trust that this publication will help readers everywhere better relate to the United Nations, its work and its values. And I hope that it will serve as a valuable companion for the demanding days ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ki Moon Ban". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ki" and last name "Ban" being more prominent than the middle name "Moon".

Ban Ki-moon
Secretary-General



Chapter 1



UN Photo / 84621

The United Nations Organization

THE UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATION

The name “United Nations”, coined by United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt, was first used in the “Declaration by United Nations” of 1 January 1942, during the Second World War, when representatives of 26 nations pledged their governments to continue fighting together against the Axis powers.

States first established international organizations to cooperate on specific matters. The International Telecommunication Union was founded in 1865 as the International Telegraph Union, and the Universal Postal Union was established in 1874. Both are now United Nations specialized agencies.

In 1899, the first International Peace Conference was held in The Hague to elaborate instruments for settling crises peacefully, preventing wars and codifying rules of warfare. It adopted the Convention for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes and established the Permanent Court of Arbitration, which began work in 1902.

The forerunner of the United Nations was the League of Nations, an organization conceived in similar circumstances during the First World War, and established in 1919 under the Treaty of Versailles “to promote international cooperation and to achieve peace and security.”

The International Labour Organization was also created under the Treaty of Versailles as an affiliated agency of the League. The League of Nations ceased its activities after failing to prevent the Second World War.

In 1945, representatives of 50 countries met in San Francisco at the United Nations Conference on International Organization to draw up the United Nations Charter. Those delegates deliberated on the basis of proposals worked out by the representatives of China, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States at Dumbarton Oaks, United States, from August to October 1944. The Charter was signed on 26 June 1945 by the representatives of the 50 countries. Poland, which was not represented at the Conference, signed it later and became one of the original 51 member states.

The United Nations officially came into existence on 24 October 1945, when the Charter had been ratified by China, France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, the United States and a majority of other signatories. **United Nations Day** is celebrated on 24 October each year.

United Nations Charter

(www.un.org/aboutun/charter)

The Charter is the constituting instrument of the Organization, setting out the rights and obligations of member states, and establishing the United Nations organs and procedures. An international treaty, the Charter codifies the major principles of international relations — from the sovereign equality of states to prohibition of the use of force in international relations in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.

Amendments to the United Nations Charter

The Charter may be amended by a vote of two thirds of the members of the General Assembly and ratification by two thirds of the members of the United Nations, including the five permanent members of the Security Council. So far, four Charter Articles have been amended, one of them twice:

- In 1965, the membership of the Security Council was increased from 11 to 15 (Article 23) and the number of affirmative votes needed for a decision was increased from seven to nine, including the concurring vote of the five permanent members for all matters of substance rather than procedure (Article 27).
- In 1965, the membership of the Economic and Social Council was increased from 18 to 27, and in 1973, was increased to 54 (Article 61).
- In 1968, the number of votes required in the Security Council to convene a General Conference to review the Charter was increased from seven to nine (Article 109).

Preamble to the Charter

The Preamble to the Charter expresses the ideals and common aims of all the peoples whose governments joined together to form the United Nations:

“WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS DETERMINED to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

“AND FOR THESE ENDS to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours, and to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest, and to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples,

“HAVE RESOLVED TO COMBINE OUR EFFORTS TO ACCOMPLISH THESE AIMS. Accordingly, our respective Governments, through representatives assembled in the city of San

Francisco, who have exhibited their full powers found to be in good and due form, have agreed to the present Charter of the United Nations and do hereby establish an international organization to be known as the United Nations.”

Purposes and principles

The *purposes* of the United Nations, as set forth in the Charter, are:

- to maintain international peace and security;
- to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples;
- to cooperate in solving international economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems and in promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- to be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in attaining these common ends.

The United Nations acts in accordance with the following *principles*:

- it is based on the sovereign equality of all its members;
- all members are to fulfil in good faith their Charter obligations;
- they are to settle their international disputes by peaceful means and without endangering international peace and security and justice;
- they are to refrain from the threat or use of force against any other state;
- they are to give the United Nations every assistance in any action it takes in accordance with the Charter;
- nothing in the Charter is to authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state.

Membership

Membership of the United Nations is open to all peace-loving nations which accept the obligations of the Charter and are willing and able to carry out these obligations.

The General Assembly admits new member states on the recommendation of the Security Council. The Charter provides for the suspension or expulsion of a member for violation of the principles of the Charter, but no such action has ever been taken.

Official languages

Under the Charter, the official languages of the United Nations are Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Arabic was later added as an official language of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

Structure of the Organization

The Charter established six principal organs of the United Nations: the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Secretariat. The United Nations family, however, is much larger, encompassing 15 agencies and several programmes and bodies.

General Assembly

(www.un.org/ga)

The General Assembly is the main deliberative organ. It is composed of representatives of all member states, each of which has one vote. Decisions on important questions, such as those on peace and security, admission of new members and budgetary matters, require a two-thirds majority. Decisions on other questions are by simple majority.

Functions and powers

Under the Charter, the functions and powers of the General Assembly include:

- to consider and make recommendations on the principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and arms regulation;
- to discuss any question relating to international peace and security and, except where a dispute or situation is being discussed by the Security Council, to make recommendations on it;*
- to discuss and, with the same exception, make recommendations on any question within the scope of the Charter or affecting the powers and functions of any organ of the United Nations;
- to initiate studies and make recommendations to promote international political cooperation, the development and codification of international law, the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, and international collaboration in the economic, social, cultural, educational and health fields;
- to make recommendations for the peaceful settlement of any situation, regardless of origin, which might impair friendly relations among nations;
- to receive and consider reports from the Security Council and other United Nations organs;

* Under the “Uniting for peace” resolution, adopted by the General Assembly in November 1950, the Assembly may take action if the Security Council, because of lack of unanimity of its permanent members, fails to act where there appears to be a threat to international peace, breach of the peace or act of aggression. The Assembly is empowered to consider the matter immediately with a view to making recommendations to members for collective measures, including, in case of a breach of the peace or act of aggression, the use of armed forces when necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security.

- to consider and approve the United Nations budget and to apportion the contributions among members;
- to elect the non-permanent members of the Security Council, the members of the Economic and Social Council and additional members of the Trusteeship Council (when necessary); to elect jointly with the Security Council the Judges of the International Court of Justice; and, on the recommendation of the Security Council, to appoint the Secretary-General.

Sessions

The General Assembly's regular session begins each year on Tuesday in the third week of September, counting from the first week that contains at least one working day. The election of the President of the Assembly, as well as its 21 Vice-Presidents and the Chairpersons of its six main committees, takes place at least three months before the start of the regular session. To ensure equitable geographical representation, the presidency of the Assembly rotates each year among five groups of states: African, Asian, Eastern European, Latin American and the Caribbean, and Western European and other states.

In addition, the Assembly may meet in special sessions at the request of the Security Council, of a majority of member states, or of one member if the majority of members concur. Emergency special sessions may be called within 24 hours of a request by the Security Council on the vote of any nine Council members, or by a majority of the United Nations members, or by one member if the majority of members concur.

At the beginning of each regular session, the Assembly holds a general debate, often addressed by heads of state and government, in which member states express their views on the most pressing international issues. Most questions are then discussed in its six Main Committees:

- **First Committee** (Disarmament and International Security);
- **Second Committee** (Economic and Financial);
- **Third Committee** (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural);
- **Fourth Committee** (Special Political and Decolonization);
- **Fifth Committee** (Administrative and Budgetary);
- **Sixth Committee** (Legal).

Some issues are considered directly in plenary meetings while others are allocated to one of the six Main Committees. Resolutions and decisions, including those recommended by the committees, are adopted in plenary meetings — usually before the recess of the regular session in December. They may be adopted with or without a vote.

The Assembly generally adopts its resolutions and decisions by a majority of members present and voting. Important questions, including recommendations on international peace and security, the election of members to some principal organs and budgetary matters, are

decided by a two-thirds majority. Voting may be conducted as a recorded vote, a show of hands or a roll-call vote.

While the decisions of the Assembly have no legally binding force for governments, they carry the weight of world opinion, as well as the moral authority of the world community.

The work of the United Nations year-round derives largely from the mandates given by the General Assembly — that is to say, the will of the majority of the members as expressed in resolutions and decisions adopted by the Assembly. That work is carried out:

- by committees and other bodies established by the Assembly to study and report on specific issues, such as disarmament, peacekeeping, development and human rights;
- in international conferences called for by the Assembly; and
- by the Secretariat of the United Nations — the Secretary-General and his staff of international civil servants.

Security Council

(www.un.org/Docs/sc)

The Security Council has primary responsibility, under the Charter, for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The Council has 15 members: five permanent — China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States — and 10 members elected by the General Assembly for two-year terms.

Each member has one vote. Decisions on procedural matters are made by an affirmative vote of at least 9 of the 15 members. Decisions on substantive matters require nine votes and the absence of a negative vote by any of the five permanent members.

All five permanent members have exercised the right of veto at one time or another. If a permanent member does not fully agree with a proposed resolution but does not wish to cast its veto, it may choose to abstain — thus allowing the resolution to be adopted if it obtains the required number of nine votes in favour.

Under Article 25 of the Charter, all members of the United Nations agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council. While other organs of the United Nations make recommendations to member states, the Council alone has the power to take decisions which member states are obligated under the Charter to implement.

Functions and powers

Under the Charter, the functions and powers of the Security Council include the following:

- to maintain international peace and security in accordance with the principles and purposes of the United Nations;
- to formulate plans for establishing a system to regulate armaments;

- to call upon the parties to a dispute to settle it by peaceful means;
- to investigate any dispute or situation which might lead to international friction, and to recommend methods of adjusting such disputes or the terms of settlement;
- to determine the existence of a threat to the peace or act of aggression and to recommend what action should be taken;
- to call upon the parties concerned to comply with such provisional measures as it deems necessary or desirable to prevent an aggravation of the situation;
- to call on members of the United Nations to take measures not involving the use of armed force — such as sanctions — to give effect to the Council's decisions;
- to resort to or authorize the use of force to maintain or restore international peace and security;
- to encourage the peaceful settlement of local disputes through regional arrangements and to use such regional arrangements for enforcement action under its authority;
- to recommend to the General Assembly the appointment of the Secretary-General and, together with the Assembly, to elect the Judges of the International Court of Justice;
- to request the International Court of Justice to give an advisory opinion on any legal question;
- to recommend to the General Assembly the admission of new members to the United Nations.

The Security Council is so organized as to be able to function continuously, and a representative of each of its members must be present at all times at United Nations Headquarters. The Council may meet elsewhere: in 1972 it held a session in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; in 1973 it met in Panama City, Panama; and in 1990 it met in Geneva, Switzerland.

When a complaint concerning a threat to peace is brought before it, the Council's first action is usually to recommend that the parties try to reach agreement by peaceful means. The Council may set forth principles for a peaceful settlement. In some cases, the Council itself undertakes investigation and mediation. It may dispatch a mission, appoint special envoys or request the Secretary-General to use his good offices.

When a dispute leads to hostilities, the Council's first concern is to bring them to an end as soon as possible. The Council may issue ceasefire directives that can be instrumental in preventing an escalation of the conflict.

The Council may also dispatch military observers or a peacekeeping force to help reduce tensions, keep opposing forces apart, and create conditions of calm in which peaceful settlements may be sought. Under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Council may decide on enforcement measures, including economic sanctions, arms embargoes, financial sanctions, travel bans or collective military action.

The sanctions instrument is an important tool available to the Security Council in seeking to promote international peace and security. Each of the sanctions regimes currently in existence features “smart” or targeted sanctions — arms embargoes, financial sanctions and travel bans — designed to eliminate or minimize unintended effects by focusing on those responsible for the policies condemned by the international community, while leaving other parts of the population and international trade relations unaffected (see chapter 2).

The Council has established two international criminal tribunals to prosecute crimes against humanity in the former Yugoslavia and in Rwanda. The tribunals are subsidiary organs of the Council. Following the terrorist attacks on the United States on 11 September 2001, the Council established its Counter-Terrorism Committee, also a subsidiary organ.

Since 1994, a working group of the General Assembly has been considering Security Council reform, including the issue of equitable representation and expansion of membership.

Economic and Social Council

(www.un.org/ecosoc)

The Charter established the Economic and Social Council as the principal organ to coordinate the economic, social and related work of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and institutions — known as the United Nations family of organizations. The Council has 54 members, who serve for three-year terms. Voting in the Council is by simple majority; each member has one vote.

Functions and powers

The functions and powers of the Economic and Social Council are:

- to serve as the central forum for discussing international economic and social issues, and for formulating policy recommendations addressed to member states and the United Nations system;
- to make or initiate studies and reports and make recommendations on international economic, social, cultural, educational, health and related matters;
- to promote respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- to assist in preparing and organizing major international conferences in the economic, social and related fields and promote a coordinated follow-up to these conferences;
- to coordinate the activities of the specialized agencies, through consultations with and recommendations to them, and through recommendations to the General Assembly.

Through its discussion of international economic and social issues and its policy recommendations, ECOSOC plays a key role in fostering international cooperation for development and in setting the priorities for action.

Sessions

The Council generally holds several short sessions and many preparatory meetings, roundtables and panel discussions with the members of civil society throughout the year, to deal with the organization of its work. It also holds a four-week substantive session in July, alternating between New York and Geneva. That session includes a high-level segment, attended by Ministers and other high officials, to discuss major economic, social and humanitarian issues. The year-round work of the Council is carried out in its subsidiary and related bodies.

Subsidiary and related bodies

The Council's subsidiary machinery includes:

- eight functional commissions, which are deliberative bodies whose role is to consider and make recommendations on issues in their areas of responsibility and expertise: Statistical Commission, Commission on Population and Development, Commission for Social Development, Commission on the Status of Women, Commission on Narcotic Drugs, Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, Commission on Science and Technology for Development, Commission on Sustainable Development;
- five Regional Commissions: Economic Commission for Africa (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (Bangkok, Thailand), Economic Commission for Europe (Geneva, Switzerland), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (Santiago, Chile), and Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (Beirut, Lebanon);
- three standing committees: Committee for Programme and Coordination, Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, Committee on Negotiations with Intergovernmental Agencies;
- a number of expert bodies on subjects such as development policy; public administration; international cooperation in tax matters; economic, social and cultural rights; energy and sustainable development;
- other bodies, including the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the United Nations Forum on Forests.

The Council also cooperates with and to a certain extent coordinates the work of United Nations programmes (such as UNDP, UNEP, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, and UNICEF) and the specialized agencies (such as FAO, ILO, UNESCO and WHO), all of which report to the Council and make recommendations for its substantive sessions.

Relations with non-governmental organizations

Under the Charter, the Economic and Social Council consults with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) concerned with matters within its competence. Over 2,870 NGOs have consultative status with the Council. The Council recognizes that these organizations

should have the opportunity to express their views, and that they possess special experience or technical knowledge of value to its work.

The Council classifies NGOs into three categories: category I organizations are those concerned with most of the Council's activities; category II organizations have special competence in specific areas; and organizations that can occasionally contribute to the Council are placed on a roster for ad hoc consultations.

NGOs with consultative status may send observers to meetings of the Council and its subsidiary bodies and may submit written statements relevant to its work. They may also consult with the United Nations Secretariat on matters of mutual concern.

Over the years, the relationship between the United Nations and affiliated NGOs has developed significantly. Increasingly, NGOs are seen as partners who are consulted on policy and programme matters and as valuable links to civil society. NGOs around the world, in increasing numbers, are working daily with the United Nations community to help achieve the objectives of the Charter.

Trusteeship Council

(www.un.org/documents/tc)

The Trusteeship Council was established by the Charter in 1945 to provide international supervision for 11 Trust Territories placed under the administration of 7 member states, and ensure that adequate steps were taken to prepare the Territories for self-government or independence. The Charter authorized the Trusteeship Council to examine and discuss reports from the Administering Authority on the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the peoples of Trust Territories; to examine petitions from the Territories; and to undertake special missions to the Territories.

By 1994, all Trust Territories had attained self-government or independence, either as separate states or by joining neighbouring independent countries. The last to do so was the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (Palau), which became the 185th member state.

Its work completed, the Trusteeship Council — its membership reduced now to the five permanent members of the Security Council (China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States) — has amended its rules of procedure to meet as and where occasion may require.

International Court of Justice

(www.icj-cij.org)

Located at The Hague, in the Netherlands, the International Court of Justice is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. It settles legal disputes between states and gives advisory opinions to the United Nations and its specialized agencies. Its Statute is an integral part of the United Nations Charter.

The Court is open to all states that are parties to its Statute, which include all members of the United Nations. Only states may be parties in contentious cases before the Court and

submit disputes to it. The Court is not open to private persons and entities or international organizations.

The General Assembly and the Security Council can ask the Court for an advisory opinion on any legal question. Other organs of the United Nations and the specialized agencies, when authorized by the Assembly, can ask for advisory opinions on legal questions within the scope of their activities.

Jurisdiction

The Court's jurisdiction covers all questions that states refer to it, and all matters provided for in the United Nations Charter, or in international treaties and conventions. States may bind themselves in advance to accept the jurisdiction of the Court, either by signing a treaty or convention that provides for referral to the Court or by making a declaration to that effect. Such declarations accepting compulsory jurisdiction often contain reservations excluding certain classes of disputes.

In accordance with its Statute, the Court decides disputes by applying:

- international conventions establishing rules expressly recognized by the contesting states;
- international custom as evidence of a general practice accepted as law;
- the general principles of law recognized by nations; and
- judicial decisions and the teachings of the most qualified scholars of the various nations.

Membership

The Court is composed of 15 Judges elected by the General Assembly and the Security Council, voting independently. They are chosen on the basis of their qualifications, and care is taken to ensure that the principal legal systems of the world are represented in the Court. No two Judges may be from the same country. The Judges serve a nine-year term and may be re-elected. They cannot engage in any other occupation during their term of office.

The Court normally sits in plenary session, but may form smaller units called chambers if the parties so request. Judgments given by chambers are considered as rendered by the full Court. The Court also has a Chamber for Environmental Matters and forms annually a Chamber of Summary Procedure.

Secretariat

(www.un.org/documents/st)

The Secretariat — consisting of international staff working in duty stations around the world — carries out the diverse day-to-day work of the Organization. It services the other principal organs of the United Nations and administers the programmes and policies laid

down by them. At its head is the Secretary-General, who is appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council for a five-year, renewable term.

The duties carried out by the Secretariat are as varied as the problems dealt with by the United Nations. These range from administering peacekeeping operations to mediating international disputes, from surveying economic and social trends to preparing studies on human rights and sustainable development. Secretariat staff also inform the world's communications media about the work of the United Nations; organize international conferences on issues of worldwide concern; and interpret speeches and translate documents into the Organization's official languages.

The Secretariat has some 25,530 staff members on contracts of one year or more, of whom some 17,630 are paid from extrabudgetary resources. Staff on short term-contracts bring the total to some 30,550 staff from 182 countries. As international civil servants, staff members and the Secretary-General answer to the United Nations alone for their activities, and take an oath not to seek or receive instructions from any government or outside authority. Under the Charter, each member state undertakes to respect the exclusively international character of the responsibilities of the Secretary-General and the staff, and to refrain from seeking to influence them improperly.

The United Nations, while headquartered in New York, maintains a significant presence in Addis Ababa, Bangkok, Beirut, Geneva, Nairobi, Santiago and Vienna, and has offices all over the world.

Secretary-General

(www.un.org/sg)

Equal parts diplomat and advocate, civil servant and CEO, the Secretary-General is a symbol of United Nations ideals and a spokesman for the interests of the world's peoples, in particular the poor and vulnerable. Mr. Kofi Annan of Ghana completed two five-year terms as Secretary-General on 31 December 2006, and was succeeded by the eighth Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon of the Republic of Korea.

The Charter describes the Secretary-General as "chief administrative officer" of the Organization, who shall act in that capacity and perform "such other functions as are entrusted" to him or her by the Security Council, General Assembly, Economic and Social Council and other United Nations organs. The Charter also empowers the Secretary-General to "bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security". These guidelines both define the powers of the office and grant it considerable scope for action. The Secretary-General would fail if he did not take careful account of the concerns of member states, but he must also uphold the values and moral authority of the United Nations, and speak and act for peace — even at the risk, from time to time, of challenging or disagreeing with those same member states.

Previous Secretaries-General

Under the Charter, the Secretary-General is appointed by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council. Mr. Ban Ki-moon's predecessors were: Kofi Annan (Ghana), who served from January 1997 to December 2006; Boutros Boutros-Ghali (Egypt), who held office from January 1992 to December 1996; Javier Pérez de Cuéllar (Peru), who served from January 1982 to December 1991; Kurt Waldheim (Austria), who held office from January 1972 to December 1981; U Thant (Burma, now Myanmar), who served from November 1961, when he was appointed acting Secretary-General (he was formally appointed Secretary-General in November 1962) to December 1971; Dag Hammarskjöld (Sweden), who served from April 1953 until his death in a plane crash in Africa in September 1961; and Trygve Lie (Norway), who held office from February 1946 to his resignation in November 1952.

This creative tension accompanies the Secretary-General through day-to-day work, which includes attendance at sessions of United Nations bodies; consultations with world leaders, government officials, representatives of civil society groups, the private sector and individuals; and worldwide travel intended to keep him in touch with the peoples of member states and informed about the vast array of issues of international concern that are on the Organization's agenda. Each year, the Secretary-General issues a report on the work of the Organization that appraises its activities and outlines future priorities.

One of the most vital roles played by the Secretary-General is the use of his "good offices" — steps taken publicly and in private, drawing upon his independence, impartiality and integrity, to prevent international disputes from arising, escalating or spreading. The good offices of the Secretary-General have been used in a wide range of situations, including Cyprus, East Timor, Iraq, Libya, the Middle East, Nigeria and Western Sahara. (*For a list of the Secretary-General's special and personal representatives and envoys, see www.un.org/Depts/dpko/SRSG*)

Each Secretary-General defines his role within the context of his particular time in office. Demands for UN peacekeeping have grown at an unprecedented rate in recent years, leading Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to propose basic structural reforms to enable the Organization to keep pace.

As a result, the General Assembly, in June 2007, approved the creation of a **Department of Field Support (DFS)** to take over the day-to-day management of peacekeeping operations, leaving the **Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)** free to focus on overall strategy, planning and deployment. (See *box*, "Reform and Revitalization: Peacekeeping and Disarmament")

2005 World Summit Outcome

At the September 2005 World Summit, held at UN Headquarters, world leaders agreed to take action on a range of global challenges. Their commitments included:

- *Development.* Achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015; \$50 billion a year by 2010 to fight poverty; developing countries to adopt MDG national plans by 2006; quick-impact initiatives to support anti-malaria efforts, education, health care; innovative sources of financing for development; ensuring long-term debt sustainability with increased grant-based financing; cancelling 100 per cent of the official multilateral and bilateral debt of heavily indebted poor countries (HIPCs); where appropriate, significant debt relief or restructuring for other low and middle-income developing countries; commitment to trade liberalization, implementing the development aspects of the WTO's Doha work programme.
- *Terrorism.* Unqualified condemnation by all governments of terrorism "in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes"; push for a comprehensive convention against terrorism within a year; early entry into force of the nuclear terrorism convention; all states to join and implement all anti-terrorism conventions; an anti-terrorism strategy to make the international community stronger, terrorists weaker.
- *Peacebuilding, Peacekeeping and Peacemaking.* Creating a Peacebuilding Commission to help countries transition from war to peace, backed by a support office and standing fund; a standing police capacity for UN peacekeeping operations; strengthening the Secretary-General's capacity for mediation and good offices.
- *Responsibility to Protect.* Unambiguous acceptance of collective international responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity; willingness to take timely, decisive collective action through the Security Council.
- *Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law.* Strengthening the UN human rights machinery; doubling the High Commissioner's budget; establishing a Human Rights Council during the coming year; reaffirming democracy as a universal value; welcoming a new Democracy Fund; eliminating pervasive gender discrimination, including inequalities in education, property ownership, violence against women and girls, and impunity. Ratifications during the Summit triggered the entry into force of the Convention against Corruption.
- *Management Reform.* Strengthening the UN's oversight capacity, expanding oversight to additional agencies; an independent oversight advisory committee; further developing a new ethics office; reviewing all UN mandates older than five years; overhauling rules and policies on budget, finance and human resources to improve the UN's responsiveness; a one-time staff buyout, to ensure the UN has the appropriate staff for today's challenges.

- *Environment.* Recognizing the serious challenge of climate change; acting through the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change; assisting the most vulnerable, such as small island developing states; creating a global early warning system for all natural hazards.
- *International Health.* Scaling up response to HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria, through prevention, care, treatment and support, and mobilizing additional resources; fighting infectious diseases, including full implementation of the new International Health Regulations, and support for the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network of the WHO.
- *Humanitarian Assistance.* Improving the Central Emergency Revolving Fund, so that relief arrives reliably and immediately when disasters occur; recognizing the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement as an important framework for protecting the internally displaced.
- *Updating the UN Charter.* Updating the Charter by winding up the Trusteeship Council, marking completion of UN's historic decolonization role, and deleting the Charter's anachronistic references to "enemy states".

Many of these commitments have already been accomplished, and many others are well under way. (For the full text of the 2005 World Summit Outcome, see www.un.org/summit2005)

Secretary-General Ban has been particularly outspoken on climate change, describing it as "a defining issue of our time". He has also promoted establishment of the new, hybrid peacekeeping mission in the Sudan (see *box* on **UNAMID** in chapter 2), and taken steps to bring the UN disarmament machinery into closer relationship with his office — as the new **United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs**.

Mr. Ban's priorities for action include: Africa, particularly the situation in the Sudan and the tragedy in Darfur; the situation in the Middle East; non-proliferation and disarmament; achievement of the development goals that emerged from the 2000 Millennium Summit; climate change; human rights; and UN reform. (See "My priorities as Secretary-General, at www.un.org/sg/priority.shtml)

Mr. Ban Ki-moon's actions follow and build on those of his predecessor, Mr. Kofi Annan, whose efforts focused on wide-ranging reforms aimed at helping the UN adapt to a new era in global affairs. Innovations during Mr. Annan's 10-year tenure included the establishment of such internal bodies as the UN Ethics Office and the Office of the UN Ombudsman; and such major UN bodies as the Human Rights Council and the UN Peacebuilding Commission. He also established the office of Deputy Secretary-General, to assist in the array of responsibilities assigned to his office.

The Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, established by Mr. Annan in 2003, coordinates the UN systems efforts for Africa's development. The UN Democracy Fund finances projects that build and strengthen democratic institutions and processes and promote human rights.

The **Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria** has been operational since 2002. By the end of 2006, it had committed \$7.1 billion in 136 countries to support aggressive interventions in the fight against these devastating diseases (see www.theglobalfund.org).

The **Global Compact**, proposed by Mr. Annan in 1999, brings private corporations together with UN agencies, governments, labour and non-governmental organizations to advance nine universally recognized principles in the areas of human rights, labour and the environment. By January 2007, it had over 3,800 participants, including more than 2,900 businesses, as well as international and national labour groups and hundreds of civil society organizations in 100 countries, mostly in the developing world.

Mr. Annan's proposals also provided the groundwork for two major gatherings of world leaders: the 2000 Millennium Summit; and its five-year review, the 2005 World Summit. At the former, the unanimously adopted *Millennium Declaration* set a series of specific goals and targets — including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) — outlining the direction of the UN in the new century. The World Summit followed up with bold decisions in the areas of development, security, human rights and UN reform. (See *box*, “2005 World Summit Outcome”)

Deputy Secretary-General. Ms. Louise Fréchette of Canada was appointed as the first Deputy Secretary-General, in 1998. She was succeeded, in 2006, by Mr. Mark Malloch Brown of the United Kingdom, and in January 2007, by Dr. Asha-Rose Migiro of Tanzania.

Budget of the United Nations

The regular budget of the United Nations is approved by the General Assembly for a two-year period. The budget is initially submitted by the Secretary-General and reviewed by the **Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions**, made up of 16 experts who are nominated by their governments and elected by the General Assembly but who serve in their personal capacity. The programmatic aspects are reviewed by the **Committee for Programme and Coordination**, made up of 34 experts who are elected by the General Assembly and who represent the views of their governments.

The budget approved for the biennium 2006-2007 is \$3.8 billion — representing nominal growth in real terms from the 2004-2005 biennium. The budget covers the costs of United Nations programmes in areas such as political affairs, international justice and law, international cooperation for development, public information, human rights and humanitarian affairs. During the biennium, the approved budget is subject to adjustment by the General Assembly to account for financial implications related to new mandates or revised estimates submitted by the Secretary-General.

The main source of funds for the budget is the contributions of member states. These are assessed on a scale approved by the Assembly on the recommendation of the **Committee on Contributions**, made up of 18 experts who serve in their personal capacity and are selected by the General Assembly on the recommendation of its Administrative and Budgetary (Fifth) Committee.

The United Nations and the Nobel Peace Prize

Throughout the years, the United Nations and its far-flung family of agencies, organizations and supporters have frequently been awarded the annual Nobel Peace Prize, in recognition of their contribution to the cause of world peace, in all its aspects. A list of UN-related Nobel Peace Prize laureates since the establishment of the Organization includes:

- Cordell Hull — United States Secretary of State instrumental in establishing the UN (1945)
- Lord John Boyd Orr — founding director-general of the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (1949)
- Ralph Bunche — UN Trusteeship Director and principal secretary of the UN Palestine Commission, also led efforts for mediation in the Middle East (1950)
- Léon Jouhaux — one of the ILO founders (1951)
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (1954)
- Lester Bowles Pearson — honoured for his role in trying to end the Suez conflict and to solve the Middle East question through the UN, also served as General Assembly President in 1952 (1957)
- UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld — one of only two posthumous awards (1961)
- United Nations Children's Fund (1965)
- International Labour Organization (1969)
- Sean MacBride — UN Commissioner for Namibia and human rights promoter (1974)
- Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (1981)
- United Nations Peacekeeping Forces (1988)
- United Nations and its Secretary-General, Kofi Annan (2001)
- International Atomic Energy Agency, and its Director-General, Mohamed ElBaradei (2005)
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and Albert Arnold (Al) Gore Jr., former Vice President of the United States (2007)

This list does not include the many Nobel laureates who have worked closely with the United Nations or at common purpose with it, in pursuance of their particular contribution to the human family.

The fundamental criterion on which the scale of assessments is based is the capacity of countries to pay. This is determined by considering their relative shares of total gross national product, adjusted to take into account a number of factors, including their per capita incomes. The Committee completely reviews the scale of assessments every three years, on the basis of the latest national income statistics, to ensure that assessments are fair and accurate. In 2000, the Assembly fixed a maximum of 22 per cent of the budget for any one contributor.

The overall financial situation of the United Nations has been precarious for several years because of the continuing failure of many member states to pay, in full and on time, their assessed contributions. The United Nations has managed to continue to operate thanks to voluntary contributions from some countries and to its Working Capital Fund (to which member states advance sums in proportion to their assessed contributions), and by borrowing from peacekeeping operations.

Member states' unpaid contributions to the regular budget totalled \$362.0 million at the end of 2006. Out of 191 assessed member states, 134 had paid their assessments in full, while the remaining 57 had failed to meet their statutory financial obligations to the Organization.

In addition to the regular budget, member states are assessed for the costs of the international tribunals and, in accordance with a modified version of the basic scale, for the costs of peacekeeping operations.

Peacekeeping budgets are approved by the General Assembly for a one-year period beginning on 1 July. The Assembly apportions the costs based on a special scale of assessment applicable to peacekeeping. This scale takes into account the relative economic wealth of member states, with the permanent members of the Security Council paying a larger share because of their special responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Peacekeeping costs peaked at \$3 billion in 1995, reflecting in particular the expense of operations in Somalia and the former Yugoslavia, but were down to \$889 million in 1999. By 2001, the annual cost of UN peacekeeping had again risen to just over \$2.5 billion — reflecting major new missions in Kosovo, East Timor (now Timor-Leste), Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Eritrea and Ethiopia.

Since July 2005, the annual cost of United Nations peacekeeping has experienced more than a twofold increase, reflecting major new missions in Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Haiti, the Sudan and Timor-Leste, and the expansion in Lebanon. For the year beginning 1 July 2007, the approved peacekeeping budgets totalled some \$5.3 billion, excluding separate financing for the hybrid African Union/United Nations mission in Darfur. Nevertheless, this amount represents half of 1 per cent of world military spending (more than \$1 trillion annually).

Delays in the receipt of assessed contributions affect reimbursements to member states that contribute troops, equipment and logistical support, thus placing an unfair burden on them. Outstanding contributions for peacekeeping operations at the end of 2006 totalled nearly \$1.9 billion. In addition, nearly \$50.6 million was outstanding for the international tribunals, as well as some \$33.5 million towards the long-overdue renovation of UN Headquarters.

A World of Support for the United Nations

The entire UN family benefits from the energy and enthusiasm of grassroots organizations and movements to bring the high ideals of the United Nations Charter into practical form. The UN also benefits from its partnership with various members of civil society, including the business and labour communities and international charitable organizations, as well as the support of prominent figures in all fields of endeavour.

From the children who “Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF”, to the educational activities of some 5,000 UNESCO Clubs in more than 120 countries, to thousands of NGOs on the ground, people all around the world are engaged in helping the UN make this world a better place.

United Nations Associations. Inspired by the opening words of the UN Charter, “We the Peoples”, a self-described “people’s movement for the United Nations” was born in 1946, one year after the UN itself. UN Associations in over 100 member states bring the power and energy of hundreds of thousands of people to bear in a global network of support for the aims and purposes of the United Nations Charter (see www.wfuna.org)

Non-governmental organizations. The World Federation of UN Associations is but one of thousands of non-governmental organization (NGOs) which have enlisted in the cause of the UN — including some 2,870 NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (www.un.org/esa/coordination/ngo), and more than 1,660 NGOs with strong information programmes that work in partnership with the UN Department of Public Information (www.un.org/dpi/ngosection/index.asp).

NGOs are active across the broad spectrum of UN issues, including peacebuilding, disarmament, outer space affairs, AIDS, malaria prevention, agriculture, food aid, sustainable development, information and communication technologies, disaster reduction, desertification, humanitarian operations, the global drug problem, and the environment — to name but a few (see specific references in subsequent chapters).

The Global Compact. Over 3,800 participants, including more than 2,900 businesses, as well as international and national labour groups and hundreds of civil society organizations in 100 countries, work with the UN to advance universally recognized principles in the areas of human rights, labour and the environment. (See www.unglobalcompact.org)

UN Messengers of Peace and Goodwill Ambassadors. From the earliest days of the United Nations, world famous actors, sports figures and other prominent world citizens have lent their names and public recognition in support of the United Nations work for a better world. Today, there are 9 UN Messengers of Peace appointed by the Secretary-General, and 156 Goodwill Ambassadors of the UN System (see www.un.org/sg/mop).

Public Charities. The United Nations Foundation is among a number of public charities which support the work of the UN. It was created in 1998 with entrepreneur/philanthropist Ted Turner’s historic \$1 billion gift in support of UN causes and activities (see www.unfoundation.org). The UN Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP) was subsequently established within the UN to coordinate, channel and monitor the Foundation’s contributions (www.un.org/unfip).

United Nations funds and programmes — such as the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) — have separate budgets. The bulk of their resources is provided on a voluntary basis by governments, and also by individuals, as in the case of UNICEF. The United Nations specialized agencies also have separate budgets, which are supplemented through voluntary contributions by states.

The United Nations family of organizations

(www.unsystem.org)

The United Nations family of organizations (the “United Nations system”) consists of the **United Nations Secretariat**, the United Nations **funds and programmes** (such as UNICEF and UNDP), the specialized agencies (such as UNESCO and WHO) and **related organizations**. The funds and programmes are subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly. The specialized agencies are linked to the United Nations through special agreements and report to the Economic and Social Council and/or the General Assembly. The related organizations — including IAEA and the World Trade Organization — address specialized areas and have their own legislative bodies and budgets. Together, the organizations of the UN system address all areas of economic and social endeavour.

United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB). The CEB — formerly known as the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) — is the UN system’s highest coordinating mechanism. Chaired by the Secretary-General, its members are the Executive Heads of 28 organizations, including the United Nations and its funds, programmes, specialized agencies and related organizations. Its purpose is to harmonize the actions of the UN system in the pursuit of the common goals of member states. The CEB meets twice a year, and is supported in its work by a high-level committee on programmes and a high-level committee on management.

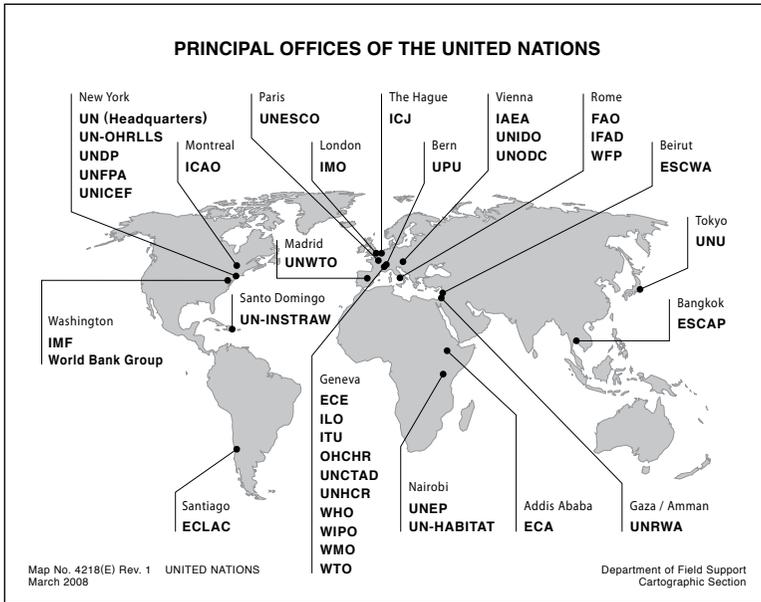
Its 28 members are the: United Nations, FAO, IAEA, ICAO, IFAD, ILO, IMF, IMO, ITU, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNODC, UNRWA, UNWTO, UPU, WFP, WHO, WIPO, WMO, World Bank and WTO. (See www.unsystemceb.org)

United Nations Secretariat

(www.un.org/documents/st)

The United Nations Secretariat consists of departments and offices, described below. The **Executive Office of the Secretary-General**, composed of the Secretary-General and his senior advisers, establishes general policies and provides overall guidance to the Organization. The Secretariat has its headquarters in New York and offices in all regions of the world.

Three main centres of activities are in Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi. The **United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG)**, headed by Director-General Sergei Alexandrovitch Ordzhonikidze (Russian Federation), is a centre for conference diplomacy and a forum for disarmament and



human rights (www.unog.ch). The **United Nations Office at Vienna (UNOV)**, headed by Director-General Antonio Maria Costa (Italy), is the headquarters for activities in the fields of international drug-abuse control, crime prevention and criminal justice, peaceful uses of outer space and international trade law (www.unvienna.org). The **United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON)**, headed by Director-General Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka (Tanzania), is the headquarters for activities in the fields of environment and human settlements (www.unon.org).

Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS)

(www.un.org/Depts/oios)

Under-Secretary-General

Ms. Inga-Britt Ahlenius (Sweden)

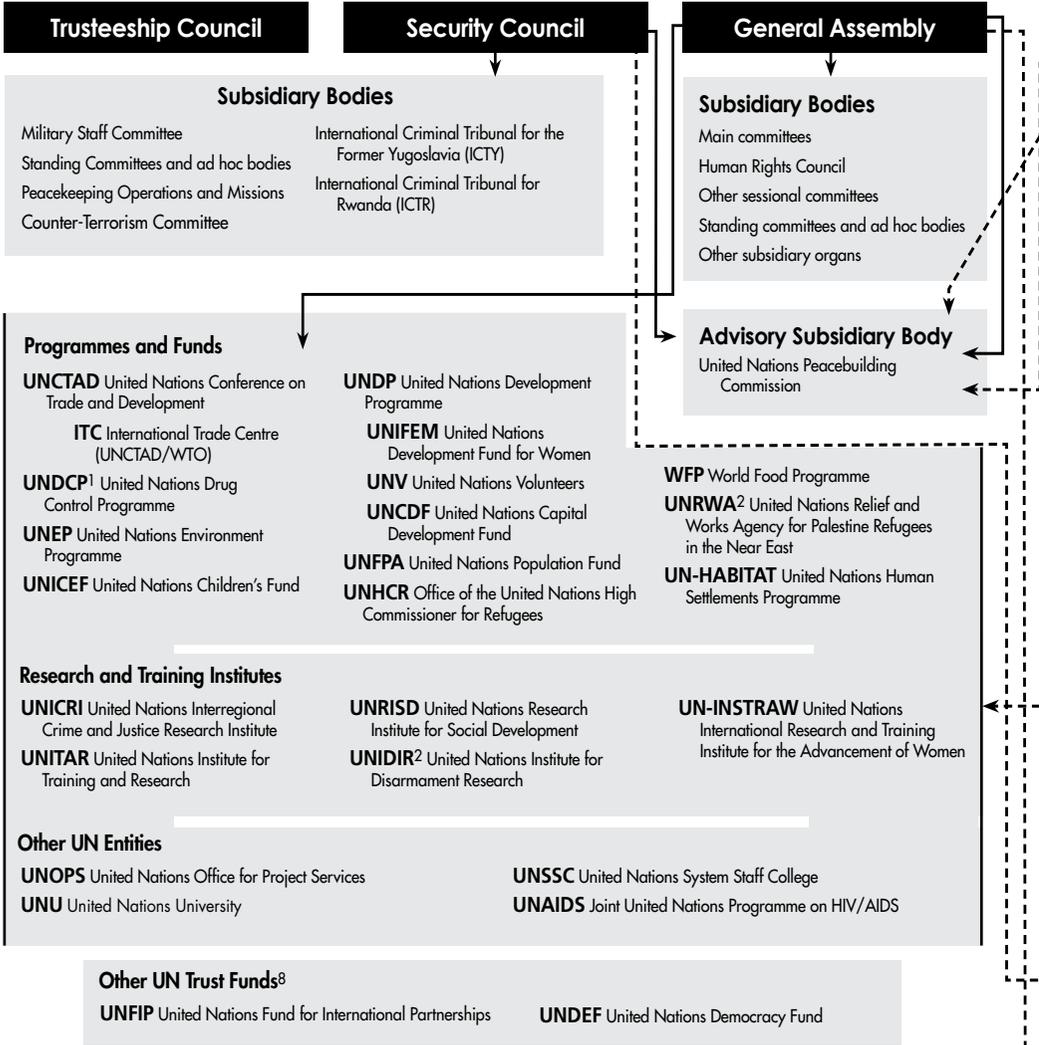
The Office of Internal Oversight Services provides independent, professional and timely internal audit, monitoring, inspection, evaluation and investigation services. It aims to be an agent of change that promotes responsible administration of resources, a culture of accountability and transparency, and improved programme performance. The Office:

- conducts comprehensive internal audits;
- conducts inspections of programmes and organizational units;
- monitors and evaluates the efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation of programmes and mandates;
- investigates reports of mismanagement and misconduct;
- monitors the implementation of recommendations emanating from audits, evaluations, inspections and investigations.



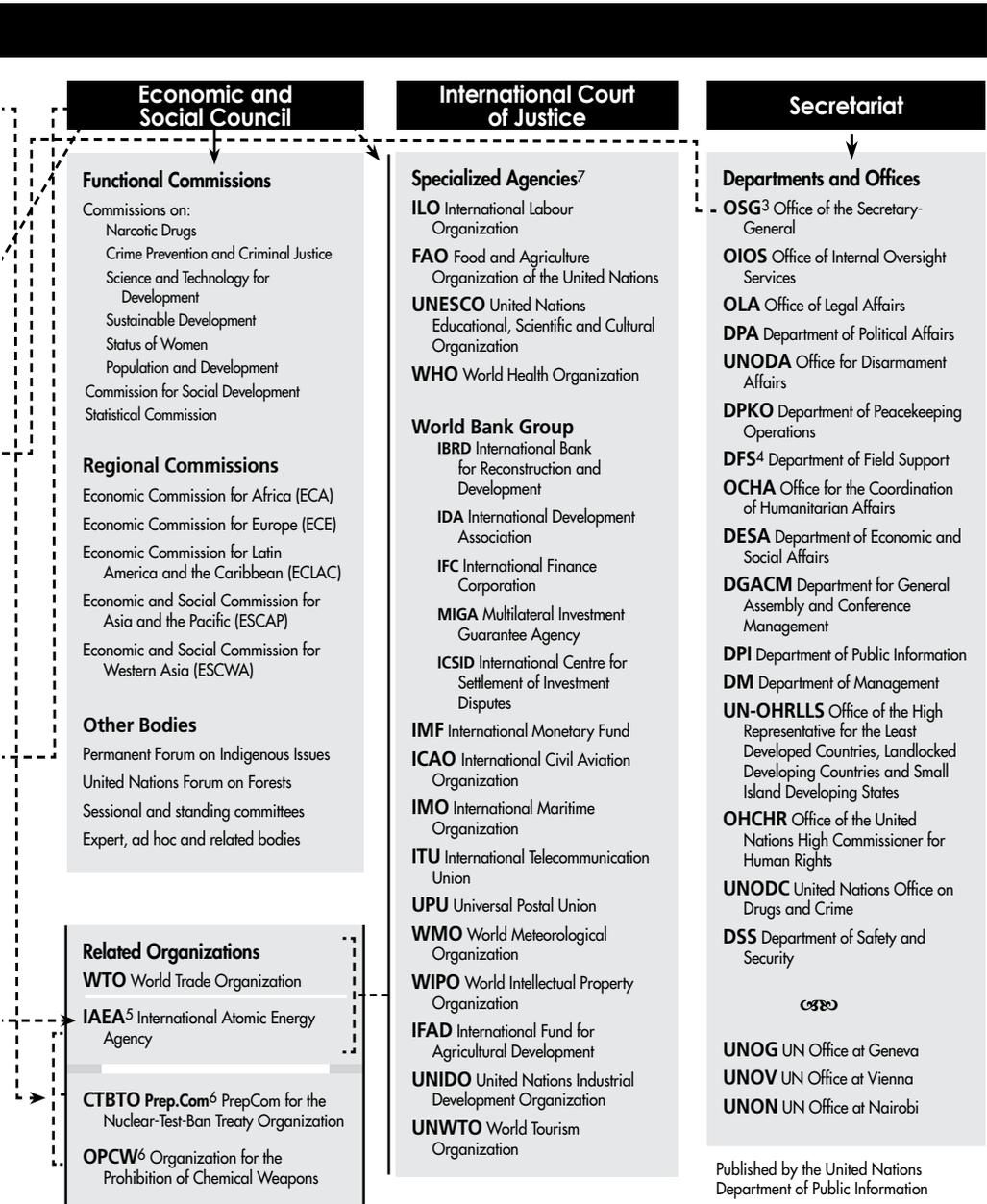
The United Nations System

Principal Organs



NOTES: Solid lines from a Principal Organ indicate a direct reporting relationship; dashes indicate a non-subsidiary relationship.

¹ The UN Drug Control Programme is part of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime.
² UNRWA and UNIDIR report only to the GA.
³ The United Nations Ethics Office, the United Nations Ombudsman's Office, and the Chief Information Technology Officer report directly to the Secretary-General.
⁴ In an exceptional arrangement, the Under-Secretary-General for Field Support reports directly to the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.
⁵ IAEA reports to the Security Council and the General Assembly (GA).
⁶ The CTBTO Prep.Com and OPCW report to the GA.
⁷ Specialized agencies are autonomous organizations working with the UN and each other through the coordinating machinery of the ECOSOC at the intergovernmental level, and through the Chief Executives Board for coordination (CEB) at the inter-secretarial level.
⁸ UNFIP is an autonomous trust fund operating under the leadership of the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General. UNDEF's advisory board recommends



Published by the United Nations
Department of Public Information

OIOS covers all UN activities under the Secretary-General's authority, including the UN Secretariat in New York, Geneva, Nairobi and Vienna; the five regional commissions; and UN peacekeeping and humanitarian operations. It provides services to funds and programmes administered separately under the authority of the Secretary-General — including UNHCR, UNEP, UN-HABITAT and OHCHR. It also provides assistance to other entities that have requested its services — including the secretariats of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification and of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The OIOS budget for 2006-2007, including all funding sources, was approximately \$85 million. Each year OIOS issues more than 200 reports, as well as more than 1,500 recommendations aimed at improving internal controls and correcting underlying obstacles to organizational efficiency and effectiveness. Since 1995, it has issued recommendations with financial implications amounting to more than \$400 million — covering such areas as cost avoidance, recovery of overpayments, efficiency gains and other measurable improvements (as of 30 June 2007).

The Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services is appointed by the Secretary-General and approved by the General Assembly for one five-year term without possibility of renewal.

Office of Legal Affairs (OLA)

(<http://untreaty.un.org/ola>)

**Under-Secretary-General
The Legal Counsel**

Mr. Nicolas Michel (Switzerland)

The Office of Legal Affairs is the central legal service of the Organization. It provides legal advice to the Secretary-General, Secretariat departments and offices, and principal and subsidiary organs of the United Nations in the field of public and private international law; performs substantive and secretariat functions for legal organs involved in public international law, the law of the sea and international trade law; and performs the functions conferred on the Secretary-General as depositary of multilateral treaties.

OLA deals with legal questions relating to international peace and security; to the status, privileges and immunities of the United Nations; and to the credentials and representations of member states. It prepares drafts of international conventions, agreements, rules of procedure of United Nations organs and conferences, and other legal instruments. It also provides legal services and advice on issues of international private and administrative law and on United Nations resolutions and regulations.

In addition, the Office provides secretariat services for the General Assembly's Sixth Committee, the International Law Commission, the Commission on International Trade Law, the organs established by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the United Nations Administrative Tribunal and other legal bodies. It also discharges the Secretariat's responsibilities regarding the registration and publication of treaties pursuant to Article 102 of the UN Charter.

The head of the Office — the Legal Counsel — represents the Secretary-General at meetings and conferences of a legal nature, as well as in judicial and arbitral proceedings. The Legal Counsel also certifies legal instruments issued on behalf of the United Nations, convenes meetings of the Legal Advisers of the United Nations System, and represents the United Nations at such meetings.

Department of Political Affairs (DPA)

(www.un.org/Depts/dpa)

Under-Secretary-General

Mr. B. Lynn Pascoe (United States)

The Department of Political Affairs plays a central role in United Nations efforts to prevent and resolve deadly conflict around the world and to consolidate peace in the aftermath of war. To that end, DPA:

- monitors, analyses and assesses political developments throughout the world;
- identifies potential or actual conflicts in whose control and resolution the United Nations could play a useful role;
- recommends to the Secretary-General appropriate action in such cases and executes the approved policy;
- assists the Secretary-General in carrying out political activities decided by him, the General Assembly and the Security Council, in the areas of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding;
- advises the Secretary-General on requests for electoral assistance received from member states and coordinates programmes established in response to such requests;
- advises and supports the Secretary-General in the political aspects of his relations with member states;
- services the Security Council and its subsidiary bodies, as well as the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Special Committee of 24 on decolonization.

The head of the Department — the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs — among other things undertakes consultations and negotiations relating to peaceful settlement of disputes, and is the focal point for United Nations electoral assistance activities.

Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)

(<http://disarmament.un.org>)

High Representative for Disarmament

Mr. Sergio de Queiroz Duarte (Brazil)

The Office for Disarmament Affairs promotes the goal of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as the strengthening of the disarmament regimes with respect to other weapons of mass destruction, including chemical and biological weapons. It promotes disarmament in the

area of conventional weapons, especially with respect to implementation of the 2001 Programme of Action on illicit trade in small arms — the weapons of choice in contemporary conflicts. This includes arms collection and stockpile management programmes, as well as the disarmament and demobilization of former combatants and their reintegration into civil society. It also advocates restrictions on and eventual disarmament of anti-personnel landmines.

UNODA provides substantive and organizational support for norm-setting in the area of disarmament through the work of the General Assembly and its First Committee, the Disarmament Commission, the Conference on Disarmament and other bodies. It fosters preventive disarmament measures, such as dialogue, transparency and confidence-building on military matters, including the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and standardized reporting on military expenditures. It encourages regional disarmament efforts, including nuclear-weapon-free zones and regional and subregional transparency regimes. It also provides information and supports educational initiatives on UN disarmament efforts.

In the first half of 2007, this body was transformed from the Department of Disarmament Affairs to the Office for Disarmament Affairs, as part of the Secretary-General's efforts to bring new momentum to the United Nations disarmament agenda. (See *box*, "Reform and Revitalization: Peacekeeping and Disarmament".)

Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)

(www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko)

Under-Secretary-General

Mr. Alain Le Roy (France)

The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is responsible for assisting member states and the Secretary-General in their efforts to maintain, achieve and sustain international peace and security. It does this by planning, preparing and conducting United Nations peacekeeping operations, in accordance with mandates provided by the member states. The Department:

- Undertakes contingency planning for possible new peacekeeping operations;
- Secures, through negotiations with member states, the civilian, military and police personnel, the military units, and the equipment and services required to accomplish the mandate;
- Provides political and executive guidance, direction and support to peacekeeping operations;
- Maintains contacts with parties to conflicts and with members of the Security Council on the implementation of Council resolutions;
- Manages "integrated operational teams" to direct and supervise all peacekeeping operations;
- Advises the Security Council and member states on key peacekeeping issues, including security sector reform, the rule of law, and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants;

Reform and Revitalization: Peacekeeping and Disarmament

During the first months of his tenure, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon proposed a number of basic reforms aimed at strengthening the capacity of the UN to carry out its mission in the world. Among these was the restructuring of the United Nations peacekeeping and disarmament machinery.

In a letter to the General Assembly, the Secretary-General noted that “the number of peace operations is at an all-time high, with almost 100,000 personnel in the field”. Reforms in 2000 had aimed to enable DPKO to launch one new multidisciplinary mission per year, but “the past 36 months alone have seen the start-up or expansion of nine field missions, with three additional missions currently in active start-up”.

“Over the course of the next year, the number of personnel in UN peace operations could increase by as much as 40 per cent”, the Secretary-General said. He therefore proposed the creation of a new Department of Field Support to handle the planning, deployment and support of peacekeeping operations, leaving the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to focus on such matters of strategic oversight and operational policy guidance.

On 15 March 2007, the General Assembly endorsed this proposal, and on 29 June 2007 it formally established the new **Department of Field Support (DFS)** to ensure more effective, coherent and responsive support to field operations and more efficient management of resources. The Under-Secretary-General heading DFS reports to and receives direction from the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, to ensure unity of command and clear lines of responsibility. This reform is to be phased in over a period of 12 months.

Also on 15 March, the Assembly endorsed the Secretary-General's proposal to transform the Department of Disarmament Affairs into a **United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)**, to be led by a High Representative for Disarmament, who would report directly to the Secretary-General. The reform is intended to promote fresh progress on the disarmament agenda, including efforts towards entry into force of the *Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty*, which was adopted by the General Assembly in September 1996.

- Analyses emerging policy questions and best practices related to peacekeeping, and formulates policies, procedures and general peacekeeping doctrine;
- Coordinates all UN activities related to landmines, and develops and supports mine-action programmes in peacekeeping and emergency situations.

The head of the Department — the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations — directs peacekeeping operations on behalf of the Secretary-General; formulates policies and guidelines for operations; and advises the Secretary-General on all matters relating to peacekeeping and mine action.

(For information on changes currently under way in DPKO, see “Department of Field Support”, and the box on “Reform and Revitalization: Peacekeeping and Disarmament”.)

Department of Field Support (DFS)

(www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/dfs.shtml)

Under-Secretary-General

Ms. Susana Malcorra (Argentina)

On 29 June 2007, the General Assembly formally established the Department of Field Support, as proposed by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon earlier in the year. The reform, undertaken in the face of growing demand for UN peacekeeping, aims to strengthen the capacity of the Organization to manage and sustain such operations. It is to be phased in over a period of 12 months.

Under the new arrangement, DPKO is responsible for strategic oversight and operational political guidance, while DFS is charged with planning, deployment and maintenance. In creating DFS, the Assembly also approved a record \$5.25 billion budget for 13 of the 16 active peacekeeping operations it would oversee. (Note: UNTSO and UNMOGIP are financed from the UN regular budget, and UNAMID had not yet been established.)

In order to help ensure unity of command, the Under-Secretary-General for Field Support reports to and receives direction from the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. In approving this structure, wherein the head of one department reports to and takes direction from another head of department, the Assembly stated that this would create no precedent with respect to other reporting relationships within the Secretariat. (For background, see *box* on “Reform and Revitalization: Peacekeeping and Disarmament”.)

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

(<http://ochaonline.un.org>)

Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Emergency Relief Coordinator

Sir John Holmes (United Kingdom)

The mission of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is to mobilize and coordinate humanitarian action, in partnership with national and international actors, to alleviate human suffering in disasters and emergencies.

Through its network of field offices, humanitarian coordinators and country teams, OCHA works to ensure the coherence of relief efforts. To support the efforts of its humanitarian coordinators and of UN agencies that deliver assistance to populations in need, OCHA coordinates needs assessments, contingency planning and the formulation of humanitarian programmes.

Led by the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, OCHA also advocates for the rights of people in need, promotes preparedness and prevention, and facilitates the implementation of sustainable solutions.

The core functions of the Emergency Relief Coordinator are:

- coordination of a humanitarian emergency response;
- policy development to ensure that all humanitarian issues, including those which fall between gaps in the mandates of agencies, are addressed; and
- advocacy of humanitarian issues with political organs, notably the Security Council.

The Emergency Relief Coordinator also chairs the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), an umbrella organization that comprises all major humanitarian actors — including the Red Cross Movement and three consortia of non-governmental organizations. By developing common policies, guidelines and standards, the Committee ensures a coherent interagency response to complex emergencies and natural and environmental disasters.

OCHA has a staff of 1,064 worldwide. Its budget for 2007 was \$159 million, 92 per cent of which came from extrabudgetary resources.

Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)

(www.un.org/esa/desa)

Under-Secretary-General

Mr. Sha Zukang (China)

The Department of Economic and Social Affairs has three broad, interlinked areas of work:

- It compiles and analyses a broad range of social, economic and environmental data and information on relevant issues and trends. This analytical information serves to inform the United Nations policy-making processes, as well as a wider audience.
- DESA facilitates negotiations in the General Assembly and in the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies, providing support to member states and other participants as they build consensus on matters of global concern in the economic, social and related areas.
- It also advises governments, at their request, on ways and means of addressing their development challenges — including the development of national programmes and activities to carry out actions agreed to at the Millennium Summit, the Monterrey International Conference on Financing for Development, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and other global economic, social and environmental conferences and summits.

DESA works in the areas of sustainable development, gender issues and the advancement of women, development policy analysis, population, statistics, public administration and e-government, and social policy and development. Its work includes support for the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the United Nations Information and Communications Technologies Task Force, and the United Nations Forum on Forests. DESA collaborates closely with NGOs, as well as other representatives of civil society.

Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM)

(www.un.org/Depts/DGACM)

Under-Secretary-General

Mr. S. Muhammad Shaaban (Egypt)

The Department for General Assembly and Conference Management provides technical and secretariat support services to the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, their committees and other subsidiary bodies, and to conferences held

away from Headquarters. It is responsible for the processing and issuance at Headquarters of all official documents in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish and provides interpretation services from and into these languages to intergovernmental meetings. It also produces the official records of the United Nations, including summary and verbatim records of meetings.

The head of the Department — the Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management — is responsible for the development and coordination of conference-management policies for the United Nations at UN Headquarters in New York, and the UN Offices at Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi. He advises the President of the General Assembly on all matters relating to the session and work of the General Assembly and its General and Main Committees.

Department of Public Information (DPI)

Under-Secretary-General

Mr. Kiyoo Akasaka (Japan)

DPI's mission is to help fulfil the substantive purposes of the United Nations by strategically communicating information on the Organization's activities and concerns to the public. It does this to encourage public support for the achievement of the aims of the Organization. The Department uses outreach programmes, information campaigns, news and feature services, radio and television programmes, press releases, publications, documentary videos and special events to communicate the Organization's messages, and provides library and knowledge-sharing services. In addition to its staff at UN Headquarters, DPI has 55 information centres and services around the world, as well as a regional centre (UNRIC) in Brussels, and information components in eight UN Offices.

The Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, who is the head of the Department, is responsible for United Nations communications and public information policy. He is charged with ensuring that the Organization provides accurate and coordinated information about its responsibilities and its work to the media, civil society and the general public.

The Department consists of three divisions. The Strategic Communications Division develops communication strategies to promote United Nations priorities and coordinates their implementation within the Department and across the UN system. It develops information products to publicize key thematic issues, targeting in particular the global media. It provides programmatic and operational support to the global network of UN information centres (www.un.org/aroundworld/unics), as well as communications planning and backstopping to the information component of peace missions.

The News and Media Division is charged with producing and distributing United Nations news and information to the media around the world (see www.un.org/News). It provides logistical support to journalists covering the UN and maintains a constant flow of news in six languages through the UN News Centre on the web. It provides coverage of UN meetings and events — including press releases, live TV feeds, radio programmes and photographs —

and produces and distributes radio and video documentary and news programmes about the United Nations.

It also covers the daily press briefings and statements by the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General (www.un.org/News/oss), which is administered by the Department. The Office is responsible for planning the Secretary-General's media-related activities and explaining the policies and work of the United Nations to the world's media. The Spokesperson briefs journalists on a daily and continuous basis on the work of the Secretary-General and on developments throughout the UN system, including the Security Council and other principal organs, along with the tribunals, agencies, funds and programmes. The Spokesperson reports directly to the Secretary-General.

The main United Nations library — the Dag Hammarskjöld Library (www.un.org/Depts/dhl) — is part of the Outreach Division, as are the sections of the Department that work with non-governmental organizations (www.un.org/dpi/ngosection) and educational institutions and those that market United Nations information products and services (www.un.org/Pubs). The Outreach Division organizes special events and exhibitions on priority issues, as well as an annual training programme for journalists from developing countries. It also develops partnerships with private and public sector organizations to further the aims of the United Nations. Other responsibilities of this Division include conducting guided tours of UN Headquarters (www.un.org/tours), responding to public inquiries (www.un.org/geninfo/faq), and providing public speakers on UN issues. It also produces the *Yearbook of the United Nations*, the quarterly *UN Chronicle* magazine, and *The United Nations Today*.

Department of Management (DM)

(www.un.org/Depts/DGACM)

Under-Secretary-General

Ms. Angela Kane (Germany)

The Department of Management provides strategic policy guidance and management support to all entities of the Secretariat in three management areas: finance, human resources and support services. These fall under the purview of the Offices of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts; Human Resources Management; and Central Support Services.

The Department is responsible for formulating and implementing improved management policies in the Secretariat; the management and training of staff; programme planning, budgetary, financial and human resources management; and technological innovations. It also provides technical servicing for the General Assembly's Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary), as well as servicing for the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

As head of the Department, the Under-Secretary-General for Management provides policy guidance, coordination and direction for preparation of the Organization's medium-term plan and biennial budgets. She represents the Secretary-General on matters relating to management and monitors emerging management issues throughout the Secretariat. With authority delegated by the Secretary-General, the Under-Secretary-General also ensures the efficient implementation of the Organization's internal system of justice.

Department of Safety and Security (DSS)

Under-Secretary-General

Sir David Veness (United Kingdom)

The Department of Safety and Security was established by the General Assembly in January 2005 to meet the need for a unified and strengthened security management system. Its mandate is to ensure the safety and security of UN staff, operations and premises at UN Headquarters and main duty stations, as well as in the field.

The Department brings three previously separate entities together under a single management structure: the Office of the UN Security Coordinator, the security and safety services at each headquarters location, and the civilian security component of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. This provides a unified approach to the development and application of security policies and standards, as well as to coordination, communications, compliance and risk assessment.

During its first two years, the Department focused in particular on installing better access control systems, introducing a more analytical approach to the management of security risks, and setting up an effective compliance and evaluation structure. Its achievements to date have included a significant rationalization of policy, improved training of security personnel and other staff, and the development of coordination mechanisms for responding to a variety of crisis scenarios. And its “framework for accountability” defines the security responsibilities of everyone in the UN system — from the Secretary-General to the most junior staff member.

The Department’s long-term goals include making security considerations an integral part of the UN system’s planning and budget process, improving understanding and cooperation with host-country authorities, and creating a “culture of security” throughout the UN system. The creation of DSS has significantly strengthened the UN’s security management system.

DSS is the cornerstone of that system, which ensures that security concerns are mainstreamed into the planning and conduct of all UN operations. The development of this system has been facilitated by the Inter-Agency Security Management Network, which meets twice a year to recommend security policy applicable to all UN bodies participating in the Chief Executives Board (CEB).

Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing State (UN-OHRLLS)

(<http://www.un.org/ohrls>)

**Under-Secretary-General,
High Representative for the Least Developed
Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries
and Small Island Developing States**

Mr. Cheick Sidi Diarra (Mali)

The Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States was established by the General Assembly in December 2001 to help mobilize international support for implementation of the 2001 *Brussels Declaration and Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010*.

UN-OHRLLS assists the Secretary-General in ensuring the full mobilization and coordination of international support for the effective implementation of the *Brussels Programme of Action* and a number of related international commitments — including the *Almaty Declaration* and its Programme of Action, “*Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries*”. That Programme emerged from the first global conference to address the specific needs of landlocked developing countries, held at Almaty, Kazakhstan, in August 2003.

The Office also works to ensure implementation of the *Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States*, adopted at the 1994 Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, and the *Mauritius Strategy* for implementation of the Barbados Programme, adopted at an international conference held in Mauritius in January 2005.

UN-OHRLLS facilitates coordination within the UN system in implementing these programmes, and support the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly in assessing progress made. It also engages in advocacy and promotion of global awareness of these issues, in partnership with the relevant UN bodies, civil society, the media, academia and foundations.

The Office also prepared and coordinated the General Assembly’s High-Level Mid-term Review of the Implementation of the *Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries*, held on 18 and 19 September 2006.

Regional commissions

The United Nations regional commissions report to ECOSOC and their secretariats are under the authority of the Secretary-General. Their mandate is to initiate measures that promote the economic development of each region and strengthen the economic relations of the countries in that region, both among themselves and with other countries of the world. They are funded under the regular UN budget.

Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)

(www.uneca.org)

Set up in 1958, ECA carries out activities encouraging the growth of the economic and social sectors of the continent. It promotes policies and strategies to increase economic cooperation and integration among its 53 member countries, particularly in the production, trade, monetary, infrastructure and institutional fields. ECA focuses on producing information and analysis on economic and social issues; promoting food security and sustainable development; strengthening development management; harnessing the information revolution for development; and promoting regional cooperation and integration. Special attention is paid to improving the condition of women, enhancing their involvement and decision-making in development, and ensuring that women and gender equity are key elements in national development.

Executive Secretary: Mr. Abdoulie Janneh (Gambia)

Address: PO Box 3001, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Tel: (251-11) 551-7200; Fax: (251-11) 551-0365; Email: ecainfo@uneca.org

Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)

(www.unece.org)

Created in 1947, ECE is the forum at which the countries of North America, Europe and central Asia forge the tools of their economic cooperation. It has 56 member countries, including Israel. Priority areas include economic analysis, environment and human settlements, statistics, sustainable energy, trade, industry and enterprise development, timber and transport.

The ECE pursues its goals primarily through policy analysis and debates, and development of conventions, regulations and standards. The implementation of these instruments contributes to eliminating obstacles and simplifying procedures for trade in the region and with the rest of the world. Several aim at improving the environment. The Commission contributes to their implementation by providing technical assistance, in particular to countries with economies in transition.

Executive Secretary: Mr. Marek Belka (Poland)

Address: Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

Tel: (41-0-22) 917-1234; Fax: (41-0-22) 917-0505; Email: info.ece@unece.org

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

(www.eclac.cl, www.eclac.org)

Established in 1948, ECLAC works to coordinate policies for promoting sustainable economic and social development in the region. It collaborates with its 44 member states and 8 associate members in the research and analysis of regional and national development processes. Its mission includes proposing, evaluating and following up on public policy measures as well as providing assistance in areas of specialized information, guided by internationally agreed development goals.

ECLAC — the Spanish acronym is CEPAL — cooperates with national, regional and international organizations on subjects such as: agricultural development; economic and social planning; industrial, technological and entrepreneurial development; international trade, regional integration and cooperation; investment and financing; social development and equity; integration of women in development; natural resources and infrastructure; environment and human settlements; statistics; administrative management; demography and population policies.

Headquartered in Santiago, Chile, ECLAC has a subregional headquarters in Mexico City, for Central America, and another in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, for the Caribbean. It also maintains country offices in Buenos Aires, Brasilia, Montevideo and Bogota, as well as a liaison office in Washington, D.C.

Executive Secretary: Ms. Alicia Bárcena Ibarra (Mexico)

Address: Avenida Dag Hammarskjöld 3477, Casilla 179-D, Santiago, Chile

Tel: (56-2) 210-2000, 471-2000; Fax: (56-2) 208-0252, 1946; Email: secepal@cepal.org

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

(www.unescap.org)

ESCAP, established in 1947, has a mandate to address the economic and social issues of the region. It plays a unique role as the only comprehensive intergovernmental forum for all the countries of Asia and the Pacific. Its 53 member states and 9 associate member states represent some 60 per cent of the world's population. ESCAP gives technical support to governments for social and economic development. The assistance comes through direct advisory services to governments, training and sharing of regional experience, and information through meetings, publications and inter-country networks.

ESCAP executes programmes and projects to stimulate growth, improve socio-economic conditions and help build the foundations of modern society. Four regional research and training institutions — for agricultural development, agricultural machinery and engineering, statistics, and technology transfer — operate under its auspices. ESCAP also has a Pacific Operation Centre. Current priority areas are poverty reduction, managing globalization and addressing emerging social issues.

Executive Secretary: Ms. Noeleen Heyzer (Singapore)

Address: United Nations Building, Rajadamnern Nok Avenue, Bangkok 10200 Thailand

Tel: (66-2) 288-1234; Fax: (66-2) 288-1000; Email: escap-registry@un.org

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

(www.escwa.un.org)

Established in 1973, ESCWA facilitates concerted action for the economic and social development of the countries of Western Asia by promoting economic cooperation and integration in the region. Comprised of 13 member states, ESCWA serves as the main general economic and social development forum for the region within the United Nations system. Its programmes address such areas as economic development, social development, agriculture, industry, natural resources, the environment, transport, communications and statistics.

Executive Secretary: Mr. Bader Al-Dafa (Qatar)

Address: PO Box 11-8575, Riad el-Solh Square, Beirut, Lebanon

Tel: (961-1) 98-1301, or 1-212-963-9731, 9732 (Satellite, via New York);

Fax: (961-1) 98-1510; Email: Click "Contact Us" form on website.

International tribunals

International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY)

(www.un.org/icty)

Established by the Security Council in 1993, the Tribunal is mandated to prosecute persons responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in the former Yugoslavia since 1991. It has 16 permanent judges, 27 ad litem judges, of whom it can use up to 12 at any given time, and a staff of more than 1,140 from 81 countries. Its 2006-2007 budget was \$276.5 million.

Since its inception, more than 160 people have been publicly indicted. As of February 2007, 61 accused were in proceedings before the Tribunal, of whom 13 were before the Appeals Chamber and six remained at large. One hundred accused have been tried to date, including 48 convicted and sentenced, five acquitted, 11 referred to national jurisdictions, and 36 deceased or whose indictments were withdrawn.

President: Judge Fausto Pocar (Italy)

Prosecutor: Mrs. Carla Del Ponte (Switzerland)

Registrar: Mr. Hans Holthuis (Netherlands)

Headquarters: Churchillplein 1, 2517 JW The Hague, Netherlands

Tel: (31-70) 512-5000; Fax: (31-70) 512-5355

International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR)

(www.icttr.org)

Created by the Security Council in 1994, the Tribunal has the mandate to prosecute persons responsible for genocide and other serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in Rwanda during 1994, as well as Rwandan citizens responsible for such violations committed in the territory of neighbouring states. It has three Trial Chambers made up of three judges each, and an Appeals Chamber made up of seven judges — five of whom sit on any given case. It also has a pool of 18 ad litem judges, of whom it can use up to nine at any given time, and a staff of 1,042. Its 2006-2007 budget was \$269.8 million.

As of January 2007, the ICTR had handed down 25 judgements involving 31 accused. There were also 28 detainees on trial, nine awaiting trial, and seven whose cases were pending appeal; 18 accused remained at large. Those convicted include Jean Kambanda, Prime Minister during the genocide — the first head of government to be arrested and subsequently convicted for that genocide.

President: Judge Erik Møse (Norway)

Prosecutor: Mr. Hassan B. Jallow (Gambia)

Registrar: Mr. Adama Dieng (Senegal)

Headquarters: Arusha International Conference Centre, PO Box 6016, Arusha, Tanzania

Tel: (212) 963-2850 or (255-27) 250-4367, 4372; Fax: (212) 963-2848 or (255-27) 250-4000/4373

United Nations programmes and other bodies

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

(www.unctad.org)

Established in 1964 as a permanent intergovernmental body and subsidiary of the General Assembly, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development is the UN system's focal point for development and related issues in the areas of trade, finance, technology, investment and sustainable development.

UNCTAD's main goal is to help developing countries and transition economies use trade and investment as an engine for development, poverty reduction and integration into the world economy. In pursuing these objectives, UNCTAD conducts research, analysis and technical cooperation activities; organizes intergovernmental deliberations; and promotes interaction with other key development stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector.

UNCTAD's highest decision-making body is its quadrennial ministerial conference, at which the organization's 193 member states (including the Holy See) debate issues on the international economic agenda and set UNCTAD's mandate. The next conference, UNCTAD XII, will take place in Accra, Ghana, in April 2008. UNCTAD's executive body, the Trade and Development Board, meets annually in regular session to review the work of the secretariat.

The annual operating budget is about \$61 million, drawn from the UN regular budget. UNCTAD's technical cooperation activities, financed from extrabudgetary resources, amount to some \$31 million. Currently there are more than 280 such activities under way in about 100 countries — all of them demand-driven. Based in Geneva, UNCTAD has a staff of about 400. Its main publications are: the *Trade and Development Report*, *World Investment Report*, *Economic Development in Africa Report*, *Least Developed Countries Report*, *UNCTAD Handbook of Statistics*, *Information Economy Report*, and *Review of Maritime Transport*.

Secretary-General: Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi (Thailand)

Headquarters: Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

Tel: (41-22) 917-5809; Fax: (41-22) 917-0051; Email: info@unctad.org

International Trade Centre (ITC)

(www.intracen.org)

The International Trade Centre (ITC) is the technical cooperation agency of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) for operational, enterprise-oriented aspects of trade development. It supports developing and transition economies — and particularly their business sector — in their efforts to realize their full potential for developing exports and improving import operations.

ITC's goals are: to facilitate the integration of developing and transition economy enterprises into the multilateral trading system; to support national efforts to design and implement trade development strategies; to strengthen key trade support services, both public and private; to improve export performance in sectors of critical importance and opportunity; and to foster international competitiveness within the business community as a whole, and the small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) sector in particular.

The Centre's technical programmes include: strategic and operational market research; business advisory services; trade information management; export training capacity

development; sector-specific product and market development; trade in services; and international purchasing and supply chain management.

ITC's regular programme is financed in equal parts by WTO and the United Nations. The Centre also implements projects, at the demand of beneficiary countries, with voluntary contributions from donor governments and civil society institutions. During 2006, it delivered \$25.3 million in technical assistance to 153 countries. It has a headquarters staff of around 210, as well as some 800 consultants in the field.

Executive Director: Ms. Patricia Francis (Jamaica)

Headquarters: Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

Tel: (41-22) 730-0111; Fax: (41-22) 733-4439; Email: itcreg@intracen.org

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

(www.unodc.org)

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime — formerly called the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (established in 1997) — was created to enhance the United Nations capacity to address the interrelated issues of drug control, crime prevention and terrorism. It consists of a drug programme and a crime programme.

The drug programme is responsible for coordinating and leading United Nations drug control activities. It provides technical advice to member states on drug control matters; statistics on drug abuse, seizures and trends; and helps draft legislation and train judicial officials. The programme also works to educate the world on the dangers of drug abuse and to strengthen international action against production, trafficking and drug-related crime.

The crime programme is responsible for activities in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice. It works with member states to strengthen the rule of law and to promote stable and viable criminal justice systems. It pays special attention to combating transnational organized crime, illicit trafficking in human beings and firearms, financial crimes, corruption and terrorism.

UNODC has some 450 staff members, working at the national, regional and global levels through a network of 20 field offices worldwide, as well as liaison offices in New York and Brussels. Its budget for 2006-2007 was \$335.9 million. The bulk of this amount comes from voluntary contributions: \$189.2 million (57 per cent) for the drug programme and \$74.7 million (22 per cent) for the crime programme. The balance of \$72 million (21 per cent) is from the regular budget of the United Nations.

Executive Director: Mr. Antonio Maria Costa (Italy)

Headquarters: Vienna International Centre, Wagramerstrasse 5,

O Box 500, A-1400 Vienna, Austria

Tel: (43-1) 26060-0; Fax: (43-1) 26060-5866; Email: unodc@unodc.org

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

(www.unep.org)

The United Nations Environment Programme was founded in 1972. Its mission is to provide leadership and encourage partnerships in caring for the environment by enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.

As the principal United Nations body in the field of the environment, UNEP sets the global environmental agenda, promotes implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development in the United Nations system, and serves as an authoritative advocate of the global environment.

UNEP's governing body — the Governing Council — made up of 58 countries, meets annually. Programmes are financed by the Environment Fund, made up of voluntary contributions from governments and supplemented by trust funds and a small allocation from the United Nations regular budget. The Fund's budget for 2006-2007 was \$144 million. UNEP has a staff of approximately 800.

Executive Director: Mr. Achim Steiner (Germany)

Headquarters: United Nations Avenue, Gigiri, PO Box 30552, 00100, Nairobi, Kenya

Tel: (254-20) 762-1234; Fax: (254-20) 762-4489, 4490; Email: unepinfo@unep.org

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

(www.undp.org)

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the UN's global development network. It advocates for change and connects countries to knowledge, experience and resources, to help their people build a better life. UNDP is on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the expertise of UNDP and its wide range of partners.

World leaders have pledged to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, which include the overarching goal of cutting poverty in half by 2015. UNDP's network links and coordinates global and national efforts to reach these goals. Its focus is on helping countries build and share solutions to the challenges of poverty reduction, crisis prevention and recovery, environment and sustainable development, and democratic governance, including the governance of HIV/AIDS responses.

UNDP also administers the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the UN Volunteers (UNV). It is governed by a 36-member Executive Board, representing both developing and developed countries. Among its major publications is the annual *Human Development Report*.

Administrator: Mr. Kemal Derviş (Turkey)

Headquarters: 1 UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017, USA

Tel: (1-212) 906-5000; Fax: (1-212) 906-5364; Email: www.undp.org/comments/form.shtml

United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

(www.unifem.org)

The United Nations Development Fund for Women promotes women's empowerment and gender equality. It works to ensure the participation of women in all levels of development planning and practice. It also acts as a catalyst within the United Nations system for efforts to link the needs and concerns of women to all critical issues on the national, regional and global agendas.

Since its creation in 1976, UNIFEM has supported projects and initiatives throughout the developing world that promote women's human rights, as well as the political, economic and social empowerment of women. These have ranged from small grass-roots enterprises improving women's working conditions to public education campaigns and the design of new gender-sensitive laws. It also manages the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women.

UNIFEM works in autonomous association with UNDP. It reports to a Consultative Committee consisting of representatives from all regions and to UNDP's Executive Board. UNIFEM is represented at the regional and country levels by its 15 subregional and two country programme offices. Its total expenditures during 2006 were \$57 million.

Executive Director, Inés Alberdi (Spain)

Headquarters: 304 East 45th Street, 15th floor, New York, NY 10017, USA

Tel: (1-212) 906-6400; Fax: (1-212) 906-6705;

Email: www.unifem.org/about/contact_general.php

United Nations Volunteers (UNV)

(www.unv.org)

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is the volunteer arm of the UN system, supporting peace, relief and development initiatives in nearly 150 countries. Created by the General Assembly in 1970, it is administered by the UN Development Programme and reports to the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA. It works through UNDP country offices to send volunteers and promote the idea of volunteerism. As a volunteer-based programme, UNV is both unique within the United Nations family and in its scale as an international undertaking. It assigns mid-career professionals to sectoral and community-based development projects, humanitarian aid activities, and the promotion of human rights and democracy.

In 2005, its eighth consecutive year of growth, UNV mobilized some 8,400 volunteers of 168 nationalities, to serve in 144 countries. Nearly 70 per cent of UN volunteers are themselves citizens of developing countries, while the remaining 30 per cent come from the industrialized world. More than 30,000 persons have served as UNVs since 1971.

Graduate qualifications and several years' working experience are preconditions for recruitment. Contracts are normally for two years, with shorter assignments for humanitarian, electoral and other missions. UNVs receive a modest monthly living allowance. Funding comes from UNDP, partner UN agencies and donor contributions to the UNV Special Voluntary Fund.

Executive Coordinator: Mr. Ad de Raad (Netherlands)
Headquarters: Postfach 260 111, D-53153 Bonn, Germany
Tel: (49-228) 815-2000; Fax: (49-228) 815-2001; Email: information@unv.org

United Nations Population Fund
(UNFPA)
(www.unfpa.org)

Established operationally in 1969 at the initiative of the General Assembly, the United Nations Population Fund is the largest internationally funded source of population assistance to developing countries and those with economies in transition. It assists countries, at their request, to improve reproductive health and family planning services on the basis of individual choice, and to formulate population policies in support of efforts towards sustainable development. It is a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly and has the same Executive Board as UNDP.

UNFPA is wholly funded by voluntary contributions, which totalled \$389.3 million from 180 countries in 2006, plus \$216.2 million earmarked for specific activities, for a record-breaking grand total of \$605.5 million. Some 61.5 per cent of this assistance was used for reproductive health, including safe motherhood, family planning and sexual health, to refine approaches to adolescent reproductive health, reduce maternal disabilities such as obstetric fistula, address HIV/AIDS, and provide assistance in emergencies.

Another 21.3 per cent of this assistance related to population and development strategies. UNFPA aims to ensure a balance between development and population dynamics by providing information, influencing policy, and building national capacity in population programming. The rest is used for advocacy. UNFPA seeks to mobilize resources and political commitment for population activities relating to agreed international development goals, including those in the *Millennium Declaration*. Some 77 per cent of the Fund's 1,031 staff members work in the field, in 154 countries, areas and territories.

Executive Director: Ms. Thoraya Ahmed Obaid (Saudi Arabia)
Headquarters: 220 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017, USA
Tel: (1-212) 297-5000; see also www.unfpa.org/help/contact.htm

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
(UNHCR)
(www.unhcr.org)

Created by the General Assembly in 1950, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is mandated to lead and coordinate international action for the worldwide protection of refugees and the resolution of refugee problems. Since its creation, UNHCR has helped around 50 million refugees, earning two Nobel Peace Prizes in 1954 and in 1981.

UNHCR's most important responsibility, known as "international protection", is to ensure respect for refugees' basic human rights, including their ability to seek asylum and to ensure that no one is returned involuntarily to a country where he or she has reason to fear persecution. UNHCR also promotes international refugee agreements, monitors government compliance with international law and provides material assistance such as food, water, shelter and medical care to fleeing civilians. UNHCR seeks long-term solutions for refugees through voluntary repatriation, integration in countries where they first sought asylum, or resettlement in a third country.

By the end of 2006, UNHCR was looking after some 32.9 million people, including refugees, returnees and people displaced within their own countries. In 2006, for the first time since the turn of the century, the number of refugees increased by 12 per cent, to almost 10 million — largely as a result of the crisis in Iraq. At the start of 2006, UNHCR had more than 6,500 staff members working in 263 offices in 116 countries, plus 796 UN Volunteers, who were deployed to 70 operations. The agency also entered into 1,050 agreements with 645 national and international NGO partners.

UNHCR collaborates with other members of the UN system and various governmental and intergovernmental bodies. Its programmes are approved by UNHCR's Executive Committee, composed of 72 member countries as of May 2007. Programmes are financed by voluntary contributions, mainly from governments, but also from other groups including private citizens and organizations. UNHCR receives a limited subsidy — \$31.5 million in 2006 — from the UN regular budget, which is used exclusively for administrative costs. Funds available for 2006 — \$232 million short of actual requirements — amounted to \$1.22 billion.

High Commissioner: Mr. António Manuel de Oliveira Guterres (Portugal)

Headquarters: Case Postale 2500, CH-1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland

Tel: (41-22) 739-8111; see also www.unhcr.org/contact.html

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

(www.unicef.org)

Since its creation in 1946, the United Nations Children's Fund has evolved from an emergency fund to a development agency, committed to protecting the rights of every child to survival, protection and development. Its work is guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child — the most widely accepted human rights treaty in the world. UNICEF believes that caring for children and protecting their rights are the cornerstones of human progress.

UNICEF works in partnership with governments, civil society and other international organizations to achieve goals for children. It is engaged in every facet of child health, from birth through adolescence. It works to ensure that all children are immunized against common childhood diseases, and that children and their mothers are well nourished. It works to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS among young people, and helps children and families affected by the disease to live with dignity.

UNICEF promotes quality education for girls and boys. It advocates for a protective environment for children, especially in emergencies, to prevent and respond to violence,

exploitation and abuse. In all its work, UNICEF encourages young people to speak out and participate in the decisions that affect their lives.

The United Nations Children's Fund is governed by an Executive Board comprising delegates from 36 countries who govern its policies, programmes and finances. There are 8,200 UNICEF employees working in 157 countries and territories around the world. UNICEF is funded entirely by voluntary contributions; its total programme expenditures in 2006 totalled \$2.34 billion. While its strongest support comes from governments (58 per cent in 2006), UNICEF also receives considerable aid from the private sector — \$799 million — and from some 6 million individuals who give through 37 National Committees in the industrialized world.

In 1965, UNICEF was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Its major publication, *The State of the World's Children*, is released annually.

Executive Director: Ms. Ann M. Veneman (United States)

Headquarters: UNICEF House, 3 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017, USA

Tel: (1-212) 326-7000; Fax: (1-212) 888-7465; Email: www.unicef.org/about/contact.html

World Food Programme (WFP)

(www.wfp.org)

Established in 1963, the World Food Programme is the world's largest humanitarian organization. Funded entirely by voluntary contributions, WFP leads the global fight against hunger by providing emergency food assistance to the most vulnerable victims of calamity, whether natural or man-made. It also uses food aid, coupled with technical and logistical expertise and its significant presence in the field, to help eradicate the root causes of hunger. Together with its partners, WFP is doing its utmost to reach the first Millennium Development Goal — cutting the proportion of those hungry in half by 2015.

WFP provides food assistance, expertise and resources to build self-sustaining communities in the most impoverished and disadvantaged corners of the world, where most of the planet's 854 million undernourished people live. Through its global school feeding campaign, for example, WFP supplies daily meals to close to 20 million school children a year. In emergencies, WFP delivers fast, life-sustaining relief to victims of wars and civil strife, as well as to people hit by drought, flood, hurricanes, earthquakes.

In 2006, 27 per cent of WFP's resources were directed to emergency relief and 46 per cent to post-emergency protracted relief and recovery efforts. In all, WFP provided nearly 70 per cent of the world's emergency food aid.

WFP has a staff of 10,587, 92 per cent of whom work in the field. By land, sea and air, WFP delivered 4 million tonnes of food to 87.8 million people in 78 countries during 2006, at a cost of \$2.7 billion.

WFP is governed by a 36-member Executive Board which meets three times a year.

Executive Director: Ms. Josette Sheeran (United States)

Headquarters: Via C.G. Viola 68, Parco dei Medici, 00148 Rome, Italy

Tel: (39-06) 6513-1; Fax: (39-06) 6513-2840; Email: wfpinfo@wfp.org

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)

(www.unrwa.org)

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East was established by the General Assembly in 1949 to carry out relief work for Palestine refugees. In the absence of a solution to the Palestine refugee problem, its mandate has been periodically renewed, most recently until 30 June 2008.

UNRWA initially provided emergency relief to some 750,000 Palestine refugees who had lost their homes and livelihoods as a result of the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict. The Agency is now the main provider of basic services — education, health, relief and social services — to more than 4.5 million registered Palestine refugees in the Middle East, including some 1.3 million living in 58 refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the occupied Palestinian territory, comprising the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. It also distributes microfinance and microenterprise loans in the occupied Palestinian territory, Syria and Jordan.

Since September 2000, UNRWA has been providing emergency humanitarian assistance to mitigate the effects of the ongoing crisis on the most vulnerable refugees in Gaza and the West Bank. The Agency has also been responding to the emergency needs of conflict-affected refugees in Lebanon since 2006, including through its \$55 million northern Lebanon Emergency Appeal in 2007.

UNRWA's operations are supervised and supported by its headquarters in Gaza and in Amman, Jordan. The Commissioner-General, who reports directly to the General Assembly, is assisted by an Advisory Commission composed of Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Lebanon, the Netherlands, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Syria, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States. The European Community, League of Arab States and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) attend as observers.

UNRWA employs more than 28,000 staff, mainly Palestine refugees, and 113 international staff funded by the General Assembly. However, the Agency depends almost entirely on voluntary contributions from donor states for its regular and emergency operations. Most contributions are in cash, although 5 per cent is in kind — mostly food donations for distribution to needy refugees. UNRWA's budgetary expenditures totalled \$417.1 million in 2006.

Commissioner-General: Ms. Karen Koning AbuZayd (United States)

Headquarters (Gaza): Gamal Abdul Nasser Street, Gaza City

Tel: (972-8) 677-7333, or 1-212-963-9571/9573 (UN satellite);

Fax: (972-8) 677-7555

Headquarters (Amman): Bayader Wadi Seer, PO Box 140157

Amman 11814, Jordan

Tel: (962-6) 582-6171/6176; Fax: (962-6) 582-6177

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

(www.ohchr.org)

The General Assembly in 1993 established the post of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights as the official with principal responsibility for United Nations human rights activities. The High Commissioner is charged with promoting and protecting the enjoyment by all of civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. The mandate is carried out through the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

OHCHR acts as the focal point for all human rights activities of the United Nations. It prepares reports and undertakes research at the request of the General Assembly and other policy-making bodies. It cooperates with governments and international, regional and non-governmental organizations for the promotion and protection of human rights. It acts as the secretariat for the meetings of United Nations human rights bodies. OHCHR, which has some 576 staff, is organized into four branches:

- The Treaties and Council Branch services the human rights treaty bodies, the Human Rights Council, and the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture. It prepares and submits the documents for the various treaty bodies, processes communications submitted to them under optional procedures, follows up on recommendations and decisions taken at treaty-body meetings, and helps to build national capacities to implement treaty-body recommendations.
- The Special Procedures Branch provides support to the fact-finding and investigatory mechanisms of the Human Rights Council — including such thematic mechanisms as special rapporteurs, special representatives and thematic working groups — with a view to documenting human rights violations worldwide, enhancing the protection of victims, and promoting their rights.
- The Research and Right to Development Branch is responsible for promoting and protecting the right to development. To that end, it conducts research, provides support for the Working Group on the Right to Development, and seeks to mainstream human rights in development activities. It also services the UN Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, as well as the UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations.
- The Capacity Building and Field Operations Branch develops, implements, monitors and evaluates advisory services and other technical-assistance projects relating to human rights, at the request of governments. It also provides support to human rights fact-finding missions and investigations.

OHCHR's budgetary requirement for 2006-2007 came to \$245.6 million, of which \$85.6 million was provided by the United Nations regular budget, with the balance of \$160 million being sought through voluntary contributions.

High Commissioner: Ms. Navanethem Pillay (South Africa)

Headquarters: Palais Wilson, 52 rue des Pâquis, CH-1201 Geneva, Switzerland

Tel: (41-22) 917-9000; Fax: (41-22) 917-9012

Email: InfoDesk@ohchr.org [Type "Request for information" in "Subject" field]

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT)

(www.unhabitat.org)

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) — formerly known as the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements — promotes sustainable human settlements development through advocacy, policy formulation, capacity building, knowledge creation and the strengthening of partnerships between governments and civil society.

UN-HABITAT was established in 1978. It is the lead agency for implementing the "Habitat Agenda" and coordinating human settlements development activities within the United Nations family, focusing on two priority areas: adequate shelter for all; and sustainable urban development. UN-HABITAT is also responsible for helping the international community meet the Millennium Development Goal of improving the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020, and reducing by half the number without sustainable access to safe drinking water.

The Human Settlements Programme supports and works in partnership with governments, local authorities, NGOs and the private sector. Its technical programmes and projects focus on a wide range of issues, including slum upgrading, urban poverty reduction, post-disaster reconstruction, the provision of urban water and sanitation and the mobilization of domestic financial resources for shelter delivery. Most of these programmes are implemented in partnership with other bilateral support agencies.

UN-HABITAT is governed by a 58-member Governing Council which meets every two years. Expenditures of \$166.3 million were approved for the biennium 2006-2007, of which \$151.3 million (91 per cent) is reserved for programme activities, with the remaining \$15 million going for support activities and policy-making organs. The Programme produces two flagship publications: the *Global Report on Human Settlements*, a complete review of human settlements conditions worldwide, and the *State of the World's Cities*.

Executive Director: Mrs. Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka (Tanzania)

Headquarters: PO Box 30030, Nairobi 00100, Kenya

Tel: (254-20) 762-3120; Fax: (254-20) 762-3477; Email: infohabitat@unhabitat.org

United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)

(www.unops.org)

The United Nations Office for Project Services provides project management and procurement services with an emphasis on post-crisis situations, developing countries, and economies in transition. Its clients include United Nations bodies, international financial institutions, governments, and non-governmental organizations.

At the request of its clients, UNOPS provides the people, tools, and operational know-how needed to launch and implement large-scale, complex projects in a variety of settings. UNOPS has particular proficiency in construction, census and elections support, environmental rehabilitation, fund supervision, and mine action. It is the designated UN lead office for physical infrastructure projects in post-conflict settings.

UNOPS income for 2006 totalled \$53.4 million, with project delivery valued at \$706 million.

Executive Director: Mr. Jan Mattsson (Sweden)

Headquarters: Midtermolen 3, P.O. Box 2695, DK-2100 Copenhagen, Denmark

Tel: (45-3) 546-7511; Fax: (45-3) 546-7501; Email: hq@unops.org

United Nations University (UNU)

(www.unu.edu)

The United Nations University is an international community of scholars engaged in research, policy study, institutional and individual capacity development, and the dissemination of knowledge to further the United Nations aims of peace and progress. The Charter of the University was adopted in 1973, and UNU commenced operations in Tokyo in 1975. The University has 13 Research and Training Centres and Programmes around the world, and is supported by 14 UNU Associated Institutions, as well as hundreds of cooperating institutions and individuals worldwide.

UNU is financed entirely by voluntary contributions from governments, agencies, foundations and individual donors. It receives no funds from the United Nations budget: its basic annual income for operating expenses comes from investment income derived from its Endowment Fund. UNU's budget for the biennium 2006-2007 was \$88.0 million. At the end of 2006, it had 356 staff members from 68 countries, 24 per cent of whom were nationals of developing countries.

UNU is directed by a 24-member Governing Council that meets annually.

Rector: Prof. Dr. Konrad Osterwalder (Switzerland)

Headquarters: 53-70 Jingumae 5-chome, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150-8925, Japan

Tel: (81-3) 3499-2811; Fax: (81-3) 3499-2828; Email: mbox@hq.unu.edu

United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW)

(www.un-instraw.org)

The United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women was established in 1976 on the recommendation of the first World Conference on Women. It has the unique mandate to promote and undertake policy research and training programmes at the international level to contribute to the advancement of women; to enhance their active and equal participation in the development process; to raise awareness of gender issues; and to create networks worldwide for the attainment of gender equality.

UN-INSTRAW emphasizes the importance of research, training and knowledge management through a continuous cycle of analysis, learning and action. In this manner, research leads to the exchange of information, policy-formulation, and the design of training and capacity-building programmes.

The Institute conducts applied research programmes on gender, migration, remittances and development; gender, peace and security; and governance and women's political participation. It aims to use the results of research to make policies and programmes gender-responsive — applying lessons learned, and replicating best practices. Such an approach promotes flexibility in responding both to existing challenges and to new and emerging issues.

Director: Ms. Carmen Moreno (Mexico)

Headquarters: Calle César Nicolás Penson 102-A,
Santo Domingo, DN, Dominican Republic

Tel: (1-809) 685-2111; Fax: (1-809) 685-2117; Email: info@un-instraw.org

United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI)

(www.unicri.it)

The United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute collects, analyses and disseminates information, and carries out training and technical cooperation projects, with the aim of fostering the development of just and efficient criminal justice systems.

Established in 1968, UNICRI works to advance understanding of crime-related problems, support respect for international instruments and standards, and to facilitate judicial assistance, the exchange and dissemination of information; and cooperation in international law enforcement.

UNICRI structures its activities to meet the identified needs of member states. Its programmes focus on priorities in crime prevention and criminal justice, including security and counter-terrorism, international criminal law, judicial reform, juvenile justice, major event security, corruption, victim protection, organized crime, human trafficking, counterfeiting, cyber-crime, crimes against the environment and drugs.

The Institute designs and carries out training activities at the international and national levels in these fields, and promotes the exchange of information through its international documentation centre on crime prevention and criminal justice.

UNICRI's activities are entirely financed through voluntary contributions. It enjoys the support of member states, international and regional organizations, charities and foundations, as well as financial and in-kind contributions from public and private sector organizations.

Director: Mr. Sandro Calvani (Italy)

Headquarters: Viale Maestri del Lavoro 10, 10127 Turin, Italy

Tel: (39-011) 653-7111; Fax: (39-011) 631-3368; Email: information@unicri.it

United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)

(www.unitar.org)

An autonomous United Nations body established in 1965, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research has the mandate to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations through training and research. UNITAR provides training and capacity development to assist countries in meeting the challenges of the 21st century; conducts research on innovative training and capacity-development methodologies; and forms partnerships with other UN agencies, governments and NGOs to develop and organize training and capacity-development activities that meet countries' needs.

In 2006, UNITAR offered over 300 courses, seminars and workshops, benefiting over 10,000 participants — mainly from developing countries and countries in transition. Some 30,000 trainees also benefited from its e-learning courses.

UNITAR is governed by a Board of Trustees (*ad personam*). Currently, the Institute is fully self-funded and is sponsored by voluntary contributions from governments, intergovernmental organizations, foundations and other non-governmental sources. UNITAR's activities are conducted from its headquarters in Geneva, as well as through its New York and Hiroshima offices. It has a total staff of some 50 permanent professionals.

Executive Director: Mr. Carlos Lopes (Guinea-Bissau)

Headquarters: International Environment House, Chemin des Anémones 11-13,
CH-1219 Châtelaine, Geneva, Switzerland

By mail: UNITAR, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

Tel: (41-22) 917-8455; Fax: (41-22) 917-8047

United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)

(www.unrisd.org)

An autonomous United Nations body created in 1963, the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development engages in research on the social dimensions of contemporary development issues. UNRISD provides governments, development agencies, civil society organizations and scholars with a better understanding of how development policies and processes of economic and social change affect different social groups.

UNRISD relies wholly on voluntary contributions for financing its activities and has an annual operating budget of approximately \$4 million. In 2006, it received more than \$2.8 million in contributions, as well as \$1.3 million for specific projects. An 11-member Board approves its annual budget and research programme.

Director: Mr. Thandika Mkandawire (Sweden)

Headquarters: Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

Tel: (41-0-22) 917-3020; Fax: (41-0-22) 917-0650;

Email: info@unrisd.org

United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR)

(www.unidir.org)

Established in 1980, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) is an autonomous institute within the United Nations. It conducts research on disarmament and security, with the aim of assisting the international community in its disarmament thinking, decisions and efforts.

Through its research projects, publications, small meetings and expert networks, UNIDIR promotes creative thinking and dialogue on disarmament and security challenges. Its activities encompass diverse realities — from the intricacy of global diplomacy to local entrenched tensions and violent conflicts.

The Institute explores both current and future security issues, examining topics as varied as tactical nuclear weapons, refugee security, computer warfare, regional confidence-building measures, and small arms. It organizes expert-level meetings and discussions, implements research projects, and publishes books, reports and papers, as well as the quarterly journal *Disarmament Forum* (hardcopy and online).

UNIDIR relies predominantly on voluntary contributions from governments and private funders. It received nearly \$2.8 million during 2006, including more than \$2 million from governments and more than \$500,000 in public donations. The Institute's core staff is supplemented by visiting fellows and research interns.

Director: Dr. Patricia Lewis (United Kingdom, Ireland)

Headquarters: Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

Tel: (41-0-22) 917-3186 or 917-4263; Fax: (41-0-22) 917-0176; Email: unidir@unog.ch

Specialized agencies and other organizations

International Labour Organization (ILO)

(www.ilo.org)

The International Labour Organization is the specialized agency that seeks the promotion of social justice and internationally recognized human and labour rights. Established in 1919, it became the first specialized agency of the United Nations in 1946.

ILO formulates international policies and programmes to help improve working and living conditions; creates international labour standards to serve as guidelines for national authorities in putting these policies into action; carries out an extensive programme of technical cooperation to help governments in making these policies effective; and engages in training, education and research to help advance these efforts.

ILO is unique among world organizations in that workers' and employers' representatives have an equal voice with those of governments in formulating its policies. It is composed of three bodies:

- The International Labour Conference brings together governmental, employer and worker delegates from member countries every year. It sets international labour standards and acts as a forum where social and labour questions of importance to the entire world are discussed.
- The Governing Body meets twice a year and directs ILO operations, prepares the programme and budget and examines cases of non-observance of ILO standards.
- The International Labour Office is the permanent secretariat of the Organization.

Opportunities for study and training are offered at the International Training Centre in Turin, Italy. ILO's International Institute for Labour Studies' means of action include: research networks; social policy forums; courses and seminars; visiting scholar and internship programmes; and publications.

On its fiftieth anniversary, in 1969, ILO was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

ILO employs 2,500 officials and experts of more than 110 nationalities at its Geneva headquarters and in 40 field offices around the world. It adopted a programme and budget for 2006-2007 of \$594.3 million.

Director-General: Mr. Juan Somavía (Chile)

Headquarters: 4, route des Morillons, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland

Tel: (41-22) 799-6111; Fax: (41-22) 798-8685; Email: ilo@ilo.org

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

(www.fao.org)

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations is the lead agency for agriculture, forestry, fisheries and rural development in the UN system. It works to alleviate poverty and hunger by promoting agricultural development, improved nutrition and the pursuit of food security. Such security exists when all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

FAO offers development assistance, provides policy and planning advice to governments, collects, analyses and disseminates information, and acts as an international forum for debate on food and agriculture issues. Special programmes help countries prepare for emergency food crisis and provide relief assistance.

During 2006, FAO had over 1,600 field projects, totalling more than \$410 million. Of these, 444 were emergency operations amounting to more than \$180 million and accounting for nearly 45 per cent of total programme delivery.

FAO is governed by the Conference of member nations, which meets biennially. The Conference elects a 49-member Council that serves as the governing body between sessions of the Conference. FAO has a staff of 3,600, working at headquarters and in the field. Its regular programme budget for 2006-2007 was \$765.7 million.

World Food Day, observed annually on 16 October, marks the founding of FAO at a conference in Quebec City on 16 October 1945.

Director-General: Dr. Jacques Diouf (Senegal)

Headquarters: Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy

Tel: (39-06) 5705-1; Fax: (39-06) 5705-3152; Email: FAO-HQ@fao.org

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

(www.unesco.org)

UNESCO was created in 1946 to build lasting world peace based on the intellectual and moral solidarity of humankind. Its areas of work are education, natural sciences, social and human sciences, culture and communication.

Its programmes aim at promoting a culture of peace and human and sustainable development. They focus on: achieving education for all; promoting natural and social science research through international and intergovernmental scientific programmes; supporting the expression of cultural identities; protecting and enhancing the world's natural and cultural heritage; and promoting the free flow of information and press freedom, as well as strengthening the communication capacities of developing countries.

UNESCO maintains a system of 192 National Commissions and is supported by some 4,000 UNESCO Associations, Centres and Clubs. It enjoys official relations with nearly 340 international NGOs and some 25 foundations and similar institutions. It also works with a network of 7,900 educational institutions in 176 countries.

UNESCO's governing body — the General Conference — is made up of all 192 member states and meets every two years. The Executive Board, consisting of 58 members elected by the Conference, is responsible for supervising the programme adopted by the Conference.

UNESCO has a staff of 2,160 from some 170 countries — more than 680 of whom work in UNESCO's field offices worldwide. Its regular budget for 2006-2007 was \$610 million.

Director-General: Mr. Koïchiro Matsuura (Japan)

Headquarters: 7 place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07-SP, France

Tel: (33-0-1) 4568-1000; Fax: (33-0-1) 4567-1690; Email: bpi@unesco.org

World Health Organization (WHO)

(www.who.int)

Established in 1948, the World Health Organization promotes technical cooperation for health among nations, carries out programmes to control and eradicate disease, and strives to improve the quality of life. Its objective is the attainment by all people of the highest possible level of health.

WHO's strategic direction for the decade 2006-2015 includes: investing in health to reduce poverty; building individual and global health security; promoting universal coverage, gender equality and health-related human rights; tackling the determinants of health; strengthening health systems and equitable access; harnessing knowledge, science and technology; strengthening governance, leadership and accountability.

Its governing body, the World Health Assembly, is composed of 192 member states (including the Cook Islands) and meets annually. Its decisions and policies are given effect by the Executive Board, composed of 34 government-appointed health experts, which it meets twice a year.

WHO has Regional Offices in Brazzaville, Congo; Washington, D.C., USA; Cairo, Egypt; Copenhagen, Denmark; New Delhi, India; and Manila, Philippines. With a staff of some 3,500 health experts and other experts and support staff, WHO's regular budget for 2006-2007 was \$3.3 billion.

Director-General: Dr. Margaret Chan (China)

Headquarters: 20 Avenue Appia, CH-1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland

Tel: (41-22) 791-2111; Fax: (41-22) 791-3111; Email: inf@who.int

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

(www.imf.org)

Established at the Bretton Woods Conference in 1944, the International Monetary Fund:

- facilitates international monetary cooperation;
- promotes exchange rate stability and orderly exchange arrangements;
- assists in the establishment of a multilateral system of payments and the elimination of foreign exchange restrictions;
- assists members by temporarily providing financial resources to correct maladjustments in their balance of payments.

The IMF has authority to create and allocate to its members international financial reserves in the form of "Special Drawing Rights (SDRs)". The Fund's financial resources consist primarily of the subscriptions ("quotas") of its 185 member countries, which totalled SDR 216.7 billion as of end-March 2007, or about \$327 billion. Quotas are determined by a formula based upon the relative economic size of the members.

A core responsibility of the IMF is to provide loans to countries experiencing balance-of-payments problems. This financial assistance enables them to rebuild their international reserves, stabilize their currencies, continue paying for imports, and restore conditions for strong economic growth. In return, members borrowing from the Fund agree to undertake policy reforms to correct the problems that underlie these difficulties. The amounts that

IMF members may borrow are limited in proportion to their quotas. The Fund also offers concessional assistance to low-income member countries.

Its governing body, the Board of Governors, in which all member countries are represented, meets annually. Day-to-day work is conducted by the 24-member Executive Board. The International Monetary and Finance Committee, whose 24 members are on the Board of Governors, advises the Board on matters under its purview.

The IMF has a staff of nearly 2,720 from more than 165 countries, headed by a Managing Director who is selected by the Executive Board. Its administrative budget for the financial year ending April 2007 was \$911.9 million net of estimated reimbursements.

The IMF publishes the *World Economic Outlook* and the *Global Financial Stability Report* twice a year, along with a variety of other studies.

Managing Director: Mr. Dominique Strauss-Kahn (France)

Headquarters: 700 19th Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20431, USA

Tel: (1-202) 623-7300; Fax: (1-202) 623-6278; Email: publicaffairs@imf.org

The World Bank Group

(www.worldbankgroup.org)

The World Bank Group consists of five institutions: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (established in 1945); the International Finance Corporation (1956); the International Development Association (1960); the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (1988); and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (1966). The term “World Bank Group” encompasses all five institutions. The term “World Bank” refers specifically to two of the five — IBRD and IDA.

The common goal of the Bank is to reduce poverty around the world by strengthening the economies of poor nations. Its aim is to improve people’s living standards, in line with the Millennium Development Goals, by promoting economic growth and development. The Bank orients its lending activities and capacity-building activities based on two pillars for development: building the climate for investment, jobs and sustainable growth; and investing in poor people and empowering them to participate in development.

The World Bank is owned by its 185 member countries, which constitute its Board of Governors. General operations are delegated to a smaller group, the Board of Executive Directors, with the President of the Bank serving as Chairman of the Board. It has a staff of about 10,000 employees, working at headquarters and over 100 country offices.

In the fiscal year ending June 2007, the World Bank Group committed \$34.6 billion in loans, grants, equity investments, and guarantees to its members and to private businesses in member countries. Among its major publications is the annual *World Development Report*.

President: Mr. Robert B. Zoellick (United States)

Headquarters: 1818 H Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20433, USA

Tel: (1-202) 473-1000; Fax: (1-202) 477-6391; Email: pic@worldbank.org

International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)

(www.worldbank.org)

The articles of IBRD were drawn up in 1944 at the Bretton Woods Conference, and the Bank began operations in 1946. IBRD aims to reduce poverty in middle-income and creditworthy poorer countries by promoting sustainable development through loans, guarantees and non-lending — including analytical and advisory services. IBRD does not maximize profit but has earned a net income each year since 1948.

The Bank, which has 185 members, raises almost all its money through the sale of AAA-rated bonds and other securities in international capital markets. The amount paid in by countries when they join the Bank constitutes less than 5 per cent of IBRD's funds, but it has been leveraged into some \$433 billion in loans since the Bank was established.

In fiscal 2007, the Bank's new loan commitments amounted to \$12.8 billion, covering 112 new operations in 34 countries.

International Development Association (IDA)

(www.worldbank.org)

IDA helps the world's poorest countries reduce poverty by providing credits — loans at zero interest with a 10-year grace period and maturities of 35 to 40 years. Since its establishment in 1960, IDA has provided \$181 billion in interest-free credits to the world's 82 poorest countries, home to some 2.5 billion people. IDA commitments in fiscal 2007 reached \$11.9 billion, 25 per cent higher than the previous year, and the highest in IDA's history. The largest share, around 50 per cent, went to Africa, which has 39 of the world's poorest countries.

The bulk of IDA's resources come from donor government contributions. These contributions come mainly from richer IDA members, but donor countries also include some that are current recipients of IBRD loans. Donors are asked every three years to replenish IDA funds. There have been 14 replenishments since IDA was established. In February 2005, donor representatives ("IDA Deputies"), concluding negotiations on the 14th replenishment, agreed on a framework for the projected programme and its financing needs. That replenishment made possible the commitment of SDRs worth some \$32.5 billion to the world's poorest countries over the following three years — the largest expansion of IDA resources in two decades.

Negotiations for the 15th replenishment of IDA were launched in Paris in March 2007. One of the main issues under discussion is to ensure that IDA's future financial support for poor countries is not reduced as a result of debt cancellation under the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative.

In fiscal 2007, IDA lending totalled \$11.9 billion for 189 new operations in 64 countries. It has 166 members.

International Finance Corporation (IFC)

(www.ifc.org)

IFC, the private sector arm of the World Bank Group, is the largest multilateral source of loan and equity financing for private-sector projects in the developing world. It finances and provides advice for private-sector ventures and projects in developing countries, in partnership with private investors. Through its advisory work, IFC also helps governments create conditions that stimulate the flow of both domestic and foreign private savings and investment.

Its focus is to promote economic development by encouraging the growth of productive enterprise and efficient capital markets in member countries. IFC participates in an investment only when it can make a special contribution that complements the role of market investors. It also plays a catalytic role, stimulating and mobilizing private investment in the developing world by demonstrating that investments there can be profitable.

IFC is a separate entity within the World Bank Group, with 179 members, and its funds are distinct from those of IBRD. Since its founding in 1956, IFC has committed more than \$64 billion of its own funds and arranged \$27 billion in syndications for 3,760 companies in 140 developing countries. In fiscal 2007, its commitments amounted to \$8.2 billion of its own account and \$1.8 held in syndication for 299 projects in 69 countries. Its worldwide committed portfolio totalled \$25.4 billion for its own account and \$5.5 billion held for participants in loan syndications.

Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA)

(www.miga.org)

MIGA helps to encourage foreign investment in developing countries by providing insurance (guarantees) to foreign private investors against loss caused by non-commercial (i.e., political) risks — such as currency transfer, expropriation, war and civil disturbance. It also provides technical assistance to help countries disseminate information on investment opportunities.

MIGA's subscribed capital comes from its 171 member countries. MIGA has successfully promoted the flow of capital to developing countries. In fiscal 2007, it issued guarantees of \$1.4 billion. Since its inception in 1988, MIGA has issued nearly 900 guarantees for projects in 96 developing countries, worth more than \$17.4 billion, and facilitated several times that amount in foreign direct investment.

International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID)

(www.worldbank.org/icsid)

ICSID provides facilities for the settlement, by conciliation or arbitration, of investment disputes between governments and private foreign investors. It was established under the 1966 Convention on the Settlement of Investment Disputes between States and Nationals of Other States, which has been ratified by 144 countries as of May 2007. Recourse to the Centre is voluntary, but once the parties have consented to arbitration, neither can unilaterally withdraw its consent.

The Centre is an autonomous organization with close links to the Bank, and all of its members are also members of the Bank. Its Administrative Council, chaired by the World Bank's President, consists of one representative of each country that has ratified the Convention.

International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

(www.icao.int)

The International Civil Aviation Organization was created in 1944 to promote the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation throughout the world. It sets standards and regulations necessary for aviation safety, security, efficiency and regularity, as well as for aviation environmental protection. It serves as the forum for cooperation in all fields of civil aviation among its 190 Contracting States.

ICAO has an Assembly, its sovereign body, comprising delegates from all Contracting States, and a Council of representatives of 36 nations elected by the Assembly. The Assembly meets at least once every three years: it decides ICAO policy and examines any matters not specifically referred to the Council. The Council is the executive body, and carries out Assembly directives.

Its budget for 2007 was \$66.5 million. ICAO has over 700 staff members.

President of the Council: Mr. Roberto Kobeh González (Mexico)

Secretary General: Dr. Taïeb Chérif (Algeria)

Headquarters: 999 University Street, Montreal, Quebec H3C 5H7, Canada

Tel: (1-514) 954-8219; Fax: (1-514) 954-6077; Email: icaohq@icao.int

International Maritime Organization (IMO)

(www.imo.org)

The International Maritime Organization, which began functioning in 1959, is responsible for the safety and security of shipping engaged in international trade and for preventing marine pollution from ships.

IMO provides the machinery for governments to cooperate in formulating regulations and practices relating to technical matters affecting international shipping; to facilitate the adoption of the highest practicable standards of maritime safety and efficiency in navigation; and to protect the marine environment through prevention and control of pollution from ships.

More than 40 conventions and agreements and some 1,000 codes and recommendations have been produced by IMO and implemented globally.

In 1983, IMO established the World Maritime University in Malmö, Sweden, which provides advanced training for administrators, educators and others involved in shipping at the senior level. The IMO's International Maritime Law Institute (Valletta, Malta) was

established in 1989 to train lawyers in international maritime law. The IMO's International Maritime Academy (Trieste, Italy), established in 1989, offers specialized short courses in a variety of maritime disciplines.

IMO's governing body, the Assembly, consists of all 167 member states and meets every two years. It elects the 40-member Council, which is IMO's executive organ and meets twice a year.

IMO's budget for 2006-2007 is £49.7 million. It has a staff of about 300.

Secretary-General: Mr. Efthimios E. Mitropoulos (Greece)

Headquarters: 4 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7SR, United Kingdom

Tel: (44-0-207) 735-7611; Fax: (44-0-207) 587-3210;

Email: Click "Contact Us" on web site.

International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

(www.itu.int)

The International Telecommunication Union is an international organization within which governments and the private sector coordinate global tele-communication networks and services. Founded in Paris in 1865 as the International Telegraph Union, ITU took its present name in 1934 and became a United Nations specialized agency in 1947.

All the elements of ITU's work centre around the goal of putting every human being within easy and affordable reach of information and communication technology (ICT), and to contribute significantly towards the economic and social development of all people. A key priority lies in bridging the digital divide separating developed and developing countries by building ICT infrastructure; promoting capacity-building; and developing confidence in the use of cyberspace by enhancing online security through its Global Cybersecurity Agenda.

ITU's work includes developing the standards used to create infrastructure for the delivery of telecommunications services on a worldwide basis; promoting equitable management of the radio-frequency spectrum and satellite orbits to help bring wireless services to every corner of the world; and providing support to countries as they pursue telecommunication development strategies. It also focuses on strengthening emergency communications for disaster prevention and mitigation — particularly for poorer nations, which are hardest hit by natural disasters because of their fragile economies.

ITU is composed of 191 member states and nearly 750 sector members and associates (scientific and industrial companies, public and private operators, broadcasters, regional and international organizations). Its governing body is the Plenipotentiary Conference, which meets every four years, and which elects the 46-member ITU Council that meets annually.

ITU has 822 staff members of some 80 nationalities (as of January 2006). Its budget for 2006-2007 was CHF 339.4 million (around \$308.5 million).

Secretary-General: Mr. Hamadoun Touré (Mali)

Headquarters: Place des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland

Tel: (41-22) 730-5111; Fax: (41-22) 733-7256; Email: *itumail@itu.int*

Universal Postal Union (UPU)

(www.upu.int)

The Universal Postal Union is the specialized institution that regulates international postal services. Established by the Berne Treaty of 1874, it became a United Nations specialized agency in 1948.

The UPU plays a leadership role in promoting the continued revitalization of postal services. With 191 member countries, it is the primary vehicle for cooperation between postal services. It advises, mediates and renders technical assistance. Among its principal objectives are the promotion of universal postal service, growth in mail volumes through the provision of up-to-date postal products and services, and improvement in the quality of postal service for customers. In so doing, the UPU fulfils its basic mission of promoting and developing communication between all the people of the world.

The Universal Postal Congress is the supreme authority of the UPU. Meeting every five years, it examines strategic issues of concern to the postal sector and lays down the general programme of activities. The twenty-fourth Congress is to take place in Nairobi, Kenya, from 13 August to 3 September 2008.

UPU's annual budget is approximately CHF 37 million gross (around \$30.4 million). Some 230 people, drawn from more than 45 countries, work at the UPU International Bureau.

Director-General: Mr. Eduaordo Dayan (France)

Headquarters: Weltpoststrasse 4, Case Postale 3000, Berne 15, Switzerland

Tel: (41-31) 350-3111; Fax: (41-31) 350-3110; Email: info@upu.int

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

(www.wmo.ch)

The World Meteorological Organization, a United Nations specialized agency since 1951, provides authoritative scientific information on the state of the atmosphere, weather, freshwater resources, climate and related environmental issues.

Through international collaboration, WMO has developed and operates a global observing system and a network of global, regional and national centres, which provide weather, climate and hydrological forecasting services. This information system makes possible the rapid exchange of weather information and also promotes activities in operational hydrology.

WMO operates major programmes relating to weather, climate, atmospheric science, applied meteorology, the environment and water resources. These programmes provide the basis for better preparation and forewarning of most natural hazards, including heavy rain, strong winds, tropical cyclones, floods, sea surge, heat waves, droughts, El Niño and La Niña. They help save life and property, and improve our understanding of the environment and the climate. WMO has also drawn attention to issues of major concern, such as ozone layer depletion, global warming and diminishing water resources.

WMO has 188 members, comprising 182 states and 6 territories, all of which maintain their own meteorological and hydrological services. Its governing body, the World Meteorological Congress, meets every four years. The 37-member Executive Council meets annually.

WMO has a staff of around 300. Its budget for 2008-2011 is CHF 269.8 million.

Secretary-General: Michel Jarraud (France)

Headquarters: 7 bis, avenue de la Paix, Casa postale No. 2300, CH-1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland

Tel: (41-22) 730-8111; Fax: (41-22) 730-8181; Email: wmo@wmo.int

World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

(www.wipo.int)

The World Intellectual Property Organization was established in 1970 and became a United Nations specialized agency in 1974. Its objectives are to promote the protection of intellectual property throughout the world through cooperation among its 184 member states, and to ensure administrative cooperation among the Unions established to afford protection in the field of intellectual property — principally the Paris Union (“International Union for the Protection of Industrial Property” and the Berne Union (“International Union for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works”).

WIPO’s core tasks, as laid out in its 2006-2007 programme budget are: developing international laws and standards with respect to intellectual property (IP); delivering global IP protection services; encouraging the use of IP for economic development; promoting better understanding of IP; and providing a forum for debate on IP-related issues.

Intellectual property comprises two main branches: industrial property, chiefly inventions, trademarks, industrial designs and appellations of origin; and copyright, mainly of literary, musical, artistic, photographic and audio-visual works. WIPO administers 24 international treaties on industrial property and copyright (see www.wipo.int/treaties).

WIPO’s three governing bodies are: the General Assembly, comprised of WIPO member states which are members of the Paris and/or Berne Union, and which meets every two years; the Conference, comprising all member states, which also meets every two years; and the 82-member Coordination Committee, which meets every year.

WIPO is largely self-financing, with a budget of CHF 531 million for the 2006-2007 biennium. Some 95 per cent of that figure is generated by the services WIPO provides to users of its international filing and registration systems. The remainder is derived from revenues generated by WIPO’s arbitration and mediation services, the sale of publications, and relatively small contributions from member states (half of one per cent). WIPO has nearly 920 staff members from 84 countries.

Director-General: Dr. Kamil Idris (Sudan)

Headquarters: 34 chemin des Colombettes, PO Box 18, CH-1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland,

Tel: (41-22) 338-9111; Fax: (41-22) 733-5428;

Email: www.wipo.int/tools/en/contacts

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

(www.ifad.org)

Chronic hunger and malnutrition almost always accompany extreme poverty, and 75 per cent of the world's poorest people — almost 1 billion women, children and men — live in rural areas, depending on agriculture and related activities for their livelihoods. IFAD is an international financial institution and a specialized agency of the United Nations, dedicated to eradicating poverty in the rural areas of developing countries.

IFAD mobilizes resources from its 165 member countries to provide low-interest loans and grants to middle- and lower-income members to finance poverty reduction programmes and projects in the world's poorest communities. In 2007, IFAD adopted a debt sustainability framework based on a model developed by the International Development Association, to give grants instead of loans to countries with low debt sustainability. The framework is part of a unified effort by the world's largest multilateral financial institutions to ensure that essential financial assistance does not cause undue financial hardship for those countries most in need.

Partnerships are fundamental to IFAD's work. From its inception, IFAD has worked in partnership with national governments and international organizations. It also has strong relationships with national partners, including farmers' organizations and non-governmental organizations. Its partners in the international development community include other UN agencies, international financial institutions, research institutions and the private sector.

IFAD is financed by voluntary contributions from governments, special contributions, loan repayments and investment income. Since 1978, it has invested more than \$9.5 billion in 731 projects and programmes that have reached more than 300 million poor rural people, and partners have contributed \$16.1 billion in cofinancing. At the end of 2006, it was financing 186 ongoing programmes and projects worth \$6.2 billion, of which IFAD had provided \$2.9 billion and its partners about \$3.3 billion.

IFAD's Governing Council is made up of all 165 member states and meets annually. The Executive Board, which consists of 18 members and 18 alternates, oversees IFAD's operations and approves loans and grants. At the end of 2006, IFAD had 436 staff members.

President: Mr. Lennart Båge (Sweden)

Headquarters: Via del Serafico 107, 00142 Rome, Italy

Tel: (39-06) 54-591; Fax: (39-06) 504-3463; Email: ifad@ifad.org

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

(www.unido.org)

The mandate of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization is to promote industrial development and cooperation. Established by the General Assembly in 1966, it became a United Nations specialized agency in 1985.

UNIDO helps to improve the living conditions of people and promote global prosperity by offering tailor-made solutions for the sustainable industrial development of developing countries and countries in transition. It cooperates with governments, business associations and the private industrial sector to build industrial capabilities for meeting the challenges and spreading the benefits of the globalization of industry.

To support its services, UNIDO has engineers, economists and technology and environment specialists in Vienna, as well as professional staff in its network of Investment Promotion Service offices and field offices. These field offices are headed by UNIDO regional and country representatives.

UNIDO's 172 member states meet every two years at the General Conference, which approves the budget and work programme. The Industrial Development Board, comprising 53 member states, makes recommendations relating to the planning and implementation of the programme and budget.

UNIDO has more than 650 staff members, working at headquarters, 16 country offices and 12 regional offices. It also draws on the services of some 2,100 international and national experts annually in project assignments throughout the world. In 2006, UNIDO delivered technical cooperation valued at \$113.7 million. The value of its ongoing technical cooperation at year's end was \$494.6 million.

Director-General: Mr. Kandeh Yumkella (Sierra Leone)

Headquarters: Vienna International Centre, Wagramerstrasse 5

PO Box 300, A-1400 Vienna, Austria

Tel: (43-1) 26026-0; Fax: (43-1) 269-2669; Email: unido@unido.org

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

(www.iaea.org)

The International Atomic Energy Agency promotes the peaceful uses of nuclear energy for the benefit of humanity and guards against its use for military purposes. It is the world's foremost intergovernmental forum for scientific and technical cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and the international inspectorate for the application of nuclear safeguards covering civilian nuclear programmes. The Agency is also at the centre of international efforts to promote international cooperation on nuclear safety and security-related matters.

Established in 1957 as an autonomous agency under the aegis of the United Nations, it has 144 member states. It provides technical assistance to member states in need, focusing on the application of nuclear science and technology to sustainable development, according to priorities set by the states themselves — in areas including food and agricultural production, human health, industry, water management, improvement of the marine environment, generation of electricity and nuclear safety and security.

The IAEA monitors and verifies states' compliance with their non-proliferation obligations pursuant to bilateral agreements and international treaties, meant to ensure that nuclear materials and facilities are not diverted for military purposes. Over 200 IAEA inspectors regularly carry out inspections in more than 900 installations and other locations covered under the IAEA Safeguards Programme.

The Agency's governing bodies are: the General Conference, in which all member states are represented and which meets annually; and the Board of Governors, with 35 member states, which meets periodically throughout the year. The IAEA has a staff of 2,200 from more

than 90 countries. Its total regular budget for 2007 was EUR 283.6 million; the target for additional, voluntary contributions to the Technical Co-operation Fund was \$80 million.

Director General: Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei (Egypt)

Headquarters: PO Box 100, Wagramerstrasse 5, A-1400 Vienna, Austria

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Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO)

(www.ctbto.org)

The Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization was established on 19 November 1996 at a Meeting of States Signatories to the Treaty held in New York. As an international organization financed by the States Signatories, it consists of two organs: a plenary body composed of all the States Signatories — also known as the Preparatory Commission — and the Provisional Technical Secretariat. The main task of the Preparatory Commission is to establish the global verification regime foreseen in the Treaty, so that it will be operational by the time the Treaty enters into force.

The Commission has three subsidiary bodies: Working Group A, on administrative and budgetary matters; Working Group B, on verification issues; and the Advisory Group on financial, budgetary and associated administrative issues. Its budget for 2007 was \$48.3 million and EUR 48.6 million.

Executive Secretary: Mr. Tibor Tóth (Hungary)

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Tel: (43-1) 26030-6200; Fax: (43-1) 26030-5823; Email: info@ctbto.org

Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)

(www.opcw.org)

The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons monitors the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction. The Convention, which entered into force on 29 April 1997, is the first multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation agreement that provides for the global elimination of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction, under stringent international verification and within prescribed timelines.

The OPCW is composed of 182 member states. Since 1997, member states have verifiably destroyed more than 25,020 metric tonnes of chemical agents — over 35 per cent of the total declared quantity of more than 71,000 metric tons (as of September 2007). That includes the destruction of more than one third of the 8 million declared munitions. Of the 65 former chemical weapons production facilities declared by 12 states parties under the Convention, over 93 per cent have been either destroyed or converted to use for permitted purposes.

OPCW inspectors have conducted more than 3,000 inspections at military and industrial plants in 80 countries. These missions ensure that chemical weapons production facilities are

inactivated and destroyed or verifiably converted to permitted purposes. Inspectors also verify the destruction of chemical weapons through their presence at destruction facilities.

All OPCW member states are obliged to assist their fellow states parties if they are threatened or attacked with chemical weapons. To handle such a contingency, OPCW regularly tests and enhances its capacity to coordinate a swift and effective international response aimed at protecting lives, as well as to efficiently investigate any alleged use of chemical weapons. The OPCW also has a range of international cooperation programmes to facilitate the peaceful uses of chemistry.

The OPCW Technical Secretariat, based in The Hague (Netherlands), has a staff of over 500, representing some 70 nationalities. Its budget for 2007 was EUR 75 million.

Director-General: Mr. Rogelio Pflirter (Argentina)

Headquarters: Johan de Wittlaan 32, 2517 JR, The Hague, Netherlands

Tel: (31-70) 416-3300; Fax: (31-70) 306-3535; Email: media@opcw.org

World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (OMT)

(www.unwto.org)

Established in 1925, the World Tourism Organization is the leading international organization in the field of tourism. It serves as a global forum for tourism policy issues and a practical source of tourism know-how. Its membership includes 150 countries, seven territories as associate members, two observers, and more than 300 affiliate members representing local government, tourism associations and private-sector companies, including airlines, hotel groups and tour operators.

An intergovernmental body entrusted by the United Nations with the promotion and development of tourism, WTO became a specialized agency of the United Nations on 23 December 2003, by General Assembly resolution 58/232. Through tourism, WTO aims to stimulate economic growth and job creation, provide incentives for protecting the environment and heritage of tourist destinations, and promote peace and understanding among nations.

WTO's General Assembly, its supreme body, is made up of full, associate and affiliate members. It meets every two years to approve the budget and the programme of work, and to debate major topics in the tourism sector. The Executive Council is WTO's governing board, composed of 29 full members elected by the Assembly, and a permanent member, Spain; it meets twice a year. The six regional commissions — Africa, the Americas, East Asia and the Pacific, Europe, the Middle East and South Asia — meet at least once a year.

WTO has a staff of 90. Its budget for 2006-2007 was EUR 24.17 million.

Secretary-General: Francesco Frangialli (France)

Headquarters: Capitán Haya 42, 28020 Madrid, Spain

Tel: (34-91) 567-8100; Fax: (34-91) 571-3733; Email: omt@unwto.org

World Trade Organization (WTO)

(www.wto.org)

The World Trade Organization was established in 1995, replacing the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) as the only international organization dealing with multilateral rules governing trade between nations. It is not a specialized agency, but has close cooperative arrangements and practices with the United Nations and UN agencies.

The purpose of the WTO is to help trade flow smoothly, in a system based on multilateral rules agreed to by all its members; to impartially settle trade disputes between governments; and to provide a forum for trade negotiations. At its heart are some 60 WTO agreements, the legal ground rules for international commerce and trade policy. The principles on which these agreements are based include: non-discrimination (the “most-favoured nation” clause and the national treatment provision), freer trade, encouraging competition, and special provisions for less developed countries. One of WTO’s objectives is to gradually open trade for the benefit of all.

Since its establishment, the WTO has been the forum for successful negotiations to open markets in telecommunications, information technology equipment and financial services. It has been involved in settling close to 370 trade disputes, and continues to oversee implementation of the agreements reached in the 1986-1994 Uruguay Round of world trade talks. In 2001, at Doha, Qatar, the WTO launched a new round of multilateral trade negotiations known as the Doha Development Agenda. That round is still ongoing.

The WTO has 151 members. Its governing body, the Ministerial Conference, meets every two years; the General Council carries out the day-to-day work. WTO’s budget for 2007 was CHF 182 million. It has a staff of some 664.

Director-General: Mr. Pascal Lamy (France)

Headquarters: Centre William Rappard, Rue de Lausanne 154,
CH-1211 Geneva 21, Switzerland

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Email: enquiries@wto.org (First go to www.wto.org/english/inf_e/cont_e.htm)



Chapter 2



INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

One of the primary purposes of the United Nations is the maintenance of international peace and security. Since its creation, the UN has often been called upon to prevent disputes from escalating into war, to persuade opposing parties to use the conference table rather than force of arms, or to help restore peace when armed conflict does break out. Over the decades, the UN has helped to end numerous conflicts, often through actions of the Security Council — the primary organ for dealing with issues of international peace and security.

During the 1990s, the end of the cold war led to an entirely new global security environment, one marked by a focus on internal rather than inter-state wars. In the early 21st century, new global threats emerged. The attacks of 11 September 2001 on the United States clearly demonstrated the challenge of international terrorism, while subsequent events heightened concern about the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the dangers from other non-conventional weapons, casting a shadow over people throughout the world.

The organizations of the UN system mobilized immediately in their respective spheres to step up action against terrorism. On 28 September, the Security Council adopted a wide-ranging resolution under the enforcement provisions of the UN Charter to prevent the financing of terrorism, criminalize the collection of funds for such purposes, and immediately freeze terrorist financial assets — establishing a Counter-Terrorism Committee to oversee its implementation.

The UN has also reshaped and enhanced the traditional range of instruments at its command, strengthening its peacekeeping capacity to meet new challenges, increasingly involving regional organizations, and enhancing its post-conflict peacebuilding capability. Civil conflicts have also raised complex issues regarding the adequate response of the international community, including the question of how best to assist civilian victims of war — a concept known as the “responsibility to protect”. (See *box*)

To deal with civil conflicts, the Security Council has authorized complex and innovative peacekeeping operations. Since its establishment, the UN has played a major role in ending conflict and fostering reconciliation, including successful missions in El Salvador and Guatemala, in Cambodia and Mozambique, in Sierra Leone and Liberia and Tajikistan, to name but a few.

Other conflicts, however — such as in Somalia, Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia in the early 1990s — often characterized by ethnic violence and the lack of any internal power structure to deal with security issues, brought new challenges to United Nations peacemaking and peacekeeping.

Confronted with the problems encountered in these conflicts, the Security Council did not establish any new operation from 1995 to 1997. But soon the essential role of the UN was dramatically reaffirmed, as continuing crises in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, East Timor, Kosovo and Sierra Leone led the Council to establish five new missions as the decade drew to a close.

The Council has established 28 new peacekeeping missions since 1995, including the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) in 2000; the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) in 2003; the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB) in 2004; the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) in 2005; and the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) in 2006. Many of these new missions have already completed their mandates, including, most recently, the missions in the Central African Republic, Burundi and Sierra Leone.

On 31 July 2007, the Council authorized a joint United Nations/African Union hybrid operation in Darfur (UNAMID), to take necessary action to support implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement, as well as to protect its personnel and civilians, without prejudice to the responsibility of the government of the Sudan. UNAMID was to begin implementing its mandate no later than 31 December 2007.

On 25 September 2007, determining that the situation in the region of the border between the Sudan, Chad and the Central African Republic constituted a threat to international peace and security, the Council approved the establishment in Chad and the Central African Republic, in concert with the European Union, of a multidimensional presence intended to help create the security conditions conducive to a voluntary, secure and sustainable return of refugees and displaced persons. It decided that the multidimensional presence would include a United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT).

The experience of recent years has also led the United Nations to focus as never before on peacebuilding — efforts to reduce a country's risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities for conflict management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development. Experience has shown that the creation of lasting peace can only be achieved by pulling together all resources to help countries foster economic development, social justice, respect for human rights and good governance.

No other institution has the global legitimacy, multilateral experience, competence, coordinating ability and impartiality that the UN brings in support of these tasks. In addition to its complex operations in places such as Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Liberia and Kosovo, the UN has established special political missions and peacebuilding support offices in a number of other countries, including Afghanistan, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste. There are also UN political offices for Somalia, the Middle East, Lebanon, West Africa and Nepal.

The Peacebuilding Commission, which became operational in 2006, is a new intergovernmental advisory body of the United Nations specifically dedicated to helping countries make the transition from war to lasting peace. It aims to do so by bringing together all of the relevant peacebuilding actors, including international donors, the international financial institutions, national governments, troop-contributing countries and representatives of civil society; proposing integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery; helping ensure predictable financing for early recovery activities and sustained

financial investment over the medium- to longer-term; extending the period of attention by the international community to post-conflict recovery; and developing best practices on issues that require extensive collaboration among political, military, humanitarian and development actors.

The concurrent General Assembly and Security Council resolutions establishing the Peacebuilding Commission also provided for establishment of a Peacebuilding Fund and a Peacebuilding Support Office. (See *box, The New Peacebuilding Architecture*, and www.un.org/peace/peacebuilding)

The Security Council, the General Assembly and the Secretary-General all play major, complementary roles in fostering peace and security. United Nations activities cover the principal areas of conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, enforcement and peacebuilding. These types of engagement must overlap or take place simultaneously if they are to be effective. (For the UN role in maintaining peace and security, see www.un.org/peace)

The Security Council

The United Nations Charter — an international treaty — obligates member states to settle their disputes by peaceful means, in such a manner that international peace and security and justice are not endangered. They are to refrain from the threat or use of force against any state, and may bring any dispute before the Security Council.

The Security Council is the United Nations organ with primary responsibility for maintaining peace and security. Under the Charter, member states are obliged to accept and carry out its decisions. Recommendations of other United Nations bodies do not have the mandatory force of Security Council decisions, but can influence situations by expressing the opinion of the international community.

When a dispute is brought to its attention, the Council usually urges the parties to settle it by peaceful means. The Council may make recommendations to the parties for a peaceful settlement, appoint special representatives, ask the Secretary-General to use his good offices, and undertake investigation and mediation.

When a dispute leads to fighting, the Council seeks to bring it to an end as quickly as possible. Often the Council has issued ceasefire directives that have been instrumental in preventing wider hostilities. In support of a peace process, the Council may deploy military observers or a peacekeeping force to an area of conflict.

Under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Council is empowered to take measures to enforce its decisions. It can impose embargoes and sanctions, or authorize the use of force to ensure that mandates are fulfilled.

In some cases, the Council has authorized, under Chapter VII, the use of military force by a coalition of member states or by a regional organization or arrangement. But the Council takes such action only as a last resort, when peaceful means of settling a dispute have been

The New Peacebuilding Architecture

With the establishment in June 2006 of the UN Peacebuilding Commission, a new Peacebuilding Architecture — comprising the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) — was put in place within the organization. These three bodies work together to:

- design and coordinate peacebuilding strategies
- sustain peace in conflict-affected countries by garnering international support for nationally owned and led peacebuilding efforts
- provide effective support to countries in the transition from war to lasting peace.

The Peacebuilding Commission, a 31-member, intergovernmental body, is charged with bringing together all relevant actors to advise on and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery. Its standing organizational committee consists of members of the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly, and top providers of contributions, military personnel and civilian police to UN missions.

As the second pillar of the peacebuilding architecture, the **Peacebuilding Fund** — a multi-year standing fund for post-conflict peacebuilding, funded by voluntary contributions — aims to ensure the immediate release of resources needed to launch peacebuilding activities, as well as the availability of appropriate financing for recovery. The Fund, which is designed to provide the initial seed money for peacebuilding, had nearly \$184 million in commitments as of September 2007, towards and initial target of \$250 million.

The Peacebuilding Support Office, the third pillar of the peacebuilding architecture, manages the Peacebuilding Fund, supports the Secretary-General's agenda for peacebuilding, and serves as interlocutor between the UN system and the Commission. Its mandate includes assisting the Commission in designing strategies and working within the UN system to ensure those strategies are implemented.

exhausted, and after determining that a threat to the peace, a breach of the peace or an act of aggression exists.

Also under Chapter VII, the Council has established international tribunals to prosecute persons accused of serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, including genocide. Many of the recently established peacekeeping operations have been authorized by the Council under Chapter VII, meaning the peacekeepers may use force if needed to implement their mandates.

The General Assembly

The United Nations Charter (Article 11) empowers the General Assembly to “consider the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security”

and “make recommendations ... to the Members or to the Security Council or to both”. The Assembly offers a means for finding consensus on difficult issues, providing a forum for the airing of grievances and diplomatic exchanges. To foster the maintenance of peace, it has held special sessions or emergency special sessions on such issues as disarmament, the question of Palestine and the situation in Afghanistan.

The General Assembly considers peace and security issues in its First (Disarmament and International Security) Committee and in its Fourth (Special Political and Decolonization) Committee. Over the years, the Assembly has helped promote peaceful relations among nations by adopting declarations on peace, the peaceful settlement of disputes and international cooperation.

The Assembly in 1980 approved the establishment in San José, Costa Rica, of the **University for Peace**, an international institute for studies, research and dissemination of knowledge on peace-related issues.

The Assembly has designated 21 September each year as the **International Day of Peace**.

Conflict prevention

The main strategies for preventing disputes from escalating into conflict, and for preventing the recurrence of conflict, are preventive diplomacy and preventive disarmament.

Preventive diplomacy refers to action to prevent disputes from arising, to resolve them before they escalate into conflicts, or to limit the spread of conflicts when they occur. It may take the form of mediation, conciliation or negotiation. Early warning is an essential component of prevention, and the United Nations carefully monitors political and other developments around the world to detect threats to international peace and security, thereby enabling the Security Council and the Secretary-General to carry out preventive action.

Envoys and special representatives of the Secretary-General are engaged in mediation and preventive diplomacy throughout the world. In some trouble spots, the mere presence of a skilled special representative can prevent the escalation of tension. This work is often undertaken in close cooperation with regional organizations.

Complementing preventive diplomacy, *preventive disarmament* seeks to reduce the number of small arms in conflict-prone regions. In El Salvador, Sierra Leone, Liberia and elsewhere, this has entailed demobilizing combat forces as well as collecting and destroying their weapons as part of an overall peace agreement. Destroying yesterday’s weapons prevents their being used in tomorrow’s wars.

Peacemaking

Peacemaking refers to the use of diplomatic means to persuade parties in conflict to cease hostilities and to negotiate the peaceful settlement of a dispute. The United Nations provides various means through which conflicts may be contained and resolved, and their root

Responsibility to Protect

Should the international community intervene in a country to stop gross, systematic and widespread violations of human rights? The question was raised in 1998 by Secretary-General Kofi Annan, generating wide debate. In the wake of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes in Central Africa, the Balkans and elsewhere, he argued for agreement on legitimate and universal principles, within the framework of international law, for protecting civilians against massive and systematic human rights violations. Since then, it has become clear that the question is no longer whether, but when and how the international community should intervene to protect populations against these crimes.

World leaders gathered for the 2005 World Summit addressed **the responsibility to protect** in their comprehensive "Outcome Document". They declared that: "Each individual state has the responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. This responsibility entails the prevention of such crimes, including their incitement, through appropriate and necessary means. **We accept that responsibility and will act in accordance with it.**"

They went on to specify that: "The international community, through the United Nations, also has the responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means, in accordance with Chapters VI and VIII of the Charter, to help to protect populations from [these crimes].

"In this context, we are prepared to take collective action, in a timely and decisive manner, through the Security Council, in accordance with the Charter, including Chapter VII, on a case-by-case basis and in cooperation with relevant regional organizations as appropriate, should peaceful means be inadequate and national authorities are manifestly failing to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity."

They also highlighted the need to help states build capacity to protect their populations from these crimes, and to assist states which are under stress before crises and conflicts break out. (See General Assembly resolution 60/1 of 16 September 2005; and Security Council resolution 1674 of 28 April 2006, which addresses the protection of civilians in armed conflict and endorses these principles.)

These issues are relevant in establishing new UN missions, such as the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). The UN has also strengthened its ongoing human rights machinery, establishing the **Human Rights Council** in 2006 as a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly — to address specific human rights violations, promote the coordination and mainstreaming of human rights within the UN system, and to make recommendations on the further development of international human rights law.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has often expressed his intention to "operationalize" the responsibility to protect within the United Nations. To that end, he appointed Francis Deng as his Special Adviser for the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities in May 2007, later upgrading the position to that of Special Representative of the Secretary-General. And on 12 December 2007, he announced his intention to appoint Edward Luck to the newly created post of Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect.

causes addressed. The Security Council may recommend ways to resolve a dispute or request the Secretary-General's mediation. The **Secretary-General** may take diplomatic initiatives to encourage and maintain the momentum of negotiations.

The Secretary-General plays a central role in peacemaking, both personally and by dispatching special envoys or missions for specific tasks, such as negotiation or fact-finding. Under the Charter, the Secretary-General may bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter that might threaten the maintenance of international peace and security.

To help resolve disputes, the Secretary-General may use his "good offices" for mediation or to exercise preventive diplomacy. The impartiality of the Secretary-General is one of the United Nations great assets. In many instances, the Secretary-General has been instrumental in averting a threat to peace or in securing a peace agreement.

For example, action by the Secretary-General and his envoy helped end, in 1996, the 36 year civil conflict in Guatemala. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Secretary-General and his envoy helped negotiate the 2003 agreements that ended the country's civil war. Cases such as Tajikistan, El Salvador, Mozambique and Namibia reflect the many different ways the Secretary-General becomes involved as a peacemaker. Most recently, the Secretary-General has played a key role in the efforts to resolve the conflict in Darfur, in the Sudan, and the establishment of a new peacekeeping mission there — UNAMID.

Peacekeeping

United Nations peacekeeping operations are a crucial instrument at the disposal of the international community to advance peace and security. The role of UN peacekeeping was recognized in 1988, when United Nations peacekeeping forces received the Nobel Peace Prize.

While not specifically envisaged in the Charter, the UN pioneered peacekeeping in 1948 with the establishment of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization in the Middle East. Since then, it has established a total of 63 — operations — 50 of these since 1988.¹ On 1 October 2007, there were 17 active peacekeeping operations. (See *box*)

Peacekeeping operations are deployed with the authorization of the Security Council and the consent of the host government and/or the main parties to the conflict. Peacekeeping has

¹ The intervention in Korea in 1950 was not a United Nations peacekeeping operation. In June 1950, the United States and the United Nations Commission on Korea informed the United Nations that the Republic of Korea had been attacked by forces from North Korea. The Security Council recommended that member states furnish the necessary assistance to the Republic of Korea to repel the attack and restore peace and security. In July, the Council recommended that member states providing military forces make them available to a unified command under the United States; 16 nations made troops available. This force, known as the United Nations Command and authorized by the Council to fly the United Nations flag, was not a United Nations peacekeeping operation, but an international force acting under a unified command. The Soviet Union, which had been absent from the Security Council in protest against the Chinese Nationalist government representing China at the United Nations, deemed the Council's decisions illegal on the grounds that two permanent members (the Soviet Union and China) were absent. Fighting continued until July 1953, when an armistice agreement was signed.

Who commands peacekeeping operations?

Peacekeeping operations are established by the Security Council and directed by the Secretary-General, usually through a special representative. Depending on the mission, the force commander or the chief military observer is responsible for its military aspects.

The United Nations has no military force of its own, and member states provide the military and civilian personnel required for each operation. Peacekeepers wear their country's uniform and are identified as peacekeepers only by a United Nations blue helmet or beret and a badge.

traditionally involved a primarily military model of observing ceasefires and the separation of forces after inter-state wars. Today, it has evolved into a complex model of many elements — military, police and civilian — working together to help lay the foundations of a sustainable peace.

In recent years, the Council has introduced the practice of invoking the enforcement provisions in Chapter VII of the UN Charter when authorizing the deployment of certain UN peacekeeping operations, or mandating them to perform tasks which may require the use of force — such as the protection of civilians under imminent threat of physical violence. Traditionally, UN peacekeepers could only use their weapons in self-defence, but the more “robust” mandates under Chapter VII enable them to use force, for example, to protect civilians.

The military personnel of peacekeeping operations are voluntarily provided by member states and are financed by the member states, who are assessed under the peacekeeping budget. Troop-contributing states are compensated at a standard rate from that budget.

Peacekeeping operations were expected to cost some \$5.28 billion for the fiscal year beginning July 2006 — an historic high for UN peacekeeping, but still less than half of 1 per cent of world military spending. Operations are financed through the peacekeeping budget and include troops from many countries. This worldwide “burden-sharing” can offer extraordinary efficiency in human, financial and political terms.

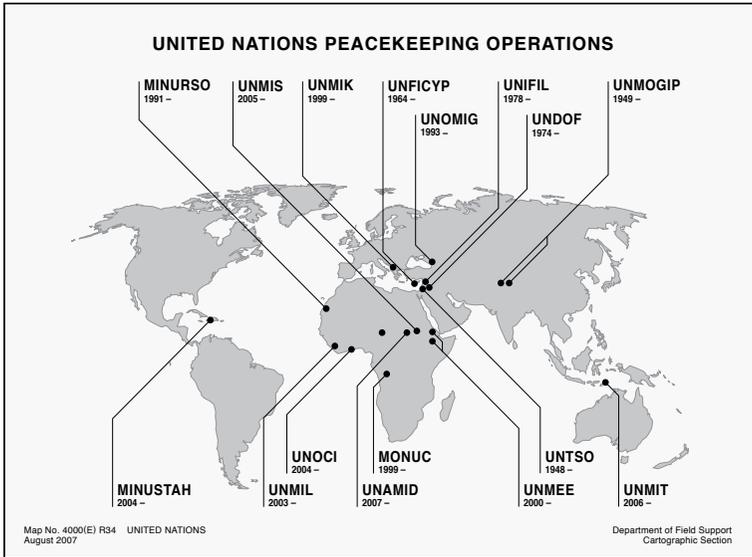
On 1 November 2007, there were 82,237 military and police personnel from 119 countries serving in UN peacekeeping operations. Since 1948, 2,415 peacekeepers had lost their lives in the line of duty.

Conflicts today are a complex mix. Their roots may be essentially internal, but they are complicated by cross-border involvement, either by states or by economic interests and other non-state actors. Recent conflicts in Africa have shown the deadly mix of civil strife and illegal export of natural resources — primarily diamonds — to fuel arms purchases. In addition, the consequences of conflicts can quickly become international because of illegal arms flows, terrorism, drug trafficking, refugee flows and environmental degradation.

United Nations peacekeeping operations*

- United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO, established 1948), in the Middle East (strength: military 152; civilian 225)
- United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP, 1949) (military 44; civilian 73)
- United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP, 1964) (military 872; civilian police 66; civilian 145)
- United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF, 1974), in the Syrian Golan Heights (military 1,047; civilian 140)
- United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL, 1978) (military 12,341; civilian 908)
- United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO, 1991) (military 214; police 6; civilian 247; UN Volunteers 24)
- United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG, 1993) (military 134; police 18; civilian 282; UN Volunteers 1)
- United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK, 1999) (military 40; police 1,953; civilian 2,412; UN Volunteers 132)
- United Nations Observer Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC, 1999) (military 17,359; police 1,049; civilian 3,021; UN Volunteers 571)
- United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE, 2000) (military 503; civilian 343; UN Volunteers 63)
- United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL, 2003) (military 12,438; police 1,148; civilian 1,453; UN Volunteers 238)
- United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI, 2004) (military 8,034; police 1,182; civilians 989; UN Volunteers 284)
- United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH, 2004) (military 7,064; civilian police 1,923; civilian 1,663; UN Volunteers 199)
- United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS, 2005) (military 9,288; police 664; civilian 3,196; UN Volunteers 250)
- United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT, 2006) (military 33; civilian police 1,546; civilian 1,134; UN Volunteers 124)
- African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID, 2007) (military 7,509; police 1,704; civilian 960; UN Volunteers 129) (when fully deployed: military 19,555; police 6,432; civilians 5,034; UN Volunteers 548)
- United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT, 2007) (military 14; police 71; civilian 32; UN Volunteers 16) (when fully deployed: "a maximum of 300 police and 50 military liaison officers and an appropriate number of civilian personnel")

* As of 1 April 2008. For all operations, past and present, see Part Three (Appendices).



United Nations operations, because of their universality, offer a unique legitimacy as a means of addressing conflicts. Their universality adds to their legitimacy and limits the implications for the host country's sovereignty. Peacekeepers from outside a conflict can foster discussion among warring parties while focusing global attention upon local concerns — opening doors that would otherwise remain closed for collective peace efforts.

Certain prerequisites for the success of an operation have become increasingly clear. These include a genuine desire on the part of the opposing forces to resolve their differences peacefully, a clear mandate, strong political support by the international community, and the provision of the financial and human resources necessary to achieve the operation's objectives. Most importantly, peacekeeping must accompany a political process; it must not and cannot substitute for one. (For UN peacekeeping, see www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko)

The international community has drawn lessons from past operations and is working to strengthen the United Nations peacekeeping capacity in a number of areas. A blueprint for reform was provided by the Secretary-General's Panel on Peace Operations, chaired by Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi, which issued its report in 2000. However, while reforms based on the Brahimi report aimed to make possible the launching of one new multidisciplinary peace mission per year, the three-year period ending in February 2007 had seen the start-up or expansion of nine field missions, with an additional two missions in their early stages.

As a result, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon proposed, and the General Assembly approved, a major restructuring of the United Nations peacekeeping apparatus, through the creation of a new **Department of Field Support (DFS)**. Formally established by the Assembly in June 2007, DFS is charged with planning, deploying and sustaining UN peacekeeping missions, while the **Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)** focuses on such matters as

strategic oversight and operational political guidance. These changes were to be phased in over a period of 12 months.

The Under-Secretary-General in charge of DFS reports to and receives direction from the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, in order to help ensure unity of command in UN peacekeeping.²

Peacekeeping operations can take many forms. They are constantly evolving in the light of changing circumstances. Among the tasks discharged by peacekeeping operations over the years are:

- *Maintenance of ceasefires and separation of forces.* By providing “breathing space”, an operation based on a limited agreement between parties can foster an atmosphere conducive to negotiations.
- *Protection of humanitarian operations.* In many conflicts, civilian populations have been deliberately targeted as a means to gain political ends. In such situations, peacekeepers have been asked to provide protection and support for humanitarian operations. However, such tasks can place peacekeepers in difficult political positions, and can lead to threats to their security.
- *Implementation of a comprehensive peace settlement.* Complex, multidimensional operations, deployed on the basis of comprehensive peace agreements, can assist in such diverse tasks as providing humanitarian assistance, monitoring human rights, observing elections and coordinating support for economic reconstruction.

No catalogue of such roles can be exhaustive. Future conflicts are likely to continue to present complex challenges to the international community. An effective response will require courageous and imaginative use of the tools for peace.

Cooperating with regional and collective security organizations. In the search for peace, the United Nations has been increasingly cooperating with regional organizations and other actors and mechanisms provided for in Chapter VIII of the Charter.

It has worked closely with the Organization of American States (OAS) in Haiti; the European Union (EU) in the former Yugoslavia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo; the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in Liberia and Sierra Leone; and the African Union (AU) in Western Sahara, the Great Lakes region and Darfur — to name just a few.³

United Nations military observers have cooperated with peacekeeping forces of regional organizations in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Georgia and Tajikistan; and forces of the

² The Secretary-General’s original detailed proposals are contained in his “Comprehensive report on strengthening the capacity of the United Nations to manage and sustain peace operations”, of 13 April 2007 (document A/61/858).

³ The Organization of African Union (OAU), originally established in 1963 to promote unity, solidarity and international cooperation among the newly independent African states, was reconstituted on 10 July 2002 as the African Union (AU) (www.african-union.org). Headquartered in Ethiopia, it has 53 members and is modelled after the European Union (EU) (<http://europa.eu>).

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) work alongside UN personnel in Kosovo and Afghanistan.

This is a welcome development, insofar as the global demand for peace operations now outstrips the capacity of any single actor, including the UN. Efforts by regional actors to develop their own ability to plan, manage and sustain peace operations give a greater depth to response options. This has created new opportunities for the development of a more flexible and responsive system that is better able to address the complex challenges posed by violent internal conflict.

Enforcement

Under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Security Council can take enforcement measures to maintain or restore international peace and security. Such measures range from economic sanctions to international military action.

Sanctions

The Council has resorted to mandatory sanctions as an enforcement tool when peace was threatened and diplomatic efforts had failed. Sanctions have been imposed against Iraq, the former Yugoslavia, Libya, Haiti, Liberia, Rwanda, Somalia, UNITA forces in Angola, Sudan, Sierra Leone, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (including Kosovo), Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Eritrea, Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The range of sanctions has included comprehensive economic and trade sanctions, or more specific measures such as arms embargoes, travel bans and financial or diplomatic restrictions.

The use of sanctions seeks to apply pressure on a state or entity to comply with the objectives set by the Security Council without resorting to the use of force. Sanctions thus offer the Council an important tool to enforce its decisions. The universal character of the UN makes it an especially appropriate body to establish and monitor sanctions.

At the same time, many states and humanitarian organizations have expressed concerns at the possible adverse impact of sanctions on the most vulnerable segments of the civilian population, such as the elderly, the disabled, refugees or mothers with children. Concerns have also been expressed at the negative economic, social and even political impact sanctions can have on the economies of third or neighbouring countries, where trade and economic relations with the sanctioned state are interrupted.

It is increasingly accepted that the design and application of sanctions need to be improved. The negative effects of sanctions can be reduced either by incorporating humanitarian exceptions directly into Security Council resolutions, or by better targeting them. So-called “smart sanctions” — which seek to pressure those in power rather than the population at large, thus reducing humanitarian costs — have been gaining support. Smart sanctions may, for instance, involve freezing the financial assets and blocking the financial transactions of elites or entities whose illicit activities triggered sanctions in the first place.

United Nations Political and Peacebuilding Missions*

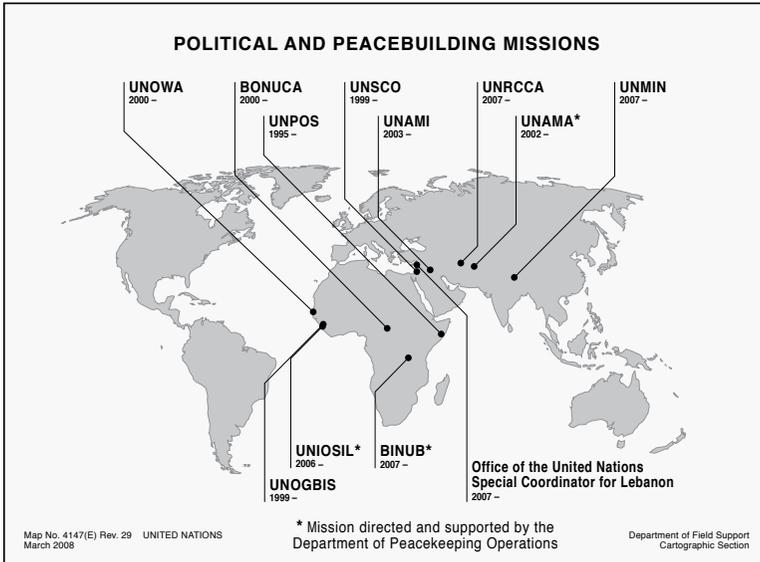
- United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS, 1995) (civilian 28)
- United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS, 1999) (military advisers 2; police adviser 1; civilian 26; UN Volunteers 1)
- United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East (UNSCO, 1999) (civilian 50)
- United Nations Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BONUCA, 2000) (military advisers 5; police 6; civilian 79; UN Volunteers 3)
- Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa (2001) (civilian 17)
- United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA, 2002) (military observers 14; police 3; civilian 1,291; UN Volunteers 35)
- United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI, 2003) (based in Iraq, Jordan and Kuwait) (military 224; civilian 632) (Authorized strength: 1,014)
- United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL, 2006) (military observers 14; police 21; civilian 277; UN Volunteers 23)
- United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB, 2007) (military observers 8; police 10; civilian 358; UN Volunteers 49)
- United Nations Political Mission in Nepal (UNMIN, 2007) (military observers 146; police 4; civilian 459; UN Volunteers 247)
- United Nations Special Coordinator of the Secretary-General for Lebanon (2007) (civilian 31)
- United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA, 2007) (Proposed staffing complement 19)

* As of 1 April 2008.

Authorizing military action

When peacemaking efforts fail, stronger action by member states may be authorized under Chapter VII of the Charter. The Security Council has authorized coalitions of member states to use “all necessary means”, including military action, to deal with a conflict — as it did to restore the sovereignty of Kuwait after its invasion by Iraq (1991); to establish a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia (1992); to contribute to the protection of civilians at risk in Rwanda (1994); to restore the democratically elected government in Haiti (1994); to protect humanitarian operations in Albania (1997); and to restore peace and security in East Timor (1999 and 2006).

These actions, though sanctioned by the Security Council, were entirely under the control of the participating states. They were not United Nations peacekeeping operations — which are established by the Security Council and directed by the Secretary-General.



Peacebuilding

For the United Nations, peacebuilding refers to efforts to assist countries and regions in their transitions from war to peace, including activities and programmes to support and strengthen these transitions. A peacebuilding process normally begins with the signing of a peace agreement by former warring parties and a United Nations role in facilitating its implementation. This may include a continued diplomatic role for the UN, to ensure that difficulties are overcome through negotiation rather than resort to arms.

It may also include various types of assistance — such as the deployment of military forces as peacekeepers; the repatriation and reintegration of refugees; the holding of elections; and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of soldiers. At the heart of peacebuilding is the attempt to build a new and legitimate state, one which will have the capacity to peacefully manage disputes, protect its civilians and ensure respect for basic human rights.

Peacebuilding involves action by a wide array of organizations of the UN system, including the World Bank, regional economic and other organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local citizens' groups. Peacebuilding has played a prominent role in United Nations operations in Cambodia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mozambique, Liberia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, as well as more recently in Afghanistan, Burundi, Iraq and Sierra Leone. An example of inter-state peacebuilding has been the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Electoral assistance

The United Nations broke new ground in 1989, when it supervised the entire election process that led to the independence of Namibia. Since then, the UN, at the request of

An interim administrator

The United Nations has sometimes played a role in helping to administer countries in transition. Requested to step in after a conflict, the Organization has carried out wide-ranging tasks in this new form of peacebuilding — on occasion taking up the full range of government powers while working with local political and civil leaders to build a self-sustaining government.

An example of such an administrative role took place in Cambodia in 1992–1993, following years of civil war. As specified in the 1991 peace agreement, the Security Council established the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia, which ran key sectors of the country's administration. After the 1993 elections, the mission relinquished its powers to the new government.

Another peacekeeping operation with administrative responsibilities was the United Nations Transitional Authority in Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium, which was deployed from 1996 to 1998 to assist in the peaceful integration of that area into Croatia.

In 1999, the Security Council established the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, with legislative, executive and judiciary powers. The mission has been running the administration of the province, but progressively turning over these functions to authorities in Kosovo, pending its final status.

Also in 1999, the Security Council established the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor, with legislative and executive authority. The mission helped develop social services, assist in reconstruction and build capacity towards nationhood. The Territory attained independence in May 2002 as Timor-Leste.

governments, has assisted with elections in countries such as Nicaragua (1990), Angola (1992), Cambodia (1993), El Salvador, South Africa and Mozambique (1994), Eastern Slavonia (Croatia) (1997), the Central African Republic (1998 and 1999), Afghanistan (2004 and 2005), Iraq and Liberia (2005), and Haiti and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (2006). It also observed the 1993 referendum in Eritrea, and organized and conducted the 1999 popular consultation in East Timor and its 2001 and 2002 elections, which led to the independence of East Timor as Timor-Leste, as well as its elections in 2007.

The degree and type of United Nations involvement depends upon such factors as the requests received from governments, provisions of peace agreements, or mandates from the General Assembly or the Security Council. The UN has played a variety of roles, ranging from technical assistance to the actual conduct of the electoral process. In some cases, the UN will coordinate the activities of international observers. Typically, such observers follow the registration of voters, the electoral campaign and the organization of the polls.

Since 1992, the United Nations has provided various forms of electoral assistance to more than 107 countries — including advisory services, logistics, training, civic education, computer applications and short-term observation. The **Electoral Assistance Division** in the Department of Political Affairs (www.un.org/Depts/dpa/ead) serves as the focal point for electoral assistance within the UN system.

In recent years, the Division has increasingly been called upon to provide support and guidance for electoral processes as key elements of UN-brokered peace negotiations, or in the context of peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts. The UN Development Programme provides technical support to the election process, helps countries establish electoral structures, and often coordinates UN electoral assistance in the field. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights helps to train election officials, establish guidelines for drafting electoral laws and procedures, and set up information activities on human rights and elections.

Building peace through development

A central tool of United Nations action to consolidate peace is development assistance. Many organizations — including UNDP, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) — play roles in the recovery stage, which is crucial for providing opportunities for displaced persons and restoring confidence in national and local institutions.

The UN can help repatriate refugees, clear landmines, repair infrastructure, mobilize resources and stimulate economic recovery. While war is the worst enemy of development, a healthy and balanced development is the best form of conflict prevention.

United Nations action for peace

Africa

Southern Africa

At the end of the 1980s, with the cold war waning, the United Nations was able to reap the fruits of many years of efforts aimed at ending wars that had plagued southern Africa. The decline of the apartheid regime in South Africa, whose influence extended to the bordering “frontline” states, and which had supported opposition forces in Angola and Mozambique, was a major factor in these efforts.

In 1988, South Africa agreed to cooperate with the Secretary-General to ensure the independence of **Namibia**. In 1992, the government of **Mozambique** and the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) signed a peace agreement to end a long and debilitating civil war. As part of the agreement, the United Nations Operation in Mozambique, deployed in 1993, successfully monitored the ceasefire, the demobilization of forces and the country’s first multiparty elections, held in 1994.

Angola. An intermittent yet devastating civil war in Angola, between the government and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), had plagued the country since its independence from Portugal in 1975. The UN played an important role in ending the conflict — through such efforts as mediation by the Secretary-General and his envoys, the organization of peace talks, the imposition of a Security Council arms and oil embargo and travel restrictions against UNITA, and the monitoring of national elections.

Africa: a United Nations priority

Africa remains an area of continuing major focus and action by the United Nations. The Organization has addressed the challenge posed by protracted conflicts and longstanding disputes on the continent in innovative ways and at the highest level. In their *Millennium Declaration* in September 2000, world leaders resolved to give full support, including special measures to help Africa tackle its peace and development issues. UN action for Africa over the years has included its campaign against apartheid in South Africa, active support for Namibia's independence, and some 25 peacekeeping operations in various countries on the continent.

Among these, a UN mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea helps maintain peace between those two countries. UN forces in Côte d'Ivoire since 2003 support peace agreements between divided parts of the country. A mission deployed in 2005 works to support the comprehensive peace agreement between north and south Sudan. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a major peacekeeping mission helped unify that giant country, which in 2006 enjoyed its first democratic elections since independence. In Liberia, a UN operation is helping that country restore stability and reconciliation after a 14-year civil war. And new peacekeeping operations have been authorized for Darfur, and for the Central African Republic and Chad.

In a 1998 report on the causes of conflict in Africa, the Secretary-General urged African nations to rely on political rather than military responses; embrace good governance, respect for human rights, democratization and accountable public administration; and enact reforms to promote economic growth. Subsequently, the Security Council adopted resolutions on the destabilizing effects of illicit arms flows, on arms embargoes, and on conflict prevention in Africa. And in January 2000, it held a month-long series of meetings on Africa, addressing such issues as conflict resolution, HIV/AIDS, refugees and internally displaced persons, and UN peace efforts.

The Secretary-General and his special representatives, advisers and envoys remain actively engaged in UN action for Africa, and the UN continues to act in close collaboration with the African Union and subregional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

And since 2003, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA) has been working to enhance international support for African development and security, improve coordination of UN system support, and facilitate global deliberations on Africa, particularly with respect to a strategic framework adopted by African leaders in 2001 — the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

(For additional information, see www.un.org/africa/osaa).

The Security Council established several successive peacekeeping and political missions in Angola. The first, in 1989, monitored the withdrawal of pro-government Cuban troops from the country. The second, starting in 1991, sought to monitor a ceasefire, verify demobilization of combatants, and observe the 1992 elections. But when the election results were rejected by UNITA, the country again plunged into war.

Mediation by the Secretary-General's special representative, Alioune Blondin Beye, resulted in the 1994 Lusaka Protocol — and a fragile peace. The accord provided for a ceasefire and for UNITA's integration into the government and the armed forces. A third mission was established to support the accord and to help the parties to achieve peace and national reconciliation.

The Secretary-General visited Angola in 1997 to promote reconciliation and the installation of a government of national unity and reconciliation, which was inaugurated in April 1997. Also during 1997, the **United Nations Observer Mission in Angola (MONUA)** was established to help restore peace and assist in the transition. But after four years of relative peace, the conflict flared up again in December 1998, exacting a heavy toll on the civilian population. The Security Council strengthened sanctions against UNITA for failing to meet its obligations under the Lusaka peace accord.

On 26 December 1998, a UN charter flight crashed in an area of military operations; a week later, another UN charter plane crashed under fire in the same area. All 15 passengers and 8 crew members were killed. The Council repeated that the main responsibility for the deterioration of the peace process lay with UNITA. In February 1999, it allowed MONUA's mandate to expire. Nevertheless, in October, it established the **United Nations Office in Angola (UNOA)**, and a representative of the Secretary-General was appointed to explore measures to restore peace and assist in capacity-building, humanitarian assistance and the promotion of human rights.

The protracted war in Angola came to a swift end when UNITA founder and leader Jonas Savimbi was killed in combat with government forces on 22 February 2002. UNITA and the government's armed forces agreed to a ceasefire in March and, in April, signed a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at completing the remaining provisions of the Lusaka Protocol.

This led to a slight expansion of the UN's political presence, with the establishment in August of the **United Nations Mission to Angola (UNMA)** — to assist the parties in completing the remaining tasks of the Lusaka Protocol, and to assist the government with elections, promoting human rights, enhancing the rule of law, supporting reintegration of demobilized soldiers and promoting economic recovery.

By December 2002, the Security Council lifted all sanctions it had imposed on UNITA over the previous nine years. By early 2003, the remaining tasks of the Lusaka Protocol had been implemented. UNMA was dissolved, and responsibility for all its remaining activities was transferred to a strengthened office of the UN resident coordinator.

Great Lakes region of Africa

Rwanda. United Nations involvement in Rwanda began in 1993, when Rwanda and Uganda requested the deployment of military observers along their common border to prevent military use of the area by the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF). In response, the Security Council established the **United Nations Observer Mission Uganda-Rwanda (UNOMUR)**.

Fighting had broken out in Rwanda in 1990 between the mainly Hutu government and the Tutsi-led RPF, operating from Uganda. A 1993 peace agreement provided for a transitional government and for elections. At the parties' request, the Security Council set up the **United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR)** to help them implement it. But in early April 1994, the death of the Presidents of Rwanda and Burundi in a plane crash caused by rocket fire ignited weeks of intense and systemic waves of massacres by the Hutu-dominated army and militias, aimed at exterminating Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

UNAMIR sought to arrange a ceasefire, without success, and when some countries unilaterally withdrew their contingents, the Security Council reduced UNAMIR's strength from 2,548 to 270. Nevertheless, UNAMIR managed to shelter thousands of Rwandans. In May, the Council imposed an arms embargo against Rwanda and increased UNAMIR's strength to up to 5,500 troops, but it took nearly six months for member states to provide them. In July, RPF forces took control of Rwanda, ending the civil war and establishing a broad-based government.

From a population of 7.9 million, approximately 800,000 people had been murdered, some 2 million fled to other countries, and up to 2 million were internally displaced. A UN appeal raised \$762 million to address the enormous humanitarian challenge.

In November 1994, the Council established the **International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR)** to prosecute those responsible for genocide and war crimes. By January 2007, it had indicted 90 individuals, handing down 25 judgements involving 31 accused; there were 28 detainees on trial, nine awaiting trial, and seven whose cases were pending appeal; 18 accused remained at large. Former President Jean Kambanda was convicted and sentenced to life in prison. The ICTR is set to end its term in 2008.

In 1996, at Rwanda's request, the Council terminated UNAMIR's mandate. In 1999, an independent inquiry commissioned by the Secretary-General found that responsibility for the failure to stop the genocide was shared by the UN Secretariat, the Security Council and the member states. He expressed deep remorse over the United Nations failure to stop the genocide, and restated his commitment to make sure the Organization never again fails to stop mass slaughter.

In 2003, a new constitution was adopted by referendum, Paul Kagame gained a landslide victory in presidential elections, and his RPF party won a large majority in the first multiparty, parliamentary elections since independence in 1962. To mark the tenth anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda, the General Assembly declared 7 April 2004 as an International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda.

At the regional level, the ending of Rwanda's civil war had led large numbers of Rwandese Hutus to take refuge in eastern Zaire — now the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Among them were elements that had been involved in the genocide, and these “génocidaires” soon launched attacks into western Rwanda.

Eventually, Uganda and Rwanda intervened in the DRC, claiming security concerns over sanctuary being given there to remnants of former Hutu militias (“Interahamwe”) and Rwandan Armed Forces (“ex-FAR”) responsible for the 1994 genocide. After intensive diplomatic efforts by the UN, the OAU and the region, the 1999 Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement for the DRC was signed. The Security Council subsequently established the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC).

In July 2002, President Kagame and President Joseph Kabila of the DRC agreed on the withdrawal of Rwandese troops from the DRC and the dismantling of the ex-FAR and Interahamwe forces — a major turning point towards peace and stability for the Great Lakes region. Rwanda completed the withdrawal of its troops on 7 October. By the end of 2003, MONUC had voluntarily repatriated some 900 Rwandese combatants and their dependants.

Burundi. The United Nations Office in Burundi has participated in international efforts to help resolve the crisis in that country, where a long-standing internal conflict led in 1993 to a coup attempt in which the first democratically elected President, a Hutu, and six ministers were killed. This ignited factional fighting in which at least 150,000 people died in the following three years.

In 1996, the government and President — put in place by a 1994 agreement between the Hutu majority and Tutsi minority — were deposed by a Tutsi-led military coup. The Security Council condemned the coup and urged the military leaders to restore constitutional order. Neighbouring countries imposed an economic embargo. As fighting intensified between the largely Tutsi army and Hutu rebels, some 500,000 people were forcibly transferred to “regroupment camps” and 300,000 fled to Tanzania.

Mediation by former Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere led, in 1998, to a transitional constitution based on political partnership between Hutus and Tutsis. Following his death in 2000, former South African President Nelson Mandela succeeded him as facilitator of the peace process. The transitional government was installed in November 2001, followed by the transitional national assembly and senate. By early 2003, ceasefire agreements had been signed with three major factional groups.

In April 2003, the AU authorized deployment of the **African Mission in Burundi (AMIB)**, comprising up to 3,500 troops, including 120 military observers. On 30 April, half-way through the transitional period, a Hutu President and Tutsi Vice-President were sworn in, marking a transfer of executive power from the Tutsi minority to the Hutu majority.

At the end of June, however, four members of parliament were abducted by the National Council for the Defence of Democracy-Forces for the Defence of Democracy (CNDD/FDD) rebel faction, as deadly attacks shook Bujumbura, Burundi's capital. Clashes were also reported between government forces and the Palipehutu-Forces Nationales de Libération (Palipehutu-FNL)

faction. Sixteen of Burundi's 17 provinces were now subject to sporadic fighting, looting and armed banditry. The UN withdrew its non-essential staff from Bujumbura.

Nevertheless, sustained efforts by South African President Thabo Mbeki and other regional leaders resulted in the signing between the transitional government and the CNDD/FDD of a Global Ceasefire Agreement in November 2003, as CNDD/FDD joined the transitional institutions. The Security Council urged Palipehutu-FNL (Rwasa), the only armed rebel group which had not yet joined the Arusha Agreement, to do so.

At long last there was real hope that a democratic Burundi would emerge from a decade of civil strife that had left between 250,000 and 300,000 people dead, and the presence of AMIB had played a key role in making it possible. But the Mission suffered from a serious lack of funds and logistics support. With legislative elections scheduled to take place before 31 October 2004, the AU requested that AMIB be taken over by the United Nations.

In May 2004, acting under the enforcement provisions of the UN Charter, the Security Council authorized the deployment, on 1 June, of the **United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB)** — to be composed, initially, of existing AMIB forces. On 1 June, more than 2,000 AMIB troops were “rehabbed” as United Nations forces.

In February 2005, a successful referendum on Burundi's post-transitional constitution was held, followed by communal elections in June, and the election of Pierre Nkurunziza as the country's first post-transitional President in August. In June 2006, the government and the FNL signed an Agreement of Principles; it led to a ceasefire agreement in September, which the UN offered to help implement.

On 1 January 2007, ONUB was replaced with a small UN Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB), to support the peace consolidation process and assist the government in such areas as strengthening national institutions, training the police, professionalizing the national defence force, completing demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, protecting human rights, reforming the justice and legal sector, and promoting economic growth and poverty reduction.

Democratic Republic of the Congo. Following the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and the establishment of a new government there, some 1.2 million Rwandese Hutus — including elements who had taken part in the genocide — fled to the Kivu provinces of eastern Zaire, an area inhabited by ethnic Tutsis and others. There, a rebellion began in 1996, pitting rebel forces led by Laurent Désiré Kabila against the army of President Mobutu Sese Seko. Kabila's forces, aided by Rwanda and Uganda, took the capital city of Kinshasa in 1997 and renamed the country the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

In 1998, a rebellion against the Kabila government started in the Kivus. Within weeks, the rebels had seized large areas of the country. Angola, Chad, Namibia and Zimbabwe promised President Kabila military support, but the rebels maintained their grip on the eastern regions. Rwanda and Uganda supported the rebel movement, the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD). The Security Council called for a ceasefire and the withdrawal of foreign forces, and urged states not to interfere in the country's internal affairs.

In July 1999, the DRC, along with Angola, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda and Zimbabwe, signed the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, which also provided for the holding of an inter-Congolese dialogue. The RCD and the Mouvement de Libération du Congo signed it in August. In November, the Council established the **United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC)** to assist in implementing the agreement.

On 16 January 2001, President Kabila was assassinated. He was succeeded by his son Joseph Kabila.

In April, an expert panel established by the Security Council reported that the conflict in the DRC was mainly about access by foreign armies to the country's rich mineral resources. Five key minerals in particular — diamonds, copper, cobalt, gold and coltan (a component of electronic chips used in cell phones and laptop computers) — were being exploited by those armies in a systematic fashion, while a number of companies had been trading arms for natural resources or facilitating access to funds to purchase weapons. The DRC also has reserves of gems, timber and uranium.

In May, President Kabila announced that he was lifting the ban on political parties, and in October, the long-awaited inter-Congolese dialogue began in Addis Ababa.

In July 2002, an agreement was signed by the governments of the DRC and Rwanda on the withdrawal of Rwandan troops from the DRC and the dismantling of the ex-FAR and Interahamwe forces there (see section on Rwanda). In September, a similar agreement was reached between the DRC and Uganda. However, by October, renewed fighting in the eastern part of the DRC threatened to destabilize the entire country.

In December 2002, the parties to the conflict, under UN and South African mediation, agreed to form a transitional government. The Security Council enlarged MONUC to 8,700 military personnel and expanded its presence eastward. But fighting soon erupted again in the South Kivu region, generating massive refugee flows.

Finally, in May 2003, the parties signed a ceasefire agreement for the Ituri region. MONUC continued to patrol Bunia, trying to ease ethnic tensions and reassure the terrified local population — the brutal inter-ethnic power struggle had been marked by the systematic use of rape, murder and “witnessed cannibalism” as psychological torture. On 30 May, the Security Council authorized deployment of an **Interim Emergency Multinational Force (IEMF)** to Bunia until 1 September, to help stabilize the situation.

On 29 June, the government and the country's main opposition factions signed an agreement on military and security arrangements, and on 17 July, a power-sharing government of national unity and transition was installed — with four Vice-Presidents and led by President Kabila. The Council increased MONUC's military strength to 10,800. Acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, it authorized the mission to use all necessary means, including force, to fulfil its mandate in Ituri and North and South Kivu Provinces. On 5 September, IEMF handed over its security responsibilities to MONUC.

The country's first free and fair elections in 46 years were held on 30 July 2006, with voters electing a 500-seat National Assembly. Following a run-off election for the presidency on

29 October, and resolution of a subsequent legal challenge, President Joseph Kabila was declared the winner. The entire electoral process represented one of the most complex votes the UN had ever helped organize.

Through MONUC, the UN remains actively involved in trying to resolve the conflict in the province of North Kivu between the national army and forces loyal to a dissident former general. In November 2007, the UN facilitated an agreement between the governments of the DRC and Rwanda to address the threat posed to the region by illegal local and foreign armed groups that still remained in the eastern DRC, including the former Hutu militias (“Interahamwe”) and Rwandan Armed Forces (“ex-FAR”).

Central African Republic. The conflict in the Central African Republic occurred when soldiers staged a series of mutinies in the mid-1990s. In 1998, following an intervention by troops from France, the former colonial power, and later by an African multinational force (MISAB), the UN established the **United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA)** — a peacekeeping operation with a mandate to help improve security in the capital, Bangui. Later, the United Nations also provided support for elections, which were concluded the following year. **The United Nations Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BONUCA)** was created in February 2000, following the withdrawal of MINURCA.

But unrest continued, and an attempted coup by army officers was put down in May 2001. Two years later, in March 2003, a group led by General François Bozizé forcefully took power through a coup d’état, ousting elected President Ange-Félix Patassé. The Security Council condemned the coup, stressing that the Bangui authorities must elaborate a plan for national dialogue, including a time frame for the holding of elections as soon as possible.

By the end of June, the UN Secretary-General reported that the new authorities envisaged a process of national dialogue, which led to two rounds of legislative and presidential elections in March and May 2005. In the final runoff ballot, General Bozizé was elected with 64.6 per cent of the vote. The newly elected National Assembly held its first regular session from 1 March to 30 May 2006.

International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. In view of the important regional dimension of the conflicts involving the Great Lakes countries, the Security Council, following the 1994 Rwanda genocide, called for the convening of an international conference on the region. At the end of the 1990s, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes was established. Located in Nairobi, Kenya, it played a key role in promoting dialogue. It was also to serve, with the African Union, as joint secretariat for the conference. The first International Conference on the Great Lakes Region was held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in November 2004.

Meeting again in December 2006, the 11 regional heads of state and governments which had participated in the conference signed a Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region, concluding a four-year diplomatic process. The Pact provides a framework for the 11 signatories — Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Congo, Democratic Republic of

the Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia — to collectively identify key problems facing the region and formulate plans for addressing them.

The signatories also created a regional political follow-up mechanism, a secretariat headed by an Executive Secretary (to be located in Bujumbura, Burundi), and a Special Fund for Reconstruction and Development. In March 2007, with the transfer of ownership of the process to the regional states, the Security Council ended the mandate of the Special Representative for the Great Lakes Region.

West Africa

Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa (UNOWA) (www.un.org/unowa). A United Nations inter-agency mission visited 11 countries in West Africa in March 2001. It recommended that the grave, interlinked political, economic and social problems faced by West African countries be addressed through an integrated subregional strategy involving the UN and its partners. In November 2001, the Secretary-General decided to establish the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa to promote such an integrated approach. Based in Dakar, Senegal, it became operational in September 2002.

UNOWA is the first UN regional peacebuilding office in the world. It carries out good offices roles and special assignments in West African countries, liaising with subregional organizations and reporting to UN Headquarters on key developments of subregional significance. The special representative has been closely involved in international efforts aimed at resolving the conflicts, as in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia.

UNOWA is involved in addressing such cross-border challenges as mercenaries; child soldiers; small arms proliferation; security sector reform; democratization; economic integration; youth unemployment; and transborder cooperation. It has organized regional meetings aimed at harmonizing programmes for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants in West Africa.

The special representative is also chairperson of the **Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission**, established by the Secretary-General at the request of the Presidents of Nigeria and Cameroon, to consider all aspects of the implementation of a ruling by the International Court of Justice on the boundary between the two countries.

Relations between Cameroon and Nigeria had been strained for some time over issues relating to their 1,600-kilometre land boundary, extending from Lake Chad to the Bakassi peninsula, with a maritime boundary in the Gulf of Guinea. Issues included rights over oil-rich land and sea reserves, and the fate of local populations. Tensions escalated into military confrontation at the end of 1993 with the deployment of Nigerian military personnel to the 1,000-square-kilometre Bakassi peninsula. In 1994, Cameroon brought the border dispute to the World Court.

On 10 October 2002, the Court issued its judgment, and the Mixed Commission held its first meeting in December, meeting every two months thereafter – alternating between

Yaoundé, Cameroon, and Abuja, Nigeria. The ensuing years saw slow progress and repeated delays until 12 June 2006, when the Presidents of both countries signed an agreement to end the border dispute over the Bakassi peninsula, following intense mediation by the Secretary-General. By 14 August, Nigeria had completely withdrawn its troops and formally transferred authority over the region to Cameroon. In October, the Secretary-General reported that steady progress was being made in marking their common boundary, under the supervision of the Mixed Commission.

Côte d'Ivoire. In December 1999, a group of officers and soldiers led by General Robert Guei overthrew Côte d'Ivoire's government. New presidential elections were scheduled for October 2000. Realizing that he was losing in the polls to Laurent Gbagbo, leader of the Front Populaire Ivoirienne, Guei claimed victory on 23 October. Alassane Ouattara, leader of the Rassemblement Démocratique des Républicains, had been barred from contesting the elections under a new, controversial Constitution.

As thousands of people demonstrated against Guei's action in Abidjan, Gbagbo declared himself president, and Guei fled the city. Violent clashes ensued in the streets of the capital between Gbagbo's supporters, those backing Ouattara and security forces. Hundreds died. An independent commission established by the Secretary-General later concluded that the security forces had been repressing the protests and were implicated in the killings.

A national reconciliation process was launched under the chairmanship of former Prime Minister Seydou Diarra, and in August 2002, President Gbagbo formed a new, broad-based government. But tensions persisted. And on 19 September, groups of disgruntled military personnel attempted a coup and occupied the northern part of the country. The attempted coup resulted in a de facto partition of the country, with the government controlling the south, one rebel group controlling the north and north-east, and two other groups controlling the west. The fighting caused massive displacements.

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) established a peacekeeping force, which was deployed to monitor a ceasefire agreement between the government and one of the rebel groups. On 11 January 2003, the government and the remaining rebel groups agreed to a ceasefire.

From 15 to 23 January 2003, the government and rebel forces met in Linas-Marcoussis, France, and a peace agreement was reached, providing for the establishment of a government of national reconciliation. In keeping with the accord, President Gbagbo established the national reconciliation government on 13 March, with Seydou Diarra as Prime Minister with enlarged powers. On 3 May, the Forces armées nationales de Côte d'Ivoire and the Forces Nouvelles — comprising the three rebel groups — signed a ceasefire agreement that covered the whole country.

On 13 May 2003, the Security Council established the **United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (MINUCI)**, consisting of up to 76 military liaison officers and a civilian component, to facilitate implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement. In September, however, the Forces Nouvelles rejected President Gbagbo's appointment of defence and

internal security ministers and pulled out of the government. It also protested that President Gbagbo had not delegated enough power to the Prime Minister and the national reconciliation government. Tensions in the country were once again rising.

Responding to this situation, the Security Council, on 27 February 2004, established the **United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI)**, asking the Secretary-General to transfer authority from MINUCI and the ECOWAS forces to UNOCI, and authorizing the French forces to use all necessary means to support the new Mission, which had an authorized maximum strength of 6,240 military personnel and a wide-ranging mandate.

The situation remained challenging, but there were positive developments. In April 2005, the government and the rebel Forces Nouvelles began a withdrawal of weapons from the frontline between them — an area held by peacekeepers of UNOCI and the UN-authorized French forces. In June, the Security Council expanded UNOCI to prevent the situation in the country from deteriorating. In October 2005, President Gbagbo agreed to the appointment of a powerful new interim Prime Minister, as proposed by the African Union and endorsed by the Council.

In a major breakthrough, President Gbagbo and Forces Nouvelles Secretary-General Guillaume Soro signed the “Ouagadougou Agreement” on 4 March 2007. It calls for the creation of a new transitional government; free and fair presidential elections; merging the Forces Nouvelles and the national defence and security forces; dismantling the militias; disarming ex-combatants; and replacing the so-called zone of confidence separating the government-controlled south and rebel-controlled north with a green line to be monitored by UNOCI.

Mr. Soro became the Prime Minister, to remain in office until presidential elections are held, but not to run in them. On 30 July, the disarmament process was officially launched, with a ceremony in which both President Gbagbo and Prime Minister Soro set fire to weapons that had been turned in. In November, the country's major political parties adopted a code of good conduct for the upcoming general elections.

Liberia. After eight years of civil strife, a democratically elected government was installed in Liberia in 1997 and the **United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Liberia (UNOL)** was established. But in 1999, fighting began between government forces and the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD). In early 2003, a new armed group emerged in the west — the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL). By May, rebel forces controlled 60 per cent of the country.

As the parties gathered in Accra, Ghana, for ECOWAS-sponsored peace talks on 4 June, the UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone announced its indictment of Liberian President Charles Taylor for war crimes in Sierra Leone during its 10-year civil war. The President offered to remove himself from the peace process. Barely two weeks later, the government, LURD and MODEL signed a ceasefire accord, providing for immediate dialogue to reach a comprehensive peace agreement within 30 days — and the formation of a transitional government without President Taylor.

But the fighting continued, and on 23 July, with rebel mortars pounding the capital, hundreds of hungry, terrified refugees scrambled for safety inside the walls of the UN compound. ECOWAS decided to send in a vanguard force of 1,000 to 1,500 troops. Upon their arrival, reinforcements from the United States and other countries would move in to prepare for a UN mission.

On 1 August, the Security Council authorized the ECOWAS multinational force. Three days later, the UN airlifted the first of two battalions to Liberia's main airport. Taking advantage of a lull in the violence, UN and other relief agencies began rushing food and medical supplies to hundreds of thousands of desperate people crowding the streets of Monrovia.

President Taylor resigned his office on 11 August, and departed for exile in Nigeria. His Vice-President, Moses Blah, succeeded him, to head an interim government. Days later, the Secretary-General's special representative secured a signed agreement by the parties to ensure free and unimpeded access of humanitarian aid to all territories under their control, and to guarantee the security of aid workers. They also signed a comprehensive peace agreement.

On 19 September 2003, the Security Council established the **United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)** — with up to 15,000 military personnel and over 1,000 civilian police officers — to take over from the ECOWAS force on 1 October, and to replace UNOL. Its mandate included: monitoring the ceasefire; assisting in the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation (DDDR) of all armed parties; providing security at key government installations and vital infrastructure; protecting UN staff, facilities and civilians; and assisting in humanitarian aid and human rights. UNMIL was also mandated to help the transitional government develop a strategy to consolidate its institutions, with a view to holding free and fair elections by October 2005.

As scheduled, 3,500 ECOWAS soldiers were “rehabbed” with the UN blue helmet. Within two weeks, the parties declared Monrovia a “weapons-free zone”. On 14 October, the national transitional government was installed, led by Chairman Gyude Bryant. On 17 October, former President Blah turned over a large quantity of arms to UN peacekeepers, declaring: “We do not want to fight anymore”.

The DDR process was launched on 1 December. Over the next 12 months, nearly 100,000 Liberians turned in guns, ammunition, rocket-propelled grenades and other weapons. On 3 November 2004, Liberia's warring militias formally disbanded in a ceremony at UNMIL headquarters in Monrovia. By the end of February 2006, more than 300,000 internally displaced Liberians had been returned to their home villages.

After 15 years of conflict, the people of Liberia, with UN assistance, held their first post-war elections. Turning out in massive numbers on 12 October 2005 — and later in a run-off between the top two contenders — they elected Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf as President, with 59.4 per cent of the vote. She took office on 16 January 2006 and set up a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to heal the country's wounds.

Although major challenges remain, Liberia has been making steady progress towards peaceful nationhood. As a result, the Council, on 20 September 2007, endorsed Secretary-General

Ban Ki-moon's call for a drawdown of UNMIL's presence in multiple stages — from the current level of 15,200 military and police to 9,750 by the end of 2010. On 4 October, the Secretary-General announced that Liberia was eligible for assistance from the UN Peacebuilding Fund.

Guinea-Bissau. Following a period of conflict in Guinea-Bissau, a government of national unity was inaugurated in February 1999. In March, the UN established the **United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS)** to help create an enabling environment for restoring and consolidating peace, democracy and the rule of law, and to facilitate the organization of free and transparent elections. But in May, the peace accord broke down, and rebel troops ousted President João Bernardo Vieira. Following parliamentary and presidential elections in November 1999 and January 2000, the transitional government turned over power to the civilian government under the new President, Koumba Yala.

Although the UNOGBIS continued to help the new government in the transitional period, the consolidation of peace and economic recovery was severely hampered by political instability, causing donors to limit their assistance, which led to mounting social tensions. In November 2002, President Yala dissolved the National Assembly, appointing a new “caretaker government”. Parliamentary elections scheduled for May 2003 were repeatedly postponed. Finally, on 14 September 2003, he was ousted in a bloodless coup.

Reporting to the Security Council several months later, the Secretary-General said that removal of the democratically elected president, however reprehensible, took place after constitutional norms had been repeatedly violated. Describing the military coup as “the culmination of an untenable situation”, he called on the international community to recommend ways of preventing democratically elected governments in post-conflict countries from flouting the principles of basic governance.

On 28 September, a political transitional charter was signed by the military and 23 of the nation's 24 recognized parties. It provided for a civilian transitional government led by a civilian transitional president and prime minister; parliamentary elections to be held within six months; and presidential elections to be organized within one year of the swearing-in of the new deputies. By 6 October, all transitional mechanisms were in place and Henrique Perreira Rosa, an economist and businessman, was sworn in as transitional President.

In March 2004, legislative elections were held and deemed to be free, fair and transparent by international observers. In June and September 2005, two rounds of peaceful voting elected João Bernardo “Nino” Vieira as President. But political tensions along party lines continued to pose a challenge to national reconciliation and the effective functioning of key government institutions. Nevertheless, a national political stability pact signed by the three main political parties led to the swearing in, on 17 April 2007, of the government of Prime Minister Martinho Dafa Cabi. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has assured Guinea-Bissau of UN support in organizing and monitoring its parliamentary elections, to be held in 2008.

Sierra Leone. In 1991, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) launched a war to overthrow the government of Sierra Leone, but in 1992, the country's own army

overthrew the government. In 1995, the Secretary-General appointed a special envoy who, working with the OAU and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), negotiated a return to civilian rule. Following elections in 1996, in which the RUF did not participate, the army relinquished power to the winner, Ahmad Tejan Kabbah. The special envoy then helped negotiate the 1996 Abidjan Peace Accord between the government and the RUF. But in 1997, in another military coup, the army joined with the RUF to form a ruling junta. President Kabbah went into exile, and the Security Council imposed an oil and arms embargo — authorizing ECOWAS to ensure its implementation using troops of its monitoring group, ECOMOG.

When supporters of the junta attacked ECOMOG in 1998, its military response led to the junta's collapse. President Kabbah was returned to office, and the Council ended the embargo. In June, the Council established the **United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL)** to monitor the security situation, the disarmament of combatants, and restructuring of the security forces. Unarmed UNOMSIL teams, under ECOMOG protection, documented atrocities and human rights abuses.

The rebel alliance soon gained control of more than half of the country, and in a January 1999 overran most of the capital, Freetown. Later that month, ECOMOG troops retook Freetown and reinstalled the government. The fighting had resulted in 700,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 450,000 refugees. The special representative, in consultation with West African states, began diplomatic efforts to open up a dialogue with the rebels. These negotiations led in July to the Lomé Peace Agreement – to end the war and form a government of national unity.

The Security Council replaced UNOMSIL in October with the larger **United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL)**, to help the parties put the agreement into effect and assist in disarming, demobilizing and reintegrating some 45,000 combatants. In February 2000, following the announced withdrawal of ECOMOG, UNAMSIL's strength was increased to 11,000 troops. But in April, when the RUF attacked UN forces after ex-combatants came forward to disarm, four peacekeepers were killed and nearly 500 UN personnel taken hostage.

In May, British troops serving under a bilateral arrangement secured the capital and its airport, and assisted in capturing the RUF leader, Foday Sankoh, who was arrested by the police. By the end of the month, around half of the UN hostages had been released. The Council increased UNAMSIL's strength to 13,000 troops to help restore peace, and in July UNAMSIL rescued the remaining hostages. In August, the Council began the process of setting up a special court to try those responsible for war crimes.

UNAMSIL completed its deployment to all areas of the country in November 2001, and the disarmament process was completed in January. Following presidential and parliamentary elections in May 2002, the Mission focused on extension of state authority throughout the country, the reintegration of ex-combatants, and the resettlement of IDPs and returnees. The IDP resettlement was completed in December, the repatriation of some 280,000 Sierra

Leonean refugees in July 2004. A Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Court for Sierra Leone began to function in mid-2002.

When UNAMSIL was withdrawn in December 2005, following a phased drawdown of forces over three years, it left the country with a growing sense of stability and an improvement in basic services. It was replaced in January 2006 by the **UN Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL)**, the first integrated UN office established to support a peace-consolidation process. (See www.uniosil.org)

In April 2006, former Liberian President Charles Taylor appeared before the Special Court to answer 11 counts of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other violations. In June, the Security Council approved the Court's request to try Taylor at The Hague, as his presence represented "a threat to the peace of Liberia and of Sierra Leone." The trial began on 4 June 2007, but was later postponed until January 2008. If convicted, Taylor will be imprisoned in the United Kingdom.

Sierra Leone's development efforts took a significant leap forward when the newly established UN Peacebuilding Commission singled it out, along with Burundi, for its first activities. On 1 March 2007, on the Commission's recommendation, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon made \$35 million available for Sierra Leone from the UN Peacebuilding Fund, set up the previous October to assist countries emerging from conflict to rebuild and avert a relapse into bloodshed.

On 20 June 2007, the UN-backed Special Court issued its first verdicts, finding three former rebel leaders guilty of multiple counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity — including acts of terrorism, murder, rape, enslavement and conscripting children under the age of 15 into armed groups. They were subsequently sentenced to terms ranging from 45 to 50 years.

On 10 July, campaigning began for Sierra Leone's presidential and parliamentary elections. UNIOSIL's participation included training 49 district officers on polling and counting procedures, to be passed on to 37,000 polling staff. The elections were held on 11 August, in a generally peaceful atmosphere, with high voter turnout. In a run-off election for the presidency, Ernest Bai Koroma of the All People's Congress was elected with 54.6 per cent of the vote. He was inaugurated on 15 November.

East Africa

Sudan, and the Crisis in Darfur. The Sudan has endured civil conflict for all but 11 of the years since it became independent on 1 January 1956. In the phase that began in 1983, the government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), the main rebel movement in the south, fought over resources, power, the role of religion in the state, and self-determination.

A UN-supported initiative by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in 2002 led to the signing of the "Machakos Protocol" in Machakos, Kenya. In 2004, an

African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) was deployed as a monitoring mission, and a **United Nations Advance Mission in the Sudan (UNAMIS)** was established to prepare for introduction of a peace operation.

Over 2 million people died, 4 million were uprooted and some 600,000 others fled the country, until the signing of the **Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA)** on 9 January 2005. The CPA covered security arrangements, power-sharing in the capital, some autonomy for the south, and more equitable distribution of economic resources, including oil. Under its terms, interim institutions would govern for six-and-a-half years, observed by international monitors. Then, in an internationally monitored referendum, the people of southern Sudan would vote for Sudanese unity or secession.

On 24 March 2005, the Security Council established the **United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS)**, with a mandate to support implementation of the CPA; facilitate and coordinate humanitarian assistance and the voluntary return of refugees and internally displaced persons; and assist the parties in mine action. It was also to contribute to protecting and promoting human rights, and coordinate international efforts to protect civilians — with particular attention to vulnerable groups.

During the same period, the African Union (AU) increased AMIS to a total authorized strength of 6,171 military personnel and 1,560 civilian police — “to promote a more secure environment and confidence-building measures, as well as protect civilians and humanitarian operations”.

In September 2005, a Government of National Unity was established. Although the parties were respecting the letter of the CPA on the whole, the spirit of cooperation, inclusiveness and transparency was less than had been hoped. The continuing crisis in Darfur was also having a direct and negative effect on its implementation.

The UN role in Darfur. Ethnic, economic and political tensions had long combined with competition over scarce resources to fuel violence in Darfur. In 2003, the government’s decision to deploy its national armed forces and to mobilize local militia in response to attacks by the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) took that violence to unprecedented levels. Indiscriminate air bombardment by Sudan’s armed forces, along with attacks by the Janjaweed and other militias, left villages across the region razed to the ground. Civilians were murdered, women and girls raped, children abducted, and food and water sources destroyed.

In July 2004, the African Union (AU) had launched negotiations at inter-Sudanese peace talks in Abuja, while deploying 60 military observers and 310 protection troops to Darfur to monitor compliance with a humanitarian ceasefire agreement that had been signed in April by the government, SLM/A and JEM. Meanwhile, the UN and non-governmental organizations launched a massive humanitarian operation.

In January 2005, a Commission of Inquiry established at the request of the Security Council reported that while the Sudanese government had not pursued a policy of genocide

in Darfur, both its forces and allied Janjaweed militias had carried out “indiscriminate attacks, including killing of civilians, torture, enforced disappearances, destruction of villages, rape and other forms of sexual violence, pillaging and forced displacement”. Stating that war crimes and crimes against humanity might be no less heinous than genocide, the Commission concluded that rebel forces in Darfur were responsible for possible war crimes, including pillaging and the murder of civilians.

The Council referred the Commission’s dossier on Darfur to the **International Criminal Court**, which on 7 June 2007 called for the arrest of two individuals — to be charged with 51 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

After three years of intense conflict, AU efforts led, on 5 May 2006, to the signing of the **Darfur Peace Agreement**, which addressed power-sharing, wealth-sharing, a comprehensive ceasefire and security arrangements. All parties to the conflict were present, but only the government and the SLM/A signed the Agreement.

On 31 August 2006, by its resolution 1706, the Council authorized an expansion of the UNMIS mandate to enable its deployment to Darfur, and invited the consent of the Sudanese Government of National Unity. Unfortunately, the government’s position on that resolution had been “very negative”, the Secretary-General reported in September.

In November, the Sudanese government expressed support, in principle, for the establishment of a hybrid UN-AU Mission in Sudan. After months of negotiations, on 31 July 2007, the Security Council established the **African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID)** to deal with the situation in Darfur in a comprehensive manner. It was to be the first hybrid force involving the United Nations, and the largest UN peacekeeping operation ever. (See *box*)

On 28 August, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced that he would soon travel to the Sudan, Chad and Libya — to help ensure quick and effective deployment of UNAMID peacekeepers, the availability of humanitarian and development aid, and continued momentum in the peace process. “My goal is to lock in the progress we have made so far”, he said, “to build on it so that this terrible trauma may one day cease.” While there, on 4 September, he announced the appointment of Ashraf Jehangir Qazi as his new special representative for the Sudan.

Three weeks later, on 25 September, the Security Council approved the establishment of a multidimensional presence in Chad and the Central African Republic, in concert with the European Union — a presence which would include a UN Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT). Having determined that the situation in the border area between the Sudan, Chad and the Central African Republic constituted a threat to international peace and security, the Council took this action to help create the security conditions conducive to a voluntary, secure and sustainable return of refugees and displaced persons.

Earlier, in January 2007, the Secretary-General had appointed Jan Eliasson, former Swedish Foreign Minister and President of the General Assembly, as his Special Envoy for Darfur, with a view towards reinvigorating the political process and bringing a peaceful settlement to the Darfur conflict.

The African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur: the UN's First Hybrid Peacekeeping Mission

By early 2007, the conflict in the Darfur region of the Sudan had killed over 200,000 people and uprooted 2.5 million more, in a situation rife with alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity.

As the International Criminal Court began to address the matter, the Security Council, on 31 July 2007, established the first-ever hybrid force involving the United Nations — the **African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID)**. It combines UN forces with those of the former African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) in a new, comprehensive operation aimed at bringing peace to that troubled part of the world.

When fully deployed, UNAMID will be the largest peacekeeping operation ever, with 19,555 military personnel and 3,772 police, as well as 19 formed police units with up to 140 personnel each (a total of 2,660 personnel). Its rapid deployment aims at enabling it to assume authority from AMIS as soon as possible and no later than the end of 2007, with a view to achieving full operational capacity and force strength as soon as possible thereafter. Its mandate includes:

- facilitating full humanitarian access throughout Darfur;
- helping protect civilian populations under imminent threat of violence;
- verifying compliance with ceasefire agreements;
- assisting in implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement;
- helping to ensure that the political process is inclusive;
- supporting AU-UN joint mediation to broaden and deepen the peace process;
- contributing to a secure environment for economic reconstruction and development, and for the sustainable return of internally displaced persons and refugees to their homes;
- helping promote respect for and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Darfur;
- helping promote the rule of law in Darfur, including support for strengthening an independent judiciary and the prison system
- assisting in development of the legal framework, with Sudanese authorities;
- monitoring and reporting on the security situation at Sudan's borders with Chad and the Central African Republic.

Following his appointment, Mr. Eliasson worked with Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, the African Union's Special Envoy for Darfur, to prepare the ground for renewed negotiations. They consulted with government officials, the various rebel movements, regional actors, and other key stakeholders to ensure that the peace talks would be inclusive, producing an agreement that would address the core grievances of Darfur's conflict-affected population. The negotiations began on 27 October 2007 and were to continue into 2008.

Somalia. Somalia's 6.8 million people have been living with anarchy since the government of President Siad Barre was overthrown in 1991 and a civil war broke out, dividing the country into fiefdoms controlled by rival warlords, with arms, ammunition and explosives flowing freely across its borders in breach of a UN embargo.

When talks organized by the Secretary-General led to a ceasefire in Mogadishu, the capital, the Security Council in April 1992 established the UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM I) to monitor the ceasefire; provide protection and security for UN personnel, equipment and supplies; and escort deliveries of humanitarian supplies. But the deteriorating security situation led the Council in December to authorize member states to form a Unified Task Force (UNITAF) to ensure the safe delivery of humanitarian assistance. In March 1993, the Council established UNOSOM II to complete UNITAF's efforts to restore peace, but the escalation of inter-clan fighting confirmed that there was no peace to keep. UNOSOM II was withdrawn in March 1995.

The Secretary-General established the UN Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) in April, to help him advance peace and reconciliation through contacts with Somali leaders, civic organizations, and concerned states and organizations. UNPOS supported a Djibouti initiative that led, in 2000, to formation of a transitional national government, but its authority was subsequently challenged by Somali leaders in the south, and by regional administrations in "Puntland" in the north-east, and "Somaliland" in the north-west.⁴

In 2002, a national reconciliation conference sponsored by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) led to agreement on a cessation of hostilities and on structures and principles to govern the national reconciliation process. That process bore fruit in January 2004 when Somali leaders agreed on a Transitional Federal Government with a five-year term, and a Transitional Federal Parliament with 275 members —12 per cent of whom would be women.

The President of "Puntland," Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, was elected President of the Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in October 2004, and all 25 presidential candidates promised to support him and to demobilize their militias. But by May 2006, heavily armed militias of the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism and of the Sharia Courts were battling in Mogadishu.

⁴ "Somaliland" declared itself to be an independent republic in 1991, although the international community does not recognize its self-declared status. A strong rivalry exists between "Somaliland" and "Puntland", which has declared autonomy but not independence.

In June 2006, the TFG and the Union of Islamic Courts pledged mutual recognition, continued dialogue, and to refrain from actions that might increase tensions. But on 11 July, the Secretary-General's special representative said that hardliners within the Islamic Courts posed a threat to the peace process and in particular to the Transitional Federal Institutions, which had its interim seat in Baidoa. On 20 July, forces loyal to the Islamic Courts advanced on a town some 60 kilometres from Baidoa.

On 6 December, the Security Council authorized IGAD and all AU member states to establish a protection and training mission in Somalia. Its mandate included: monitoring progress by the parties in implementing agreements; maintaining security in Baidoa; protecting members and infrastructure of the Transitional Federal Institutions and Government; training their security forces to provide their own security; and helping re-establish Somalia's national security forces.

With hundreds of thousands fleeing heavy fighting in Mogadishu, the Security Council, on 20 February 2007, authorized the AU to establish a wider operation, known as **AMISOM**, for an initial period of six months. Replacing the IGAD mission, it was authorized to take all necessary measures to fulfil its mandate, which included: supporting the safe passage and protection of those involved with the process of dialogue and national reconciliation; protecting the Transitional Federal Institutions; assisting with the re-establishment and training of all-inclusive Somali security forces; and helping to create security for the provision of humanitarian assistance.

On 20 August, the Council extended AMISOM for an additional six months, and approved continued contingency planning for a possible UN operation. But in November, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon reported that deploying such a mission was neither realistic nor viable, given the marked deterioration in the political and security situation. Meanwhile, the UN would continue to focus on encouraging dialogue between the TFG and opposition groups and on strengthening AMISOM.

As for the humanitarian situation, UNHCR reported that 1 million people had been displaced by the recent violence — 600,000 of them fleeing Mogadishu. (See also the UNPOS website: www.un-somalia.org)

Ethiopia-Eritrea. With the collapse of the military government in Ethiopia in 1991, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) announced the formation of a provisional government and the holding of a referendum to determine the wishes of the Eritrean people regarding their status in relation to Ethiopia. In response to a request from its referendum commission, the General Assembly established the **United Nations Observer Mission to Verify the Referendum in Eritrea (UNOVER)**, to observe the organization and holding of the 1993 referendum. With 99 per cent of the voters favouring independence, Eritrea declared independence shortly thereafter and joined the UN.

In May 1998, fighting broke out between Ethiopia and Eritrea over disputed border areas. The Security Council demanded an end to the hostilities and offered technical support for the

delimitation and demarcation of the border. In June 2000, following proximity talks under OAU auspices, a cessation of hostilities agreement was reached in Algiers.

To assist in its implementation, the Security Council in July established the **United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE)**, deploying liaison officers to each capital and military observers along the border. In September, the Council authorized deployment of up to 4,200 military personnel to monitor the cessation of hostilities and help ensure observance of the security commitments agreed to by the parties.

With the arrival of the peacekeepers, the Ethiopian and Eritrean forces redeployed and a temporary security zone (TSZ) was created. UNMEE was mandated to patrol and monitor the zone. The parties continued to negotiate their differences, facilitated by Algeria, and in December 2000 signed an agreement providing for a permanent end to military hostilities and the release of prisoners of war. It also required the establishment of an independent commission to delimit and demarcate the border based on pertinent colonial treaties and applicable international law.

In April 2002, a five-member neutral Boundary Commission reached its final and binding decision on delimitation of the border. The Security Council adjusted UNMEE's mandate to include demining in support of demarcation, and administrative and logistical support for the Commission's field offices.

During 2003, the military situation was generally stable, but the peace process remained at a critical stage, owing to Ethiopia's rejection of the Boundary Commission's recommendations. For some time, the parties continued to respect the TSZ. But in the absence of progress in implementing the Boundary Commission's decision, Eritrea began what the Secretary-General described as "massive violations" of the zone, coupled with "harsh, humiliating impediments" to UNMEE's work, including a ban on UN helicopter flights. As a result, UNMEE's authorized troop strength was significantly reduced — from 4,200 when it began, to 2,300 in May 2006, and then to 1,700 in January 2007.

On 1 November 2007, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon expressed serious concern about the latest military build-up, noting that Eritrea had moved more than 2,500 troops and heavy military equipment into the TSZ, and that both countries had conducted military exercises along their common border. Although Ethiopia said it had accepted the border delimitation decision, he reported, it continued to assert that the security conditions for demarcation did not exist.

On 13 November, the Security Council urged both parties to implement the 2002 delimitation ruling immediately and without preconditions. It called upon them to refrain from the use of force, to settle their differences by peaceful means, and to normalize their relations.

The Americas

The United Nations was instrumental in bringing peace to the Central American region, in one of its most complex and successful peacemaking and peacekeeping efforts.

The United Nations became involved in Central America in 1989, when Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua requested its assistance in their agreement to end the conflicts that plagued the region, promote democratic elections and pursue democratization and dialogue. The Security Council established the **United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA)** to verify compliance with commitments to cease assistance to irregular and insurrectionist forces, and not allow the territory of any country to be used for attacks into other countries.

Nicaragua. The five countries also agreed to draw up a plan for demobilizing the Nicaraguan resistance, and the Nicaraguan government announced it would hold elections under international and United Nations monitoring. The **United Nations Observation Mission for the Verification of Elections in Nicaragua (ONUSAL)** observed the preparation and holding of the 1990 elections — the first to be observed by the UN in an independent country. Its success helped create conditions for the voluntary demobilization of the “contras”, which was overseen by ONUCA in 1990.

El Salvador. In El Salvador, negotiations brokered by the Secretary-General and his personal representative culminated in the 1992 peace accords, which put an end to a 12-year conflict that had claimed some 75,000 lives. The **United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL)** monitored the accords, including the demobilization of combatants and both parties’ compliance with their human rights commitments. ONUSAL also assisted in bringing about reforms needed to tackle the root causes of the civil war — such as judicial reforms and the establishment of a new civilian police force. At the request of the government, ONUSAL observed the 1994 elections. Its mandate ended in 1995.

Guatemala. At the request of the government and the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG), the United Nations in 1991 began to assist in talks aimed at ending that country’s civil war, which had lasted over three decades and resulted in some 200,000 people killed or missing. In 1994, the parties concluded accords providing for the UN to verify all agreements reached and to establish a human rights mission. The General Assembly thus established the **United Nations Human Rights Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA)**.

In December 1996, a ceasefire was reached and the parties signed a peace agreement, ending the last and longest of Central America’s conflicts. For the first time in 36 years, the region was at peace. MINUGUA remained until November 2004 to verify compliance with the accords, while UN agencies continued to address the social and economic roots of conflict throughout the region.

Haiti. In 1990, following the departure of “life president” Jean-Claude Duvalier and a series of short-lived governments, Haiti’s provisional government asked the UN to observe that year’s elections. The **United Nations Observer Group for the Verification of the Elections in Haiti (ONUSAL)** observed the preparation and holding of the elections, in which Jean-Bertrand Aristide was elected President. But a military coup in 1991 ended democratic rule,

and the President went into exile. In response to the worsening situation, a joint United Nations/OAS mission, the **International Civilian Mission in Haiti (MICIVIH)**, was deployed in 1993 to monitor the human rights situation and investigate violations.

To encourage the restoration of constitutional rule, the Security Council imposed an oil and arms embargo in 1993 and a trade embargo in 1994. Subsequently, it authorized establishment of a multinational force to facilitate the return to democratic rule. As the force was about to intervene, the United States and the military rulers reached an agreement aimed at avoiding further violence, and the United States-led multinational force deployed peacefully in the country. President Aristide returned, and the embargo was lifted. In 1995, a UN peacekeeping mission took over from the multinational force, to help the government maintain security and stability and create the first national civil police.

But as Haiti celebrated its bicentennial on 1 January 2004, a severe political deadlock threatened the country's stability. Fatal clashes between pro- and anti-government militias led to a spiral of increasing violence, and on 29 February President Aristide left the country, amid reports that he had resigned from office. A letter of resignation was delivered to the Security Council.

Hours later, through its resolution 1529, the Council authorized the immediate deployment of a **Multinational Interim Force (MIF)**, following a request for assistance by newly sworn-in President Boniface Alexandre. A United States-led force immediately began its deployment. On 30 April, the Council adopted resolution 1542, establishing the **United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH)**, to support the continuation of a peaceful and constitutional political process in a secure and stable environment.

In March 2005, as the UN demobilization process began, 325 former members of the country's armed forces laid down their arms. By October, more than 3 million citizens had registered to vote. In presidential and parliamentary elections on 7 February 2006, the people turned out in high numbers, electing former President René Préval as the new President. In a second round of legislative elections in April, voters elected 27 senators and 83 deputies. President Préval assumed office in May.

The Security Council extended MINUSTAH's mandate in August 2006, asking it to reorient towards a comprehensive community violence reduction programme. In late December, UN peacekeepers and the Haitian National Police began the first phase of a crackdown on armed gangs in the capital, completing it at the end of February. By 27 March, more than 400 gang members had been arrested; by the end of July, that number had reached 850.

Speaking at a joint press conference with President Préval in August 2007, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged Haiti to consolidate its gains on the security front by strengthening the rule of law, reforming the judiciary and fighting corruption.

On 15 October 2007, the Security Council extended MINUSTAH's mandate for another year. In so doing, it reduced the Mission's military component and increased its

police element to adjust to the changing circumstances. For while gang violence had been significantly curtailed, the threat of civil unrest remained — owing to the persistence of a deep socio-economic divide. As the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, Haiti's difficulties are exacerbated by its economic and social plight.

Asia and the Pacific

The Middle East

The United Nations has been concerned with the question of the Middle East from its earliest days. It has formulated principles for a peaceful settlement and dispatched various peacekeeping operations, and continues to support efforts towards a just, lasting and comprehensive solution to the underlying political problems.

The question has its origin in the issue of the status of Palestine. In 1947, Palestine was a Territory administered by the United Kingdom under a mandate from the League of Nations. It had a population of some 2 million — two thirds Arabs and one third Jews. The General Assembly in 1947 endorsed a plan, prepared by the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine, for the partition of the Territory. It provided for creating an Arab and a Jewish state, with Jerusalem under international status. The plan was rejected by the Palestinian Arabs, the Arab states and other states.

On 14 May 1948, the United Kingdom relinquished its mandate and the Jewish Agency proclaimed the state of Israel. The following day, the Palestinian Arabs, assisted by Arab states, opened hostilities against the new state. The hostilities were halted through a truce called for by the Security Council and supervised by a mediator appointed by the General Assembly, assisted by a group of military observers which came to be known as the **United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO)** — the first United Nations observer mission.

As a result of the conflict, some 750,000 Palestine Arabs lost their homes and livelihoods and became refugees. To assist them, the General Assembly in 1949 established the **United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)**, which has since been a major provider of assistance and a force for stability in the region.

The conflict remaining unresolved, Arab-Israeli warfare erupted again in 1956, 1967 and 1973, each time leading member states to call for United Nations mediation and peacekeeping missions. The 1956 conflict saw the deployment of the first full-fledged peacekeeping force — the **United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF I)** — which oversaw troop withdrawals and contributed to peace and stability.

The 1967 war involved fighting between Israel and Egypt, Jordan and Syria, during which Israel occupied the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank of the Jordan River, including East Jerusalem, and part of Syria's Golan Heights. The Security Council called for

a ceasefire, and subsequently dispatched observers to supervise the ceasefire in the Egypt-Israel sector.

The Council, by **resolution 242 (1967)**, defined principles for a just and lasting peace, namely: “withdrawal of Israel armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict”; and “termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries, free from threats or acts of force”. The resolution also affirmed the need for “a just settlement of the refugee problem”.

After the 1973 war between Israel and Egypt and Syria, the Security Council adopted **resolution 338 (1973)**, which reaffirms the principles of resolution 242 and calls for negotiations aimed at “a just and durable peace”. These resolutions remain the basis for an overall settlement in the Middle East.

To monitor the 1973 ceasefire, the Security Council established two peacekeeping forces. One of them, the **United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF)**, established to supervise the disengagement agreement between Israel and Syria, is still in place on the Golan Heights. The other operation was UNEF II, in the Sinai.

In the following years, the General Assembly called for an international peace conference on the Middle East, under United Nations auspices. In 1974, the Assembly invited the Palestine Liberation Organization to participate in its work as an observer. In 1975, it established the **Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People**, which continues to work as the General Assembly’s subsidiary organ supporting the rights of the Palestinian people and a peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine.

Bilateral negotiations between Egypt and Israel, mediated by the United States, led to the Camp David accords (1978) and the Egypt-Israel peace treaty (1979). Israel withdrew from the Sinai, which was returned to Egypt. Israel and Jordan concluded a peace treaty in 1994.

Lebanon. From April 1975 through October 1990, Lebanon was torn by civil war. Early on, southern Lebanon became a theatre of hostilities between Palestinian groups on the one hand, and Israeli forces and its local Lebanese auxiliary on the other. After Israeli forces invaded southern Lebanon in 1978, following a Palestinian commando raid in Israel, the Security Council adopted resolutions 425 and 426, calling upon Israel to withdraw and establishing the **United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)**. The Force was set up to confirm the Israeli withdrawal, restore international peace and security, and assist Lebanon in re-establishing its authority in the area.

In 1982, after intense exchanges of fire in southern Lebanon and across the Israel-Lebanon border, Israeli forces moved into Lebanon, reaching and surrounding Beirut. Israel withdrew from most of the country in 1985, but kept control of a strip of land in southern Lebanon, where Israeli forces and its local Lebanese auxiliary remained, and which partly overlapped UNIFIL’s area of deployment. Hostilities between Lebanese groups and Israeli and auxiliary forces continued.

In May 2000, Israeli forces withdrew in accordance with the 1978 Security Council resolutions; in June, the Secretary-General verified the withdrawal was complete. As Israel

pulled out, the Council endorsed the Secretary-General's plan to assist Lebanon in re-establishing its authority. It subsequently commended Lebanon for taking steps to "ensure the return of its effective authority" throughout the south of the country. Nevertheless, the situation along the "blue line" marking Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon remained precarious.

On 14 February 2005, tensions escalated when former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri was assassinated. In November, the Security Council supported establishment of a special tribunal to try those allegedly responsible for the assassination. In April, the UN verified withdrawal of Syrian troops, military assets and intelligence operations from Lebanon. In May and June, parliamentary elections were held with UN assistance.

Serious violations of the "blue line" continued through 2005 and 2006. Israeli forces violated Lebanese air space, including overflights of Beirut, while Hizbollah launched mortar rounds, missiles and rockets on Israeli Defence Force positions in the Shaba'a Farms area of the Syrian Golan — occupied by Israel since 1967 and claimed by Hizbollah as Lebanese territory.

When two Israeli soldiers were seized by Hizbollah militants on 12 July 2006, Israel responded with massive air attacks; Hizbollah responded with rocket attacks in northern Israel. By the time the fighting was over, some 1,200 Lebanese — nearly all civilians — had been killed and 4,100 wounded, as well as more than 40 Israeli civilians and 120 soldiers killed. More than a quarter of Lebanon's population had been forced to flee their homes. Physical damage in Lebanon was estimated at \$3.6 billion, including 30,000 homes damaged or destroyed.

The fighting ended on 14 August 2006, by the terms of Security Council resolution 1701. It called for an immediate cessation of hostilities — to be followed by deployment of Lebanese troops; a significantly expanded UNIFIL peacekeeping presence across southern Lebanon; and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the same area. As the resolution was progressively implemented, massive amounts of UN aid came pouring into the country. Meanwhile, European countries rejoined UN peacekeeping for the first time in years, as blue helmets from Italy, France, Germany and Spain joined contingents from Ghana, India and Indonesia already on the ground.

A significant problem facing UNIFIL was the deadly risk posed to civilians by active remnants of cluster bombs. Up to 1 million pieces of unexploded ordnance were left in southern Lebanon from the 34-day war, with a density higher than in Kosovo and Iraq. UNIFIL mine-clearance activities have cost a number of peacekeepers their lives.

By March 2007, UNIFIL was close to its maximum strength of 15,000, with nearly 13,000 troops and sailors from 30 countries patrolling on land and sea. Its deminers had already destroyed more than 25,000 explosive devices. UNIFIL peacekeepers were also engaged in daily humanitarian work, including medical and dental aid.

In April, concerned at reported breaches of its arms embargo across the Lebanese-Syrian border, the Security Council invited the Secretary-General to send an independent mission to

assess the monitoring of the border — which was found to be lacking. The Secretary-General proposed actions to help remedy the situation.

As 2007 wore on, Lebanon faced what Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon described as “a debilitating political crisis”. Troubling incidents included fighting between Fatah al-Islam militants and Lebanese security forces at a Palestinian refugee camp — the worst internal fighting since Lebanon’s civil war ended in 1990; a series of explosions around Beirut — including one which killed a Lebanese parliamentarian and nine others; and a bomb attack on a UNIFIL convoy which killed six peacekeepers. Katyusha rockets were fired from southern Lebanon into Israel, and there were multiple Israeli overflights of Lebanese territory on nearly a daily basis.

Reporting to the Security Council in July 2007, the Secretary-General stressed that progress was needed on several fronts, including enforcement of the arms embargo; the release of the abducted Israeli soldiers and Lebanese prisoners; the halting of Israeli air violations; and the issue of sovereignty over Shaba’a Farms.

Under Lebanon’s Constitution, presidential elections were to have been held prior to 24 November, when the term of its current President was to expire. Unfortunately, the various political groups in Lebanon were unable to reach agreement, leaving the country without a head of state. (For subsequent developments, see www.un.org/News)

The Middle East peace process. In 1987, the Palestinian uprising (*intifada*) began in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip with a call for Palestinian independence and statehood. In 1988, the Palestine National Council proclaimed the state of Palestine, which the General Assembly acknowledged; it designated the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as “Palestine”, without prejudice to its observer status.

On 10 September 1993, following talks in Madrid and subsequent Norwegian-mediated negotiations, Israel and the PLO established mutual recognition. Three days later in Washington, D.C., Israel and the PLO signed the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements. The UN created a task force on the social and economic development of Gaza and Jericho. It also appointed a special coordinator for UN assistance, whose mandate was expanded in 1999 to include good offices assistance to the Middle East peace process.

The transfer of powers from Israel to the Palestinian Authority in the Gaza Strip and Jericho began in 1994. In 1995, Israel and the PLO signed an agreement on Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank, providing for the withdrawal of Israeli troops and the handover of civil authority to an elected Palestinian Council. In 1996, Yasser Arafat was elected President of the Palestinian Authority.

An interim agreement in 1999 led to further redeployment of Israeli troops from the West Bank, agreements on prisoners, the opening of safe passage between the West Bank and Gaza, and resumption of negotiations on permanent status issues. But high-level peace talks held under United States mediation at Camp David ended inconclusively in July 2000. Unresolved issues included the status of Jerusalem, the Palestinian refugee question, security, borders and Israeli settlements.

In September, a new wave of protests and violence began in the occupied Palestinian territory. The Security Council repeatedly called for an end to the violence and affirmed the vision of two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side within secure and recognized borders. But between October 2000 and January 2003, nearly 10,000 people lost their lives in the conflict.

International efforts to bring the two parties back to the negotiating table were increasingly carried out through the mechanism of “the Quartet” — composed of the United States, the United Nations, the European Union and the Russian Federation. In April 2003, the Quartet presented its “Road Map” to a permanent two-state solution — a plan with distinct phases and benchmarks, calling for parallel and reciprocal steps by the two parties, to resolve the conflict by 2005. It also envisaged a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East conflict, including the Syrian-Israeli and Lebanese-Israeli tracks. The Council endorsed the Road Map in its resolution 1515 (2003), and both parties accepted it.

Nevertheless, the last half of 2003 saw a sharp escalation of violence. The UN special coordinator for the Middle East peace process said neither side had actively addressed the other’s concerns: for Israel, security and freedom from terrorist attack; for Palestinians, a viable and independent state based on pre-1967-war borders. Palestinian suicide bombings continued, and Israel pressed on with construction of a “separation barrier” in the West Bank — later held to be contrary to international law under an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice requested by the General Assembly.

In February 2004, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon announced that Israel would withdraw its military and settlements from the Gaza Strip. In November 2004, Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat died, and was replaced in January 2005 by Mahmoud Abbas, in elections conducted with UN technical and logistic support. In February, Prime Minister Sharon and President Abbas met directly in Egypt, and announced steps to halt the violence. They met again in June, in Jerusalem, and by September Israel’s withdrawal was completed. At last, genuine progress towards a negotiated solution seemed possible — until two significant events changed the political landscape.

On 4 January 2006, Prime Minister Sharon suffered a massive stroke and fell into a coma. And in legislative elections on 25 January, the Palestinian people voted the militant Hamas faction into power. Despite appeals from the Quartet and others, Hamas did not formally recognize Israel’s right to exist.

The Israeli government, now led by Ehud Olmert — who was formally elected as Prime Minister on 15 April — took the position that the entire Palestinian Authority, including the Presidency, had now become a terrorist entity, and imposed a freeze on Palestinian tax revenues. As the year progressed, violence escalated, including the launching of rockets from Gaza into Israel, and major Israeli reprisal operations.

International aid donors balked at funding the Hamas-led government as long as it did not commit to renouncing violence, recognizing Israel’s right to exist, and abiding by previously signed agreements. The humanitarian situation in the West Bank and Gaza became

increasingly grave. In May, the Quartet endorsed a temporary mechanism to funnel direct aid to the Palestinian people, and in June, it called for international support for a European Union proposal to that end.

On 11 September, President Abbas informed the UN Secretary-General that an agreement in principle had been reached with Hamas on the formation of a unity government which would accept the programme of the PLO and all the agreements they had entered into earlier. Negotiations on the national unity government were completed in March 2007.

But in May, intra-Palestinian clashes left 68 people dead and more than 200 wounded, as Hamas militants and Executive Force members clashed repeatedly with Palestinian Authority security forces and Fatah armed groups. Rocket attacks from Gaza into southern Israel escalated significantly, followed by Israeli air strikes aimed at militants and their facilities.

Following a call in July 2007 by United States President George W. Bush for an international meeting on the Middle East, a conference was held in Annapolis, Maryland, beginning on 27 November. A joint understanding was reached between Israelis and Palestinians, expressing their agreement to “engage in vigorous, ongoing and continuous negotiations” and to make every effort to conclude an agreement before the end of 2008. To that end, a steering committee would develop a joint work plan and establish and oversee the work of negotiating teams “to address all issues”. (For subsequent developments, see www.un.org/News)

Afghanistan

The most recent chapter in United Nations involvement in Afghanistan dates back to September 1995, when the Taliban faction in Afghanistan’s civil war, having seized most of the country, took Kabul, its capital. President Burhannudin Rabbani fled, joining the “Northern Alliance”, which held territory only in the north.

Over the years, the Security Council repeatedly voiced its concern that the Afghan conflict provided fertile ground for terrorism and drug trafficking. On 7 August 1998, terrorist bomb attacks on United States embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, claimed hundreds of lives. By its resolution 1193, the Council repeated its concern at the continuing presence of terrorists in Afghanistan. By resolution 1214 of 8 December, it demanded that the Taliban stop providing sanctuary and training for international terrorists and their organizations.

Citing the Taliban’s failure to respond to this demand, the Council, on 15 October 1999, applied broad sanctions under the enforcement provisions of the UN Charter. It noted, in resolution 1267, that Osama bin Laden had been indicted by the United States for the embassy bombings and demanded that the Taliban faction — never recognized as Afghanistan’s legitimate government — turn him over to the appropriate authorities to be brought to justice.

On 22 October, the Council expressed deep distress over reports that thousands of non-Afghans were involved in the fighting on the Taliban side. It expressed grave concern at

the forced displacements of civilian populations, summary executions, abuse and arbitrary detention of civilians, violence against women and girls, and indiscriminate bombing.

The Taliban's religious intolerance also aroused widespread condemnation. In March 2001, they blew up two statues of the Buddha carved out of the sandstone cliff-face in the Bamiyan Valley some 1,300 years ago, including the largest statue of the Buddha in the world. In May, an edict required Hindu women to veil themselves like their Muslim counterparts, and all non-Muslims were required to wear identity labels. In August, eight international aid workers were arrested and subsequently put on trial for "promoting Christianity".

Their trial was under way on 11 September, when members of bin Laden's Al-Qaeda organization hijacked four commercial jets in the United States, crashing two into the World Trade Center in New York City, one into the Pentagon in the US capital, and the fourth into a field in Pennsylvania when passengers tried to stop them. Some 3,000 people were killed. In the days that followed, the US administration issued an ultimatum to the Taliban: turn over bin Laden and close the terrorist operations in Afghanistan or risk a massive military assault. The Taliban refused.

On 7 October, forces of the United States and United Kingdom unleashed missile attacks against Taliban military targets and bin Laden's training camps in Afghanistan. Two weeks of bombings were followed by the deployment of US ground forces. In December, Afghan militiamen, supported by American bombers, began an offensive strike on a suspected mountaintop stronghold of bin Laden and al-Qaeda forces in Tora Bora, in eastern Afghanistan near the Pakistan border.

In the weeks following 11 September, the Security Council supported efforts of the Afghan people to replace the Taliban regime, as the UN continued to promote dialogue among Afghan parties aimed at establishing a broad-based, inclusive government. A UN-organized meeting of Afghan political leaders in Bonn concluded on 5 December with agreement on a provisional arrangement, pending re-establishment of permanent government institutions. As a first step, the Afghan Interim Authority was established.

On 20 December 2001, the Security Council, by resolution 1386, authorized the establishment of an **International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)** to help the Authority maintain security in Kabul and its surrounding areas. On 22 December, the internationally recognized administration of President Rabbani handed power to the new Afghan Interim Authority headed by Chairman Hamid Karzai, and the first ISAF troops were deployed.

In January 2002, an International Conference on Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan, held in Tokyo, garnered pledges of over \$4.5 billion. It was announced that an Emergency Loya Jirga (Pashto for "Grand Council") — a traditional forum in which tribal elders come together and settle affairs — would be constituted to elect a head of state for the transitional administration and determine its structure and key personnel. The Security Council, welcoming the positive changes in Afghanistan as a result of the collapse of the Taliban, adjusted its sanctions to reflect the new realities, targeting al-Qaeda and its supporters.

On 28 March, the Security Council established the **United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)**, to fulfil the tasks entrusted to the UN under the Bonn Agreement in such areas as human rights, the rule of law and gender issues. Headed by the Secretary-General's special representative, it would also promote national reconciliation, while managing all UN humanitarian activities in Afghanistan in coordination with the Interim Authority and its successors. (On 23 March 2007, the Council again extended UNAMA's mandate for another year, unanimously adopting resolution 1746.)

In April 2002, the process of electing members to the Emergency Loya Jirga began. The nine-day council was opened on 11 June by Zahir Shah, the former King of Afghanistan, who nominated Hamid Karzai to lead the nation. On 13 June, Mr. Karzai was elected as Afghanistan's head of state, to lead the transitional government for the next two years. On 4 January 2004, the Constitutional Loya Jirga, reached agreement on a text which was adopted as Afghanistan's Constitution.

On 9 October 2004, more than 8 million Afghans — 70 per cent of registered voters, 40 per cent of them women — went to the polls, choosing Hamid Karzai as the country's first-ever elected President. On 18 September 2005, the Afghan people voted for the members of their National Assembly and Provisional Councils, despite a series of deadly attacks during the campaign. The new Parliament was inaugurated at the end of December.

Drug control, reconstruction and development. By the late 1990s, Afghanistan had become notorious as the source of nearly 80 per cent of the world's illicit opium, the source of heroin. By 2007, the country's \$3 billion opium trade accounted for more than 90 per cent of the world's illegal output, according to a UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) report. Cultivation was concentrated mainly in the south, where the Taliban was profiting from the drug trade. In the centre and north, where the government had increased its authority and presence, cultivation was dropping.

On 31 January 2006, a high-level group meeting in London launched the "Afghanistan Compact" — a five-year agenda to consolidate democratic institutions, curb insecurity, control the illegal drug trade, stimulate the economy, enforce the law, provide basic services to the Afghan people, and protect their human rights. On 15 February, the Security Council unanimously endorsed the Compact as providing the framework for partnership between the Afghan government and the international community.

But lack of security remained a major impediment to development. A 2007 UNDP report found that 6.6 million Afghans — one third of the population — did not have enough food to eat, while the mortality rate for children under five years and the proportion of mothers dying in childbirth was among the highest in the world.

Security. In 2006, more than 4,400 Afghans, including 1,000 civilians, died in anti-government violence — twice as many as in 2005. By the end of the year, a significant Taliban insurgency was under way, mainly in the volatile south. It was the most severe violence since the Taliban's fall in 2001.

On 27 September 2007, the Security Council voiced concern about the increased violence and terrorism, as it approved the extension of ISAF for another year. Addressing this situation, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said the key to sustaining security gains in the long term lay in increasing the capability, autonomy and integrity of the Afghan National Security Forces, and especially the Afghan National Police.

Iraq

The United Nations response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, and the situation following the collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime in 2003, illustrate the scope of the challenges the UN faces in seeking to restore international peace and security.

The Security Council, by its resolutions 660 of 2 August 1990 and 661 of 6 August, immediately condemned the invasion of Kuwait, demanded Iraq's withdrawal and imposed sanctions against Iraq, including a trade and oil embargo.

On 29 November, the Security Council set 15 January 1991 as the deadline for Iraq's compliance with resolution 660, and authorized member states to use "all necessary means" to restore international peace and security. On 16 January 1991, multinational forces authorized by the Council but not under UN direction or control launched military operations against Iraq. Hostilities were suspended in February, after the Iraqi forces withdrew from Kuwait. By its resolution 687 of 8 April 1991, the Council set the terms of the ceasefire.

Deciding that Iraq's weapons of mass destruction should be eliminated, the Council established the **United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM)** on the disarmament of Iraq, with powers of no-notice inspection, and entrusted the **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)** with similar verification tasks in the nuclear sphere, with UNSCOM assistance. It also established a demilitarized zone along the Iraq-Kuwait border. Resolution 689 set up the **United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM)**, to monitor it.

The Council established an **Iraq-Kuwait Boundary Demarcation Commission**, whose boundary decisions were accepted by Iraq in 1994. It also established a **United Nations Compensation Commission** to process claims and compensate governments, nationals or corporations for any loss or damage resulting from Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, out of a percentage of the proceeds from sales of Iraqi oil. Thus far, the Commission has approved a total of \$52.4 billion in claims, of which \$22.5 billion has been paid out. It continues to process payments, as Iraq continues to pay 5 per cent of its oil revenue to the Compensation Fund.

Concerned about the severe humanitarian impact of economic sanctions on the Iraqi people, the Council, on 17 December 1995, created an "oil-for-food" programme to offer them a degree of relief. Established under its resolution 986, it monitored sales of oil by the government of Iraq to purchase food and humanitarian supplies, and managed the distribution of food in the country. It served as the sole source of sustenance for 60 per cent of Iraq's estimated 27 million people.

In the course of their inspections, UNSCOM and the IAEA uncovered and eliminated large quantities of Iraq's banned weapons programmes and capabilities in the nuclear, chemical

and biological field. In 1998, Iraq called on the Council to lift its oil embargo, declaring that there were no more proscribed weapons. UNSCOM declared it lacked evidence of Iraq's full compliance with resolution 687. In October, Iraq suspended cooperation with UNSCOM, which conducted its final mission in December. In the same month, the United States and the United Kingdom launched air strikes on Iraq.

On 17 December 1999, by its resolution 1284, the Security Council established the **United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC)** to replace UNSCOM, expressing its intention to lift economic sanctions, dependent on Iraq's cooperation with UNMOVIC and the IAEA.

On 8 November 2002, the Council adopted resolution 1441, providing for an enhanced inspection regime and offering Iraq a final opportunity to comply with its resolutions. On 27 November, UN inspectors returned to Iraq. The Council was repeatedly briefed by the Executive Chairman of UNMOVIC, Hans Blix, and the Director-General of the IAEA, Mohamed ElBaradei, but it remained divided about how to ensure the fulfilment of Iraq's obligations.

In the midst of negotiations, and outside the framework of the Security Council, the United States, the United Kingdom and Spain presented Iraq with a 17 March 2003 deadline to disarm completely. With military action imminent, the Secretary-General ordered the withdrawal of UN international staff on 17 March and the suspension of all operations. Military action by a coalition headed by the United States and the United Kingdom began three days later.

Following the collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime, the Security Council, on 22 May, adopted its resolution 1483, stressing the right of the Iraqi people to freely determine their political future. It recognized the authorities, responsibilities and obligations of the Coalition (the "Authority") until the swearing in of an internationally recognized government. It modified the oil-for-food programme, authorizing it to resume the delivery of food and medical supplies. It also lifted international sanctions and provided a legal basis for the UN to resume operations in Iraq.

United Nations Assistance Mission. On 27 May, the Secretary-General appointed Sergio Vieira de Mello as his special representative for Iraq. By its resolution 1500, on 14 August, the Security Council established the **United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI)**, with a mandate to coordinate humanitarian and reconstruction aid and assist with the political process towards establishment of an internationally recognized sovereign Iraqi government. It welcomed the creation of the Iraqi Governing Council as an important step in that direction.

Five days later, on 19 August 2003, the UN headquarters in Baghdad was the target of a terrorist attack that resulted in 22 deaths, and more than 150 injured. Fifteen of the dead were UN staff. Among them was the head of mission, Sergio Vieira de Mello. Following the attack, the Secretary-General withdrew most UN international personnel from Baghdad, maintaining only a small team, principally Iraqis, to provide essential humanitarian assistance — including the delivery of food, water and health care country-wide.

Oil for Food: Fact and Fiction

From December 1995 to November 2003, the United Nations “oil-for-food” programme provided humanitarian relief to 27 million Iraqis. It was unique — a stand-alone programme of immense scale and complexity that was the sole source of sustenance for 60 per cent of the people. Their daily caloric intake increased dramatically under the programme, and between 1996 and 2002, malnutrition rates among children under the age of five in central and southern Iraq were cut in half. The Security Council, which established the programme, also set up a Committee to monitor all contracts awarded under it.

When the programme ended, income from the sale of oil under its purview, including income from interest and currency gains, totalled \$69.5 billion. Of that amount, \$47.6 billion funded humanitarian activities, and \$18 billion went to the UN Compensation Commission — to be paid out to persons harmed during Iraq’s 1990 invasion of Kuwait. Approximately half a billion dollars supported the work of UNSCOM and UNMOVIC, which monitored Iraqi weapons systems and materials, and oversaw the destruction of all items proscribed under the Iraq-Kuwait ceasefire agreement.

In 2004, allegations began to surface claiming corruption and mismanagement in the operation of the programme. In response, then Secretary-General Kofi Annan appointed Paul Volcker, former Chairman of the United States Federal Reserve Board, to lead an Independent Investigation Committee. The other members of the panel were South African Justice Richard Goldstone and Swiss Professor of Criminal Law Mark Pieth. It was tasked to carry out a thorough and independent probe of the programme, and was provided unprecedented access, as well as the UN’s complete cooperation. Over a year and a half of work, the Committee released five interim reports that painted a broad picture of the programme, focusing on management and oversight failures. The final report was released in October 2005.

The panel found that 2,200 companies from some 60 countries had been involved in illicit payments *outside* the purview of the oil-for-food monitoring mechanism. In contrast to the \$147,000 alleged to have been misappropriated by a UN official, the Iraqi government’s *total* illicit revenue from August 1990 through March 2003 was estimated by the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) at **\$10.9 billion**. Some \$8 billion of that amount came from exports under trade protocols which were known, and in some cases condoned, by the states members of the Security Council. Smuggling — outside the purview of the oil-for-food mechanism or before it was put in place — was estimated at \$1.74 billion.

With regard to the Secretariat’s administration of the programme, the panel found there had been mismanagement by the head of the Office of the Iraq Programme. The Volcker panel alleged that the former head of OIP had taken \$147,000 in bribes during his tenure — a charge he disputed. Nevertheless, the Secretary-General lifted his immunity from prosecution immediately. The panel also looked into allegations regarding the Secretary-General and concluded that he had not been involved in procurement decisions.

Since the release of the Volcker report, several management reform initiatives have been implemented to strengthen ethical conduct, internal oversight and accountability, as well as transparency, financial disclosure and “whistleblower” protection.

On 16 October, the Security Council, by its resolution 1511, authorized a multinational force under unified command to take all necessary measures to contribute to the maintenance of security and stability in Iraq, and to the security of UNAMI and institutions of the Iraqi Interim Administration. On 15 November, the Iraqi Governing Council and the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) reached agreement on the restoration of sovereignty on 30 June 2004.

Following requests from the Iraqi Governing Council and the CPA for UN help with the transition to sovereignty, the Secretary-General sent an electoral assistance team to assess what was needed to hold credible elections by 31 January 2005. He asked his special adviser on Iraq, Lakhdar Brahimi, to work with Iraqis on these arrangements.

Mr. Brahimi arrived in Iraq on 4 April 2004, and began a wide-ranging series of consultations with a broad cross-section of Iraqi society. On 28 May, the Iraqi Governing Council named Iyad Allawi as Iraq's Prime Minister-designate. On 8 June, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1546, endorsing the formation of the new interim government. On 28 June, sovereignty was officially transferred from the CPA to the new Iraqi interim government.

On 4 June, the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq was formed. In just over 18 months, with UN support, it conducted two national elections and a constitutional referendum, despite an extremely serious security situation on the ground. On 31 January 2005, millions of Iraqis participated in elections for a provisional national assembly. However, it was a matter of concern that large numbers of Iraq's Sunni community stayed away.

The Transitional National Assembly held its first meeting on 16 March 2006. On 31 May, its President officially requested UN support in drafting and building consensus around the country's new Constitution. On 15 October Iraq's draft Constitution was adopted in a nationwide referendum, and although voter turnout was high, some communities registered strong opposition to the document. The Secretary-General praised the Iraqis for their "incredible courage, going to vote in large numbers despite the security situation".

Iraq's parliamentary elections were held on 15 December 2005, with the participation of millions of voters of all communities, and hundreds of thousands of observers, agents and poll workers. By 8 June 2006, the new government had been completely formed. Ashraf Qazi, the Secretary-General's special representative, pledged UN assistance to the people and government of Iraq in promoting national dialogue and reconciliation.

Among the first initiatives of the new government was an International Compact with Iraq, chaired jointly by the UN and the Iraqi government, with the support of the World Bank. The Compact aims, over the next five years, to bring together the international community and multilateral organizations to help Iraq achieve its national vision, according to clearly defined priorities, benchmarks and mutual commitments.

However, despite the achievement of the benchmarks for the political transition under resolution 1546, the security situation continued to worsen. This was tragically underscored by the wave of sectarian violence and revenge that followed the bombing of the al-Askiriya shrine in Samarra during February 2006. As of late 2007, some 2.2 million Iraqis had fled the country, and nearly 2.4 million were internally displaced.

At the expanded ministerial meeting of Iraq and its neighbours held on 4 May 2007 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, the participants agreed to establish three working groups on issues of common concern, including energy, border security and refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). The UN was asked to provide technical assistance and expertise for these working groups. At the expanded ministerial meeting held in November 2007 in Istanbul, the participants endorsed the establishment of an ad hoc mechanism in Baghdad to coordinate and support the process of regional dialogue. The support mechanism would be led by the Iraqi government and be provided with strong UN assistance.

Although there have been improvements in the security situation since in mid-2007, Iraqi civilians, including women and children, have continued to be victims of terrorist acts, roadside bombs, drive-by shootings, cross-fire between rival gangs or between police and insurgents, kidnappings, military operations, crime and police abuse. Mass arrests by Iraqi security and multinational forces during military operations under the jurisdiction of the multinational forces had resulted in large numbers of detainees. Daily living conditions had become dismal, marked by intermittent water and electricity, chronic malnutrition among children, and more illiteracy among youth than ever before.

There were, however, a number of positive developments in 2007. On 3 March, the **International Compact with Iraq** was official launched, with world leaders gathered in Sharm el-Sheik, Egypt, pledging over \$30 billion in specific financial commitments to Iraq's five-year plan for peace and development, including debt relief. On 10 August, the Security Council, by its resolution 1770, voted unanimously to renew and expand the mandate of UNAMI, paving the way for the UN to enhance its role in such key areas as national reconciliation, regional dialogue, humanitarian assistance and human rights. Nevertheless, the security situation continued to limit UN presence on the ground.

Earlier, on 29 June 2007, the Security Council, expressing its gratitude for the "comprehensive contributions" made by UNMOVIC and the IAEA, formally terminated their respective mandates in Iraq.

India and Pakistan

The United Nations is actively committed to promoting harmonious relations between India and Pakistan, which have been troubled by the decades-old dispute over Kashmir. The issue dates back to the 1940s, when the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir became free to accede to India or Pakistan under the partition plan and the India Independence Act of 1947. The Hindu Maharaja of mostly Muslim Jammu and Kashmir signed his state's instrument of accession to India.

The Security Council first discussed the issue in 1948, following India's complaint that tribesmen and others, with Pakistan's support and participation, were invading Jammu and Kashmir and fighting was taking place. Pakistan denied the charges and declared Jammu and Kashmir's accession to India illegal.

The Council recommended measures to stop the fighting, including the use of UN military observers. It established a UN Commission for India and Pakistan, which made proposals for a ceasefire, troop withdrawals, and a plebiscite to decide the issue. Both sides accepted, but could not agree on the modalities for the plebiscite. Since 1949, based on a ceasefire signed by the parties, the **United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP)** has monitored the ceasefire line in Jammu and Kashmir.

Following a 1972 agreement, the parties undertook to settle their differences peacefully, but tensions remained. Hope to break the impasse came in April 2003, when India's Prime Minister and the President of Pakistan began a series of reciprocal steps to improve bilateral relations. The Secretary-General expressed hope that the normalization of diplomatic relations, the restoration of rail, road and air links, and other confidence-building measures being introduced would lead to resumption of a sustained dialogue.

In November, Pakistan offered to implement a unilateral ceasefire along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir with effect from 25 November, the beginning of the Muslim festival of Eid Al-Fitr. India responded positively. Eventually, all these efforts led to a summit meeting, on 4 and 5 January 2004 in Islamabad, between Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee of India, and Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf and its Prime Minister Zafarullah Khan Jamali.

The Secretary-General applauded the two leaders, adding that improved relations would mean a lot for the entire South Asian region — not only in reduced tensions but in economic and social terms. He urged both sides to continue their efforts, in the interest of promoting sustained and serious dialogue. And in what he described as “a powerful gesture of peace and an opportunity to reunite families divided for nearly 60 years”, a landmark bus service across the ceasefire line was inaugurated in April 2005.

More recently, an attack on the Delhi-Lahore “Friendship Express” in February 2007 left 67 people dead and nearly 20 injured. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, in a statement echoed by the Security Council, strongly condemned the terrorist bombing and called for its perpetrators to be brought to justice. He also expressed satisfaction that the leaders of India and Pakistan had reaffirmed their determination, in the wake of the bombing, to continue on the path of dialogue.

Tajikistan

Following the break-up of the Soviet Union, Tajikistan became independent in 1991. It soon faced a social and economic crisis, regional and political tensions, and differences between secularists and pro-Islamic traditionalists, plunging the country into a civil war that killed more than 50,000 people. In 1994, talks under the auspices of the Secretary-General's special representative led to a ceasefire agreement; the Security Council established the **United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT)** to assist in monitoring it.

In 1997, UN-sponsored negotiations led to a peace agreement. UNMOT assisted in its implementation, in close cooperation with a peacekeeping force of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and a mission of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). The country's first multiparty parliamentary elections were held in

February 2000. UNMOT withdrew in May, and was replaced by the much smaller UN Tajikistan Office of Peacebuilding (UNTOP), with a mandate to help consolidate peace and promote democracy. UNTOP completed its work on 31 July 2007.

Even as the closure of UNTOP ended one chapter in UN political assistance to Central Asia, a new one began in December 2007 with the inauguration of the **United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia**. Based in Ashgabat, the capital of Turkmenistan, the Centre was established to help the governments of the region to peacefully and cooperatively manage an array of common challenges and threats — including terrorism, drug trafficking, organized crime and environmental degradation.

The Centre, which represents the culmination of several years of consultations between the UN and the five Central Asian countries, will offer governments its assistance in a number of areas, including: building capacity to prevent conflict peacefully; facilitating dialogue; and catalyzing international support for specific projects and initiatives. The Centre will cooperate closely with the existing UN programmes and agencies in Central Asia, as well as with regional organizations.

Cambodia

Prior to implementation of the UN-brokered 1991 Paris Peace Agreements, Cambodia was in a state of deep internal conflict and relative isolation. Since its emergence from French colonialism in the 1950s, the country had suffered the spillover of the Viet Nam war in the 1960s and 1970s, followed by devastating civil conflicts and the genocidal totalitarian rule of Pol Pot. Under his “Khmer Rouge” regime from 1975 through 1979, nearly 2 million people perished of murder, disease or starvation, many on Cambodia’s infamous “killing fields”.

In 1993, with help from the **United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC)**, Cambodia held its first democratic elections. Since then, UN agencies and programmes have assisted the government in strengthening reconciliation and development, and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Secretary-General’s special representative have helped it promote and protect those rights — cornerstones of the rule of law and democratic development.

In May 2003, agreement was reached with the government for the UN to help it set up and run a special court to prosecute crimes committed under the Khmer Rouge. Established on 29 April 2005, its judges and prosecutors were sworn in during July 2006. By 13 June 2007, they had agreed on its internal rules. Beginning in July, the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia issued its first charges for crimes against humanity, taking several persons charged into provisional detention. (See also the section on international tribunals in chapter 6.)

Myanmar

Since Myanmar’s military leadership voided the results of democratic elections in 1990, the UN has sought to help bring about a return to democracy and improvements in its human rights situation through an all-inclusive process of national reconciliation. In 1993, the

General Assembly urged an accelerated return to democracy, asking the Secretary-General to assist the Myanmar government in that process. In using his “good offices” to that end, the Secretary-General designated three successive special envoys to engage in dialogue with all the relevant parties.

The Assembly has renewed the Secretary-General’s good offices mandate annually since 1993. Through this mandate, the UN seeks to promote progress in four key areas: the release of political prisoners, a more inclusive political process, a halt to hostilities in the border areas, and a more enabling environment for the provision of humanitarian assistance.

Following a period during 2004-2006 when there was no high-level dialogue between the UN and the government, the Secretary-General’s good offices mission resumed in May 2006, with a visit to Myanmar by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Ibrahim Gambari. In September, the Security Council included the situation in Myanmar on its agenda, and in November, Mr. Gambari paid a second visit to the country.

In May 2007, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon designated Mr. Gambari as his special adviser on Myanmar. In September, a crisis situation developed in the country, resulting in Mr. Gambari’s return to Myanmar at that time, and again in November, at the invitation of the government. He met with Myanmar’s senior leadership, and with detained opposition leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and her party — the National League for Democracy (NLD). The special adviser also engaged in a series of high-level consultations with key interested member states, including in Europe and Asia. In October, the Security Council issued a presidential statement expressing “strong and unwavering support” for the Secretary-General’s good offices mission.

In parallel to the good offices mandate of the Secretary-General, the Commission on Human Rights in 1992 designated a special rapporteur to monitor and report on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, whose mandate was subsequently extended by the Human Rights Council. At the invitation of the government, the special rapporteur last visited the country in November 2007.

Nepal

Ten years of armed conflict came to an end in Nepal in November 2006 under the terms of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed between a governing alliance of political parties and the Maoist insurgents who had waged an armed struggle in the South Asian country since 1996. The agreement came six months after a popular movement, loosely coordinated with the Maoists, brought an end to Nepal’s authoritarian monarchy. Amid these sweeping changes and their aftermath, the UN has played an important role, at Nepal’s request, in helping the country to improve its human rights situation and consolidate peace.

The United Nations work in Nepal gained visibility in 2005 when the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights established a sizeable office in the country. The office has played a key role in monitoring human rights commitments contained in the

code of conduct of the ceasefire, as well as all the human rights provisions of the peace agreement. Through its reports and statements, the office plays an active role in persuading Nepali security forces and Maoists to exercise restraint and avoid deliberately targeting civilian populations.

The UN had been engaged for several years in political efforts to end the hostilities in Nepal and encourage a negotiated political solution. In July 2006, following a request by the government for UN assistance, the Secretary-General dispatched a pre-assessment mission to the country. In August, the government and the Maoists sent identical letters to the Secretary-General requesting UN assistance in monitoring of the ceasefire code of conduct; observing elections for the constituent assembly; deploying qualified civilian personnel to monitor and verify the confinement of Maoist combatants and their weapons in designated cantonment areas; and monitoring the Nepal Army to ensure that it remains within its barracks and that its weapons are not used.

In August 2006, the Secretary-General appointed Ian Martin as his personal representative in Nepal in support of the peace process. Mr. Martin and his team were instrumental in helping the parties find common ground on key elements, including organization of the elections for the constituent assembly, the management of arms and armies, and reaching consensus on the United Nations role in the peace process.

In November, the government reiterated the two sides' request for UN assistance. The Secretary-General requested that the Security Council dispatch a technical assessment mission to Nepal, with a view to developing a full concept of operations. Such an operation would include a UN political mission to deliver the assistance requested by the parties, as well as the advance deployment of 35 civilian monitors and 25 electoral advisors. Through a presidential statement on 1 December, the Council endorsed this request. On 23 January 2007, the Council adopted resolution 1740, establishing the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN). Mr. Martin was subsequently appointed as the special representative of the Secretary-General.

Since its establishment, UNMIN has been active on various fronts. Its arms monitors have supervised the registration of Maoist weapons and combatants, a process to be completed by the end of 2007. UNMIN electoral experts have assisted Nepal's Election Commission by providing technical support for the planning, preparation and conduct of the election of the constituent assembly. A small team of UN electoral monitors independent from UNMIN has been involved in reviewing all technical aspects of the electoral process and reporting on the conduct of the election. Meanwhile, UNMIN civil affairs officers have provided the Mission with the ability to engage communities outside Kathmandu, and to help create a climate conducive to a peaceful election.

By the end of 2007, Nepal was standing on a path to peace, with the United Nations providing its continued support for that process, despite difficulties in implementing certain aspects of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and two postponements during the year of the planned election for the constituent assembly.

Bougainville / Papua New Guinea

In early 1998, following a decade of armed conflict over the issue of independence for the island of Bougainville, the government of Papua New Guinea and Bougainville leaders concluded the Lincoln Agreement, which established the framework for a peace process. Under the Agreement, a regional truce-monitoring team, with monitors from Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and Vanuatu, was transformed into a Peace Monitoring Group.

In accordance with the Lincoln Agreement, the government of Papua New Guinea sought and obtained the Security Council's endorsement of the Agreement, as well as of the appointment of a small UN observer mission. The **United Nations Political Office in Bougainville (UNPOB)**, the first UN political mission in the South Pacific, became operational on 1 August 1998.

On 30 August 2001, after more than two years of talks facilitated and chaired by UNPOB, the parties signed the Bougainville Peace Agreement — providing for a weapons disposal plan, autonomy and a referendum. UNPOB took the lead in supervising the weapons disposal plan. Completion of the second stage of the plan, as certified by UNPOB, opened the way for the drafting of a Bougainville Constitution, as well as for preparations for the election of an autonomous Bougainville government.

On 1 January 2004, responding to increased stability in Bougainville, the UN replaced UNPOB with a smaller mission, the **United Nations Observer Mission in Bougainville (UNOMB)**. Elections for the first autonomous government in the Papua New Guinea province of Bougainville were held from 20 May to 9 June 2005. On 15 June, the new autonomous provincial government of the island, including its President and House of Representatives, was sworn in. UNOMB's work was complete.

The war in Bougainville had been little noticed but brutal, costing some 15,000 lives during the 1980s and 1990s. UN efforts leading to a successful outcome included its involvement in negotiating, mediating and facilitating the resolution of the conflict. It also undertook the collection and destruction of some 2,000 weapons, encouraged the parties involved to meet agreed upon pre-election deadlines, and facilitated the election.

Timor-Leste

On 20 May 2002, the formerly dependent Territory of East Timor declared its independence as Timor-Leste, following active engagement by the United Nations over many years in its struggle for self-determination (see chapter 7). Its constituent assembly was subsequently transformed into its national parliament, and on 27 September, Timor-Leste became the 191st member state of the UN.

Following its declaration of independence on 20 May, the Security Council established a **United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISSET)**, to assist the nascent state in developing core administrative structures, providing interim law enforcement and security, developing the country's police service, and contributing to the maintenance of internal and

external security. Upon completing its work in May 2005, UNMISET was replaced by a **United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL)**, which worked for the next year to support the development of critical state institutions, the police and the border patrol unit, and to provide training in democratic governance and the observance of human rights.

However, the dismissal of nearly 600 members of the Timorese armed forces in March 2006 triggered a violent crisis that peaked in May, resulting in casualties. The government requested, and the Security Council endorsed, the deployment of international police and military assistance to secure critical locations and facilities. The Secretary-General sent his special envoy to help diffuse the crisis and to find a political solution. Following extensive negotiations among the political actors, a new government was formed in July, and elections were scheduled for May 2007, in accordance with the constitution.

Subsequently, the Security Council, on 25 August 2007, established a new and expanded operation, the **United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT)**, to support the government in “consolidating stability, enhancing a culture of democratic governance, and facilitating dialogue among Timorese stakeholders”. Since then, stability in the country has been largely maintained, and presidential and parliamentary elections were held in a generally calm security environment in May and August 2007, respectively.

Europe

Cyprus

The **United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP)** was established in 1964 to prevent a recurrence of fighting between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities and to contribute to the maintenance and restoration of law and order and a return to normal conditions.

In 1974, a coup d'état by Greek Cypriot and Greek elements favouring union of the country with Greece was followed by military intervention by Turkey and the de facto division of the island. Since 1974, UNFICYP has supervised a de facto ceasefire which came into effect on 16 August 1974, and maintained a buffer zone between the lines of the Cyprus National Guard and of the Turkish and Turkish Cypriot forces. In the absence of a political settlement, UNFICYP continues its presence on the island.

The Secretary-General has used his good offices in search of a comprehensive settlement, hosting proximity talks between the two leaders in 1999 and 2000, followed by intensive direct talks beginning in January 2002. In November, he submitted a comprehensive proposal aimed at bridging the gaps between them, but agreement could not be reached on submitting it to referendums on each side in time to allow a reunited Cyprus to sign the Treaty of Accession to the European Union (16 April).

The talks were suspended in March 2003. In April, the Turkish Cypriot authorities began to open crossing points for public travel by Greek Cypriots to the north and Turkish Cypriots to the south for the first time in nearly three decades. As UN engineers worked to improve the roads, the Security Council authorized an increase in UNFICYP's civilian police component to

ensure the safe and orderly passage of people and vehicles. By 2 November, there had been some 2 million crossings.

The Secretary-General welcomed the new initiative, but stressed that it could not substitute for a comprehensive settlement. On 10 February 2004, the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders — along with the guarantor nations of Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom — resumed negotiations in New York on the basis of the Secretary-General's detailed proposals.

After six weeks of negotiations, with agreement just out of reach, the Secretary-General stepped in to complete the “Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem”, calling for creation of a United Cyprus Republic — composed of a Greek Cypriot constituent state and a Turkish Cypriot constituent state linked by a federal government. On 24 April, 76 per cent of voters in the Greek Cypriot referendum opposed the plan, while 65 per cent of voters in the Turkish Cypriot referendum supported it.

Without the approval of both communities, the plan was defeated, and on 1 May Cyprus entered the European Union as a divided and militarized island.

On 8 July 2006, the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders met face-to-face, together with the UN Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs. In a resulting “set of principles” and “decision by the two leaders”, they committed to the unification of Cyprus based on a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation and political equality, as set out in Security Council resolutions, and to a process to achieve that end. They also met on 5 September 2007, at the official residence of the Secretary-General's special representative in Cyprus, where they agreed on the need for the earliest start of that process. As of November 2007, however, it had not yet begun.

Georgia

Relations between the Abkhaz and the Georgians have been tense for decades. Renewed attempts in 1990 by the local authorities in Abkhazia (north-western region of Georgia) to separate from the Republic, which became independent in 1991, escalated in 1992 into a series of armed confrontations. Hundreds died and some 30,000 fled to the Russian Federation. An envoy of the Secretary-General, appointed in 1993, began mediation among the parties, and a ceasefire agreement was reached later that year.

The Security Council established the **United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG)** to verify compliance. But fighting resumed, turning into civil war. In 1994, the parties, meeting in Moscow, agreed on a new ceasefire, to be monitored by a peacekeeping force of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). UNOMIG would monitor implementation of the agreement and observe the operation of the force.

Over the years, successive special representatives of the Secretary-General have conducted negotiations, and the Security Council has stressed the need for a comprehensive settlement. But the core political issue — the future status of Abkhazia within the state of Georgia — has not yet been resolved.

The Balkans

Former Yugoslavia. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was a founding member of the United Nations. In 1991, two republics of the federation, Slovenia and Croatia, declared independence. Croatian Serbs, supported by the national army, opposed the move, and war broke out between Serbia and Croatia. Responding, the Security Council imposed an arms embargo on Yugoslavia, and the Secretary-General appointed a personal envoy to support peace efforts by the European Community.

To create conditions for a settlement, the Security Council in 1992 established the **United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR)**, initially in Croatia. But the war extended to Bosnia and Herzegovina, which had also declared independence — a move supported by Bosnian Croats and Muslims but opposed by Bosnian Serbs. The Serb and Croatian armies intervened, and the Council imposed economic sanctions on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, consisting by then of Serbia and Montenegro.

The war intensified, generating the largest refugee crisis in Europe since the Second World War. Faced with widespread reports of “ethnic cleansing”, the Security Council in 1993 created, for the first time, an international court to prosecute war crimes. It also declared certain places as “safe areas”, in an attempt to insulate them from the fighting.

UNPROFOR sought to protect the delivery of humanitarian aid in Bosnia and to protect Sarajevo, its capital, as well as other “safe areas”. But while peacekeeping commanders requested 35,000 troops, the Security Council authorized only 7,600. To deter continuing attacks against Sarajevo, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1994 authorized air strikes at the Secretary-General’s request. Bosnian Serb forces detained some 400 UNPROFOR observers, using some as “human shields”.

Fighting intensified in 1995. Croatia launched major offensives against its Serb-populated areas. NATO responded to Bosnian Serb shelling of Sarajevo with massive air strikes. Bosnian Serb forces took over the “safe areas” of Srebrenica and Zepa. They killed some 7,000 unarmed men and boys in Srebrenica, in the worst massacre in Europe since the Second World War. In a 1999 report, the Secretary-General acknowledged the errors of the UN and member states in their response to the ethnic cleansing campaign that culminated in Srebrenica. The tragedy, he said, “will haunt our history forever”.

At the talks in Dayton, Ohio, in 1995, agreement was reached between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Yugoslavia, ending the 42-month war. To ensure compliance, the Security Council authorized a multinational, NATO-led, 60,000-strong Implementation Force.

The Council also established a UN International Police Task Force. It later became part of a larger **United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH)**, which facilitated the return of refugees and displaced persons, fostered peace and security, and helped build up state institutions. In 1996, the Council established the **United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka (UNMOP)**, to monitor the demilitarization of the Prevlaka peninsula, a strategic area in Croatia contested by Yugoslavia. UNMIBH and UNMOP completed their work at the end of 2002.

Kosovo. In 1989, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia revoked local autonomy in Kosovo, a province in southern Yugoslavia historically important to Serbs which was more than 90 per cent ethnically Albanian. Kosovo Albanians dissented, boycotting Serbian state institutions and authority in a quest for self-rule.

Tensions increased, and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) surfaced in 1996, seeking independence through armed rebellion. It launched attacks against Serb officials and Albanians who collaborated with them, and Serb authorities responded with mass arrests. Fighting erupted in March 1998 as Serbian police swept the Drenica region, ostensibly looking for KLA members. The Security Council imposed an arms embargo against Yugoslavia, including Kosovo, but the situation deteriorated into open warfare.

Then, in March 1999, following warnings to Yugoslavia, and against the backdrop of a Serbian offensive in Kosovo, NATO began air strikes against Yugoslavia. The Secretary-General said it was tragic that diplomacy had failed. Although there were times when “the use of force may be legitimate in the pursuit of peace”, he said, the Security Council should be involved in any such decisions.

Yugoslavia launched a major offensive against the KLA and began mass deportations of ethnic Albanians from Kosovo, causing an unprecedented outflow of 850,000 refugees. UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies rushed to assist them in Albania and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

In June, Yugoslavia accepted a peace plan proposed by the Group of Eight (the seven western industrialized nations and Russia). The Security Council endorsed it and authorized member states to establish a security presence to deter hostilities, demilitarize the KLA and facilitate the return of refugees. It also asked the Secretary-General to establish an interim international civilian administration, under which the people could enjoy substantial autonomy and self-government. Yugoslav forces withdrew, NATO suspended its bombings, and a 50,000-strong multinational **Kosovo Force (KFOR)** arrived to provide security.

The **United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK)** immediately established a presence on the ground. Its task was unprecedented in complexity and scope. The Security Council vested UNMIK with authority over the territory and people of Kosovo, including all legislative and executive powers and administration of the judiciary.

At least 841,000 refugees of the approximately 850,000 who fled during the war returned, and the first priority was to equip them for the rigours of the coming winter. That accomplished, UNMIK made significant progress towards re-establishing normal life and ensuring long-term economic reconstruction. The KLA was completely demilitarized by September 1999 and its members reintegrated in civil society. In the following months, as some 210,000 non-Albanian Kosovars left Kosovo for Serbia and Montenegro, a joint committee facilitated their safe return. Remaining non-Albanian minorities lived in isolated enclaves guarded by KFOR.

In April 2001, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia indicted former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic and four others for crimes against humanity

during a “systematic attack directed against the Kosovo Albanian civilian population of Kosovo”. When the defence had nearly completed its response, Milosovic died of natural causes while in detention, on 11 March 2006. He had been facing 66 counts for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo.

The Security Council lifted its arms embargo in September 2001. In November, a 120-member Kosovo Assembly was elected which, in March 2002, elected the province’s first President and Prime Minister. In December, UNMIK completed the transfer of specific responsibilities to local provisional institutions, though it retained control over security, foreign relations, protection of minority rights, and energy — pending determination of the province’s final status.

During 2006, the Secretary-General’s special envoy, former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari, conducted four rounds of direct negotiations between the parties and the first high-level meeting between top Serbian and Kosovar leaders, but Kosovo’s ethnic Albanian government and Serbia remained completely at odds. In February 2007, he presented his final status plan as “a compromise proposal”, but the parties were unmoved. He subsequently reported that the only viable option for Kosovo was independence — which had been consistently opposed by Serbia.

In August 2007, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon welcomed an agreement to have a troika composed of the European Union, Russia and the United States lead further negotiations on Kosovo’s future status. (See www.unmikonline.org)

Disarmament

(<http://disarmament.un.org>)

Since the birth of the United Nations, the goals of multilateral disarmament and arms limitation have been central to its efforts to maintain international peace and security. The Organization has given highest priority to reducing and eventually eliminating nuclear weapons, destroying chemical weapons and strengthening the prohibition against biological weapons — all of which pose the greatest threat to humankind. While these objectives have remained constant over the years, the scope of deliberations and negotiations is changing as political realities and the international situation evolve.

The international community is now considering more closely the excessive and destabilizing proliferation of small arms and light weapons and has mobilized to combat the massive deployment of landmines — phenomena that threaten the economic and social fabric of societies and kill and maim civilians, too many of whom are women and children. Consideration is also being given to the need for multilaterally negotiated norms against the spread of ballistic missile technology, the explosive remnants of war, and the impact of new information and telecommunications technologies on international security.

The tragic events of 11 September 2001 in the United States, and subsequent terrorist attacks in a number of countries, underlined the potential danger of weapons of mass

Multilateral disarmament and arms regulation agreements

A chronology of important international disarmament and arms regulation measures concluded through negotiations in multilateral and regional forums includes:

- 1959 *Antarctic Treaty*: demilitarizes the continent and bans the testing of any kind of weapon on the continent.
- 1963 *Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water (Partial Test-Ban Treaty)*: restricts nuclear testing to underground sites only.
- 1967 *Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco)*: prohibits testing, use, manufacture, storage, or acquisition of nuclear weapons by the countries of the region.
- 1967 *Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (Outer Space Treaty)*: mandates that outer space be used for peaceful purposes only and that nuclear weapons not be placed or tested in outer space.
- 1968 *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)*: the non-nuclear-weapon states agree never to acquire nuclear weapons and, in exchange, are promised access to and assistance in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Nuclear-weapon states pledge to carry out negotiations relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race and to nuclear disarmament, and not to assist in any way in the transfer of nuclear weapons to non-nuclear-weapon states.
- 1971 *Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons on the Sea-bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof (Sea-bed Treaty)*: bans the emplacement of nuclear weapons, or any weapon of mass destruction, on the sea-bed or ocean floor.
- 1972 *Convention on Bacteriological (Biological) Weapons (BWC)*: bans the development, production and stockpiling of biological and toxin agents, and provides for the destruction of such weapons and their means of delivery.
- 1980 *Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCWC)*: prohibits certain conventional weapons deemed excessively injurious or having indiscriminate effects. Protocol I bans weapons which explode fragments that are undetectable by X-ray within the human body. Amended Protocol II (1995) limits the use of certain types of mines, booby-traps and other devices. Protocol III bans incendiary weapons. Protocol IV bans the use of blinding laser weapons.
- 1985 *South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Rarotonga)*: bans the stationing, acquisition or testing of nuclear explosive devices and the dumping of nuclear waste within the zone.
- 1990 *Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty)*: limits the numbers of various conventional armaments in a zone stretching from the Atlantic Ocean to the Urals.
- 1992 *Open Skies Treaty*: enables states parties to overfly and observe the territory of one another, based on principles of cooperation and openness. Has been used for the verification of several arms control agreements and for other monitoring mechanisms.

- 1993 *Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)*: prohibits the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and requires their destruction.
- 1995 *Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Bangkok)*: bans the development or stationing of nuclear weapons on the territories of the states party to the treaty.
- 1996 *African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba)*: bans the development or stationing of nuclear weapons on the African continent.
- 1996 *Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)*: places a worldwide ban on nuclear test explosions of any kind and in any environment.
- 1997 *Mine-Ban Convention*: prohibits the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of antipersonnel mines and provides for their destruction.
- 2005 *International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (Nuclear Terrorism Convention)*: outlines specific acts of nuclear terrorism, aims to protect a broad range of possible targets, bring perpetrators to justice and promote cooperation among countries.
- 2006 *Central Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty*: comprising the five central Asian states — Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

(For status of ratification of these agreements, see <http://disarmament.un.org/TreatyStatus.nsf>)

destruction falling into the hands of non-state actors. The attack could have had even more devastating consequences had the terrorists been able to acquire and use chemical, biological or nuclear weapons. Reflecting these concerns, the General Assembly adopted at its fifty-seventh session in 2002, for the first time, a resolution on measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

In 2004, the Security Council took its first formal decision on the danger of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, particularly to non-state actors. Acting under the enforcement provisions of the UN Charter, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1540, obliging states to refrain from any support for non-state actors in the development, acquisition, manufacture, possession, transport, transfer or use of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery. The resolution imposes far-reaching obligations on all states to establish domestic measures to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and their means of delivery, including the establishment of appropriate controls over related materials.

Subsequently, the General Assembly adopted the *International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism*, which was opened for signature in September 2005.

In addition to its role in the actual disarmament of weapons and in verifying compliance, the United Nations plays an essential role in multilateral disarmament by assisting member states in establishing new norms and in strengthening and consolidating existing agreements. One of the most effective means of deterring the use or threatened use of weapons of mass

destruction by terrorists is to strengthen multilateral regimes already developed to ban those weapons and prevent their proliferation.

Disarmament machinery

The United Nations Charter gives the **General Assembly** the chief responsibility for considering “the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments” (Article 11). The Assembly has two subsidiary bodies dealing with disarmament issues: the First Committee (Disarmament and International Security), which meets during the Assembly’s regular session and deals with all disarmament issues on its agenda; and the Disarmament Commission, a specialized deliberative body that focuses on specific issues and meets for three weeks every year.

The **Conference on Disarmament** is the international community’s sole multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament agreements. The Conference successfully negotiated both the *Chemical Weapons Convention* and the *Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty*. Since it addresses matters that touch upon the national security interests of states, it works strictly on the basis of consensus. It has a limited membership of 65 states and a unique relationship with the General Assembly. While the Conference defines its own rules and develops its own agenda, it takes into account the recommendations of the Assembly and reports to it annually. Since 1997, the Conference has been unable to agree on a substantive programme of work due to lack of consensus among its members on disarmament priorities.

In the UN Secretariat, the **Office for Disarmament Affairs** implements the decisions of the Assembly on disarmament matters. The **United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR)** undertakes independent research on disarmament and related problems, particularly international security issues. The **Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters** advises the Secretary-General on matters relating to arms limitation and disarmament, and serves as the Board of Trustees of UNIDIR. It also advises on implementation of the recommendations of the **United Nations Disarmament Information Programme**.

Weapons of mass destruction (WMD)

Nuclear weapons

Through sustained efforts, the world community has achieved numerous multilateral agreements aimed at reducing nuclear arsenals, excluding their deployment from certain regions and environments (such as outer space and the ocean floor), limiting their proliferation and ending testing. Despite these achievements, nuclear weapons and their proliferation remain a major threat to peace and a major challenge to the international community.

Issues of concern in this area include in particular the need for reductions in nuclear weapons, upholding the viability of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, and preventing the development and proliferation of ballistic missiles and missile defence systems.

Bilateral agreements

The 1972 Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems (ABM Treaty) limited the number of anti-ballistic missile systems of the United States and the Soviet Union to one each. A 1997 “demarcation” agreement between the United States and the Russian Federation distinguished between “strategic”, or long-range ABMs, which were prohibited, and “non-strategic”, or shorter-range ABMs, which were not. The Treaty ceased to be in effect as of 13 June 2002, when the United States withdrew from it.

The 1987 United States-Soviet Union Intermediate- and Shorter-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF Treaty) eliminated an entire class of nuclear weapons, which includes all land-based ballistic and cruise missiles with a range of 500 to 5,500 km. By the end of 1996, all the weapons slated for destruction under the provisions of the Treaty had been eliminated.

The 1991 United States-Soviet Union Strategic Arms Limitation and Reduction Treaty (START I) placed a ceiling of 6,000 warheads on 1,600 deployed long-range nuclear missiles for each side by 2001, thereby reducing the 1991 stockpile levels by about 30 per cent.

The 1992 Lisbon Protocol to START I committed the Russian Federation, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine, as successor states to the Soviet Union, to abide by the START I Treaty; Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine were to adhere to the NPT as nonnuclear-weapon states. By 1996, these three states had removed all nuclear weapons from their territories.

The 1993 Strategic Arms Limitation and Reduction Treaty II (START II) committed both parties to reduce the number of warheads on long-range nuclear missiles to 3,500 on each side by 2003, and eliminated ICBMs (intercontinental ballistic missiles) equipped with MIRVs (multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles). A 1997 agreement extended the deadline for destruction of the launching systems — missile silos, bombers and submarines — to the end of 2007.

On 24 May 2002, the Presidents of the Russian Federation and the United States signed the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT), also known as the Moscow Treaty, agreeing to limit the level of their deployed strategic nuclear warheads to between 1,700 and 2,200. The Treaty will remain in force until December 2012, and may be extended or superseded by agreement of the parties.

Bilateral agreements on nuclear weapons. While international efforts to contain nuclear weapons continue in different forums, it has been generally understood that the nuclear-weapon powers hold special responsibility for maintaining a stable international security environment. During and after the cold war, the two major powers arrived at agreements that have significantly reduced the threat of nuclear war.

Multilateral agreements on nuclear weapons and non-proliferation. The *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)*, the most universal of all multilateral disarmament treaties, was first opened for signature in 1968 and came into force in 1970. The NPT is

the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. The 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT adopted a final document in which the nuclear-weapon states made “an unequivocal undertaking ... to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals”.

The Conference agreed that there should be increased transparency about nuclear-weapon capabilities, and a diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies. The decision by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to withdraw from the Treaty in January 2003 — the first such decision since the Treaty’s entry into force 33 years earlier — was of great concern to the international community. Participants in the 2005 Review Conference were unable to reach agreement on a substantive outcome.

To verify obligations assumed under the NPT, states parties are required to accept the nuclear safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). As of March 2007, there were safeguards agreements in force with 166 states, including some 140 comprehensive safeguards agreements pursuant to the NPT. In addition to the NPT, the *Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok and Pelindaba* require non-nuclear-weapon states to apply IAEA safeguards.

In 1996, an overwhelming majority of General Assembly members adopted the *Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)*, to ban any nuclear-test explosions anywhere. Originally proposed in 1954, it had taken four decades to adopt the Treaty, which extended the 1963 partial test ban to all environments. Opened for signature in 1996, the CTBT has not yet entered into force. Of 44 states listed in its Annex II whose ratification is required before the Treaty can enter into force, 10 have not yet signed or ratified the instrument.

The UN Secretary-General, in his capacity as the Depositary of the Treaty, has convened five Conferences on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT — in 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005 and 2007, respectively. The September 2007 Conference, held in Vienna, adopted a declaration that stressed the importance of achieving universal adherence to the Treaty and outlined specific measures to promote its entry into force.

With 177 signatory states participating in the Vienna-based Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO PrepCom), preparations are under way in the Provisional Technical Secretariat, established in 1997, to ensure that an international monitoring system is operational by the time the Treaty enters into force. The Agreement to Regulate the Relationship between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization was signed in 2000.

Nuclear-weapon-free zones. In a development that was to herald a new movement in regional arms control, the signing of the 1967 *Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco)* established for the first time a nuclear-weapon-free zone in a populated area of the world. With the deposit of Cuba’s instrument of ratification in 2002, the nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America and the Caribbean was consolidated to include all states in the region.

Subsequently, four additional zones were established — in the South Pacific (*Treaty of Rarotonga*, 1985), South-East Asia (*Treaty of Bangkok*, 1995), Africa (*Treaty of Pelindaba*, 1996), and Central Asia (*Central Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty*, 2006). Proposals have also been made for establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in Central Europe and South Asia, as well as for a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. The concept of an individual country as a nuclear-weapon-free zone was acknowledged by the international community in 1998, when the General Assembly supported Mongolia's self-declaration of its nuclear-weapon-free status.

Preventing nuclear proliferation. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) plays a prominent role in international efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons — serving as the world's inspectorate for the application of nuclear safeguards and verification measures covering civilian nuclear programmes.

Under agreements concluded with states, IAEA inspectors regularly visit nuclear facilities to verify records on the whereabouts of nuclear material, check IAEA installed instruments and surveillance equipment and confirm inventories of nuclear material. Taken together, these and other safeguards measures provide independent, international verification that governments are abiding by their commitment to peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

To verify the implementation of the 238 safeguards agreements in force in 155 states (and in Taiwan, China) during 2006, IAEA experts conducted a total of 1,733 safeguards inspections. Their aim was to ensure that the nuclear material held in some 900 nuclear installations in more than 70 countries was not diverted away from legitimate peaceful uses to military purposes. Through such annual inspections, IAEA contributes to international security and reinforces efforts to halt the spread of arms and move towards a world free of nuclear weapons.

Various types of safeguards agreements can be concluded with IAEA. Those in connection with the NPT, the *Model Protocol Additional to Existing Safeguards Agreements*, as well as those relating to the *Treaty of Tlatelolco*, the *Treaty of Pelindaba* and the *Treaty of Rarotonga* require non-nuclear-weapon states to submit their entire nuclear-fuel-cycle activities to IAEA safeguards. Other agreements cover safeguards at single facilities. IAEA safeguards under the NPT are an integral part of the international regime for non-proliferation and play an indispensable role in ensuring the implementation of the Treaty. (See www.iaea.org)

Removing the threat of chemical and biological weapons

The entry into force of the *Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)* in 1997 completed a process that started in 1925, when the *Geneva Protocol* prohibited the use of poison gas weapons. The Convention created, for the first time in the history of international arms control, a stringent international verification regime (involving collection of information on chemical facilities and routine global inspections) to oversee compliance with treaty obligations by states parties to the Convention. Established for that purpose at The Hague in the Netherlands, the **Organisation**

for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) had conducted, by August 2007, almost 3,000 inspections of 1,080 sites in 79 states parties. Through its inspections, 61 of the 65 declared chemical weapons production facilities have been certified as destroyed or converted for peaceful purposes. The First Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention was held in 2003. The Agreement Concerning the Relationship between the United Nations and the OPCW was signed in 2000. (See www.opcw.org)

Unlike the CWC, the 1972 *Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)*, which entered into force in 1975, does not provide for a verification mechanism. However, states parties exchange, as a confidence-building measure, detailed information each year on such items as their high-risk biological research facilities. The Sixth Review Conference of the States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention, meeting in December 2006, decided to establish an **Implementation Support Unit (ISU)**, to help states parties bolster implementation of the Convention.

Unlike the nuclear non-proliferation and chemical weapons treaties — which are supported by the IAEA and the OPCW, respectively — there was no such institutional support with respect to biological weapons until now. The Unit was launched on 20 August 2007 in Geneva, as part of the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs. It will be funded by states parties to the Convention.

Universalizing and fully implementing the BWC, as well as the CWC, and preventing the proliferation of biological and chemical weapons, represent a major task for the international community. In addition, a panel of governmental experts established pursuant to a resolution of the General Assembly, has addressed the issue of missiles in all its aspects.

Conventional weapons, confidence-building and transparency

(<http://disarmament.un.org/cab>)

Small arms, light weapons and practical disarmament. Following the end of the cold war, the international community was confronted with the eruption of intra-state conflicts in many parts of the world, in which small arms and light weapons were the weapons of choice. Though not the root cause of conflict, these weapons exacerbate violence, facilitate the use of child combatants, hinder humanitarian assistance and delay post-conflict reconstruction and development.

There are at least 640 million licensed firearms in the world. Of these, roughly two thirds are in the hands of civil society, while more than 225 million belong to state militaries and law enforcement agencies. Estimates of most other types of small arms and light weapons remain elusive. The legal trade in these arms and weapons exceeds \$4 billion a year, while the illicit trade is believed to be worth \$1 billion annually. Controlling the proliferation of illicit weapons is thus a necessary step towards better international, regional or national control over all aspects of the issue of small arms.

In 2001, an international Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects was held at the United Nations. Under its resulting programme of action, members agreed to ensure that licensed manufacturers apply a reliable marking on each small arm and light weapon in the production process; to keep comprehensive and accurate records on the manufacture, holding and transfer of such weapons under their jurisdiction; to strengthen their ability to cooperate in identifying and tracing the illicit trade of such weapons; and to guarantee that all small arms and light weapons thus confiscated, seized or collected are destroyed.

The result was a huge increase in government anti-trafficking activities. In the five years following adoption of the programme, nearly 140 countries had reported on illegal gun trafficking, while a third of all states had made efforts to collect weapons from those not legally entitled to hold them. There was also increased cooperation among and within regions to stem the flow of illicit weapons across national borders. From 26 June to 7 July 2006, more than 2,000 representatives from governments, international and regional organizations and civil society took part in a two-week event at UN Headquarters to review implementation of the programme of action, and to draw increased world attention to the issue.

Since the uncontrolled spread of illicit small arms impacts many aspects of the United Nations work — from children to health to refugees to development — a mechanism called “Coordinating Action on Small Arms” was put in place in 1998 to guarantee that the UN system addressed the many sides of small arms control in a coordinated manner. A comprehensive global effort to address the small arms scourge was also launched and sustained by civil society — through research, the promotion of coordinated national action, and global lobbying for an international convention on the arms trade.

Anti-personnel mines. The growing proliferation and indiscriminate use of anti-personnel landmines around the world has been a particular focus of attention. In 1995, a review of the *Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)* — also known as the *Inhumane Weapons Convention* — produced *Amended Protocol II*, which entered into force on 3 December 1998, strengthening restrictions on certain uses, transfers and types (self-destructing and detectable) of landmines. Currently 86 states are bound by this *Protocol*.

Not satisfied with what they considered an inadequate response to a serious humanitarian crisis, a group of like-minded states negotiated an agreement on a total ban on all anti-personnel landmines — the *Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Mine-Ban Convention)*, which was opened for signature in 1997 and entered into force on 1 March 1999. As of August 2007, 155 states had become parties to it.

The successful implementation of both instruments led to the destruction of stockpiles, mine clearance in affected countries, and fewer new victims. *Landmine Monitor Report, 2006* states that as of July 2006, it appears that 138 of the states parties to the Convention do not have stockpiles of anti-personnel mines (see www.icbl.org), and that states parties collectively had destroyed more than 39.5 million anti-personnel mines.

Explosive Remnants of War and Mines Other than Anti-Personnel Landmines (MOTAPM). While significant steps have been taken to address anti-personnel landmines, many civilians are killed or injured by other explosive munitions. They pose a potential hazard to populations through inadvertent contact or deliberate tampering, especially if the danger is not well understood. MOTAPM can cause severe damage even in small numbers; when placed in strategic locations, a single mine can cause entire roads to be closed and can disrupt normal activities. Combined with other possible characteristics of MOTAPM, such as anti-handling devices and minimum metal content, their humanitarian impact can be quite serious.

A group of governmental experts of the states parties to the *Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons* is currently negotiating an instrument on post-conflict remedial measures to reduce the risks caused by explosive remnants of war, and exploring the issue of MOTAPM, in order to consider the most appropriate way to reduce the risks posed by their irresponsible use.

Register of Conventional Arms. In order to contribute to confidence building and security among states, the General Assembly established the *United Nations Register of Conventional Arms* in 1992. This voluntary reporting arrangement enables participating governments to provide information on the export and import of seven categories of major conventional weapons systems: warships, inclusers; large-calibre artillery; and missiles and missile-launchers, including short-range man-portable air-defence systems.

Member states are also invited to provide data on transfers of small arms and light weapons, procurement through national production, and military holdings. Such data are compiled and published annually, including submarines; battle tanks; armoured combat vehicles; combat aircraft; attack helicopter by the UN as official documents available to the general public, as well as through the United Nations website. Thus far, more than 170 states have reported to the Register one or more times. It is estimated that the Register captures more than 95 per cent of the global trade in major conventional weapons.

Transparency of military expenditures. Another global mechanism designed to promote transparency in military matters is the *United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures*, introduced in 1980. This voluntary reporting instrument covers national expenditures on military personnel, operations and maintenance, procurement and construction, and research and development. So far, 124 states have reported to this instrument at least once.

Prevention of an arms race in outer space. Matters related to outer space have been pursued in international forums along two separate lines: those related to peaceful applications of space technology and those related to the prevention of an arms race in that environment. These issues have been discussed in the General Assembly, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subsidiary bodies, and the Conference on Disarmament. These discussions have contributed to the conclusion of a number of international agreements concerning both peaceful and military aspects of the use of outer space.

The fight against landmines

Since the 1980s, the United Nations has been addressing the problems posed by millions of landmines scattered in some 78 countries. Every year, they kill 15,000 to 20,000 people — most of them children, women and the elderly — and those who are not killed are often severely maimed. Years, and even decades after conflicts have ended, landmines continue to wreak havoc on civilian populations. And yet landmines continue to be used as weapons of war.

In the legal sphere, the UN-sponsored *Inhumane Weapons Convention* (1980) was strengthened in 1996 to include mine use in internal conflicts and to require that all mines be detectable. The 1997 landmark *Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Mine-Ban Convention)* banned the production, use and export of these weapons.

On the ground, 14 UN agencies, programmes, departments and funds are active in mine-related service. They find and destroy landmines and explosive remnants of war; assist victims; teach people how to remain safe in mine-affected areas; destroy stockpiles; and encourage universal participation in international agreements such as the *Mine-Ban Convention*.

The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) coordinates all mine-related activities of the UN system. It develops policies and standards, conducts ongoing assessment and monitoring of the threat posed by mines and unexploded ordnance, collects and disseminates information, mobilizes resources, and engages in advocacy in support of the global ban on antipersonnel landmines. It is also responsible for the provision of mine-action assistance in humanitarian emergencies and for peacekeeping operations. (See www.mineaction.org)

Reflecting the importance of preventing the militarization of outer space, the General Assembly's first special session on disarmament (1978) called for international negotiations on the issue. Since 1982, the Conference on Disarmament has had on its agenda an item entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space", but little progress has been made to date in negotiating a multilateral agreement, owing to continuing differences in perception among its members.

Relationship between disarmament and development. The question of promoting economic and social progress, especially for less developed nations, by using the resources released through general disarmament under a system of effective international control has long been debated among member states. Eventually, an international conference on the relationship between disarmament and development was held in 1987. In its resolution 61/53 of 6 December 2006, the General Assembly urged the international community to devote part of the resources made available through disarmament and arms limitation agreements to economic and social development, with a view to reducing the gap between developed and developing countries.

Regional approaches to disarmament. The United Nations supports initiatives towards disarmament undertaken at the regional and subregional levels, promoting

security and confidence-building measures among states within a region. It also assists them in implementing the guidelines and recommendations for regional approaches to disarmament adopted by the Disarmament Commission in 1993. To foster regional disarmament, the UN works with governmental organizations and arrangements — such as the African Union, the European Union, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the League of Arab States, the Organization of American States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe — as well as with international, regional and local non-governmental organizations.

Disarmament information and education activities. In 2002, the General Assembly adopted a report by a group of experts on disarmament and non-proliferation education, reaffirming that disarmament education was an integral part of peace education and an important aspect of every citizen's training for participation in civil life. In 2003 and 2004, the UN, in partnership with the Hague Appeal for Peace, conducted a peace and small arms education project aimed at children and youth in four countries (Albania, Cambodia, Niger and Peru).

The United Nations undertakes information and education activities on multilateral disarmament in the framework of its *Disarmament Information Programme* — through publications, special events, meetings, seminars, panel discussions, exhibits and a comprehensive website on disarmament issues. The *United Nations Disarmament Fellowship Programme*, launched by the General Assembly in 1978, has trained over 600 public officials from about 150 countries — many of whom are now in positions of responsibility in the field of disarmament within their own governments.

Gender mainstreaming in disarmament. The face of warfare has changed in recent years as women and girls have increasingly been affected by conflicts, both as victims and perpetrators. The UN promotes understanding of the importance of gender perspectives in all aspects of disarmament — whether collecting and destroying weapons, demining, conducting fact-finding missions, or participating in decision-making and peace processes. For instance, a gender perspective would consider how the spread of small arms affects women in particular and what might be done about it.

Peaceful uses of outer space

(www.unoosa.org)

The United Nations works to ensure that outer space is used for peaceful purposes and that the benefits from space activities are shared by all nations. This concern with the peaceful uses of outer space began soon after the launch of Sputnik — the first man-made satellite — by the Soviet Union in 1957, and has kept pace with advances in space technology. The United Nations has played an important role, by developing international space law and by promoting international cooperation in space science and technology.

The main intergovernmental body in this field is the **United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space**. It reviews the scope of international cooperation in peaceful uses of outer space, devises programmes and directs United Nations technical cooperation, encourages research and dissemination of information, and contributes to the development of international space law. Set up by the General Assembly in 1959, it is made up of 69 member states. A number of international organizations, both intergovernmental and non-governmental, have observer status with the Committee.

The Committee has two subcommittees:

- The **Scientific and Technical Subcommittee** is the focal point of international cooperation in space technology and research.
- The **Legal Subcommittee** works to ensure the development of a legal framework concomitant with the rapid technological development of space activities.

The Committee and its subcommittees meet annually to consider questions put before them by the General Assembly, reports submitted to them and issues raised by member states. Working on the basis of consensus, the Committee makes recommendations to the General Assembly.

Legal instruments

The work of the Committee and its Legal Subcommittee has resulted in the adoption by the General Assembly of five legal instruments, all of which are in force:

- The 1966 *Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (Outer Space Treaty)* provides that space exploration shall be carried out for the benefit of all countries, irrespective of their degree of development. It seeks to maintain outer space as the province of all humankind, free for exploration and use by all states, solely for peaceful purposes, and not subject to national appropriation.
- The 1967 *Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space (Rescue Agreement)* provides for aiding the crews of spacecraft in case of accident or emergency landing, and establishes procedures for returning to the launching authority a space object found beyond the territory of that authority.
- The 1971 *Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects (Liability Convention)* provides that the launching state is liable for damage caused by its space objects on the earth's surface, to aircraft in flight, and to space objects of another state or persons or property on board such objects.
- The 1974 *Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space (Registration Convention)* provides that launching states maintain registries of space objects and provide information on objects launched to the United Nations. Under this Convention, the Office for Outer Space Affairs maintains a United Nations Registry on objects launched

UNISPACE conferences

The United Nations has organized three major conferences on the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space, all held in Vienna. The first conference, held in 1968, examined the practical benefits deriving from space research and exploration, and the extent to which non-space countries, especially developing countries, might enjoy them. The second conference (UNISPACE '82) reflected the growing involvement of all nations in outer space activities. It assessed the state of space science and technology, considered the applications of space technology for development, and discussed international space cooperation.

The third conference (UNISPACE III), held in 1999, outlined a wide variety of actions to protect the global environment and manage natural resources; increase use of space applications for human security, development and welfare; protect the space environment; increase developing countries' access to space science and its benefits; and enhance training and education opportunities, especially for young people.

UNISPACE III also called for a global system to manage natural disaster mitigation, relief and prevention; the improvement of educational programmes and satellite-related infrastructure to promote literacy; and international coordination of activities related to near-earth objects. A Space Generation Forum, organized for and by young professionals and university students, contributed to the outcome of the conference. The event brought together governments, intergovernmental bodies, civil society and, for the first time, the private sector.

In 2004, the General Assembly conducted a five-year review of progress made in implementing the recommendations of UNISPACE III. A plan of action endorsed by the Assembly resolution calls for further action in the use of space to support global agendas for sustainable development; the development of coordinated global space capabilities; the use of space to support specific agendas to meet human development needs; and overall capacity development.

UNISPACE III recommendations are being implemented by various mechanisms. The results of their efforts have included the establishment of the UN Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER) and the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems.

into outer space. Information has been provided by all launching states and organizations. A searchable online index of objects launched into outer space is maintained by that Office on its website (www.oosa.unvienna.org).

- The 1979 *Agreement Governing Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies* (*Moon Agreement*) elaborates the principles relating to the moon and other celestial bodies set out in the 1966 Treaty, and sets up the basis to regulate the future exploration and exploitation of natural resources on those bodies.

On the basis of the work of the Committee and its Legal Subcommittee, the General Assembly has adopted sets of principles, including the following, on the conduct of space activities:

- The *Principles governing the use by states of artificial earth satellites for international direct television broadcasting* (1982) recognize that such use has international political, economic, social and cultural implications. Such activities should promote the dissemination and exchange of information and knowledge, foster development, and respect the sovereign rights of states, including the principle of non-intervention.
- The *Principles relating to remote sensing of the earth from outer space* (1986) state that such activities are to be conducted for the benefit of all countries, respecting the sovereignty of all states and peoples over their natural resources, and for the rights and interests of other states. Remote sensing is to be used to preserve the environment and to reduce the impact of natural disasters.
- The *Principles on the use of nuclear power sources in outer space* (1992) recognize that such sources are essential for some space missions, but that their use should be based on a thorough safety assessment. The Principles provide guidelines for the safe use of nuclear power sources and for notification of a malfunction of a space object where there is a risk of re-entry of radioactive material to the earth.
- The *Declaration on international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for the benefit and in the interest of all states, particularly developing countries* (1996) provides that states are free to determine all aspects of their participation in international space cooperation on an equitable and mutually acceptable basis, and that such cooperation should be conducted in ways that are considered most effective and appropriate by the countries concerned.

Office for Outer Space Affairs

The Vienna-based **United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs** serves as the secretariat for the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subcommittees, and assists developing countries in using space technology for development.

The Office disseminates space-related information to member states through its International Space Information System, and maintains the United Nations Register on Objects Launched into Outer Space. Through its *United Nations Programme on Space Applications*, the Office works to improve the use of space science and technology for the economic and social development of all nations, in particular developing countries. Under this programme, it also provides technical advisory services to member states in conducting pilot projects, and undertakes training and fellowship programmes in such areas as remote sensing, satellite communication, satellite meteorology, satellite navigation, basic space science and space law.

The Office is a cooperating body to the International Charter, “Space and Major Disasters” — a mechanism through which UN agencies can request satellite imagery to support their response to disasters. The Office also serves as secretariat to the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems — an informal body that promotes cooperation on civil satellite-based positioning, navigation, timing and value-added services, as well as on the

compatibility and interoperability of global navigation satellite systems, while increasing their use to support sustainable development — particularly in developing countries.

Space-based disaster management. The Office for Outer Space Affairs manages the newly established United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER). Established by the General Assembly in December 2006, UN-SPIDER aims to provide all countries and relevant international and regional organizations with universal access to all types of space-based information and services supporting the full disaster-management cycle. It is helping to increase the number of countries that receive assistance with respect to disaster-management planning, risk reduction and emergency response using space-based information, and devising policies on the use of space-based technologies.

The Office provides technical assistance to the regional centres for space science and technology education and to the network of space science and technology education, which are affiliated with the United Nations. The centres work with member states to enhance their capability in space science and technology at the local level. They also help scientists and researchers to develop skills and knowledge in using space science and technology for sustainable development. Currently there are four regional centres: the Asia and the Pacific regional centre in India; the African regional centres in Morocco and Nigeria; and the joint Latin America and Caribbean centre in Mexico and Brazil.

Inter-agency meetings on outer space. Space technology and its applications are increasingly utilized throughout the UN system. The Office for Outer Space Affairs serves as secretariat to the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities, which has met annually since 1975 to increase space-related cooperation among UN bodies, coordinate activities, build synergies, and consider new initiatives. The Meeting also produces the Secretary-General's report on the coordination of space-related activities of the UN system and publishes outreach materials, such as the brochure on "Space Solutions for the World's Problems: How the United Nations family is using space technology for sustainable development".

Latest developments

In a publication of this kind, it is impossible to remain entirely up to date with the rapid changes taking place in the political and security sphere. For the latest developments in these and all areas of UN involvement, please consult the UN website (www.un.org) and, in particular, the UN News website (www.un.org/News).



Chapter 3



ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Although most people associate the United Nations with the issues of peace and security, the vast majority of the Organization's resources are in fact devoted to advancing the Charter's pledge to "promote higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development". United Nations development efforts have profoundly affected the lives and well-being of millions of people throughout the world. Guiding the United Nations endeavours is the conviction that lasting international peace and security are possible only if the economic and social well-being of people everywhere is assured.

Many of the economic and social transformations that have taken place globally since 1945 have been significantly affected in their direction and shape by the work of the United Nations. As the global centre for consensus-building, the UN has set priorities and goals for international cooperation to assist countries in their development efforts and to foster a supportive global economic environment.

Since the 1990s, the UN has provided a platform for formulating and promoting key new developmental objectives on the international agenda, through a series of global conferences. It has articulated the need for incorporating issues such as the advancement of women, human rights, sustainable development, environmental protection and good governance into the development paradigm.

This global consensus was also expressed through a series of *international development decades*, the first beginning in 1961. These broad statements of policy and goals, while emphasizing certain issues of particular concern in each decade, consistently stressed the need for progress on all aspects of development, social as well as economic, and the importance of narrowing the disparities between industrialized and developing countries. As the twentieth century came to an end, the focus shifted to implementing these commitments in an integrated and coordinated manner.

At their Millennium Summit in 2000, member states adopted a set of wide-ranging **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)**, supported by a series of specific, attainable targets. Together, the goals and targets aim at: eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; achieving universal primary education; promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women; reducing child mortality; improving maternal health; combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability; and developing a global partnership for development. The international community recommitted itself to those goals during a World Summit in 2005, aimed at reviewing and moving ahead with the outcome of the Millennium Summit.

Making globalization work for all

In their *Millennium Declaration*, in September 2000, world leaders stressed that ensuring globalization becomes a positive force for all represents the central challenge before the international community. People must feel included if globalization is to succeed, Secretary-General Kofi Annan said in his report to the Millennium Summit.*

The benefits of globalization — including faster growth, higher living standards, and new opportunities for countries and individuals — are obvious, he said. Yet a backlash has begun, because these benefits are so unequally distributed, and because the global market is not yet underpinned by rules based on shared social objectives.

Global companies should be guided by the concept of global “corporate citizenship”, and apply good practices wherever they operate — promoting equitable labour standards, respect for human rights and protection of the environment.

For its part, the United Nations must “ensure that globalization provides benefits not just for some, but for all; that opportunity exists not merely for the privileged, but for every human being everywhere”. The Organization must “broker differences among states” and forge “coalitions for change” by opening up further to the participation of the many actors involved in globalization — civil society, the private sector, parliamentarians, local authorities, scientific associations and educational institutions.

Above all, “we must put people at the centre of everything we do”, Mr. Annan said. “Only when that begins to happen will we know that globalization is indeed becoming inclusive, allowing everyone to share its opportunities.”

* *We the Peoples: the role of the United Nations in the 21st century*. United Nations, 2000, ISBN 92-1-100844-1, E.00.1.16. Also available at www.un.org/millennium/sg/report.

International debate on economic and social issues has increasingly reflected the commonality of interests between rich and poor countries in solving the many problems that transcend national boundaries. Issues such as refugee populations, organized crime, drug trafficking and AIDS are seen as global problems requiring coordinated action. The impact of persistent poverty and unemployment in one region can be quickly felt in others, not least through migration, social disruption and conflict. Similarly, in the age of a global economy, financial instability in one country is immediately felt in the markets of others.

There is also growing consensus on the role played by democracy, human rights, popular participation, good governance and the empowerment of women in fostering economic and social development. (For the UN and economic and social development, see www.un.org/esa)

Coordinating development activities

Despite advances on many fronts, gross disparities in wealth and well-being continue to characterize the world. Reducing poverty and redressing inequalities, both within and between countries, remain fundamental goals of the United Nations.

The UN system works in a variety of ways to promote its economic and social goals — by formulating policies, advising governments on their development plans, setting international norms and standards, and mobilizing funds for development programmes. Through the work of its various funds and programmes and its family of specialized agencies in areas as diverse as education, air safety, environmental protection and labour conditions, the UN touches the lives of people everywhere.

In 2005, the UN system spent \$13.7 billion on operational activities for development. An additional \$13.6 billion went for global humanitarian funding — nearly half of which was in response to the Indian Ocean tsunami and an earthquake in South Asia.

The **Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)** is the principal body coordinating the economic and social work of the United Nations and its operational arms. It is also the central forum for discussing international economic and social issues and for formulating policy recommendations (see www.un.org/docs/ecosoc).

Under ECOSOC, the **Committee for Development Policy**, made up of 24 experts working in their personal capacity, acts as an advisory body on emerging economic, social and environmental issues. It also sets the criteria for the designation of least developed countries. The UN category of “least developed countries” was established by the General Assembly in the 1970s, based on UNCTAD’s early work on the differing characteristics and stages of development of developing countries.

The **United Nations Development Group**, comprised of Secretariat bodies as well as the development funds and programmes, assists in the management and coordination of development work within the Organization (see www.undg.org). This executive body works to enhance cooperation between policy-making entities and the distinct operational programmes. The **Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs**, comprised of Secretariat bodies and including the regional commissions, is also an instrument for policy development and management (see www.un.org/esa/ecesa).

Within the United Nations Secretariat, the **Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)** gathers and analyses economic and social data; carries out policy analysis and coordination, and provides substantive and technical support to member states in the social and economic sphere (see www.un.org/esa/desa). Its substantive support to intergovernmental processes facilitates member states’ role in setting norms and standards and in agreeing on common courses of action in response to global challenges. DESA provides a crucial interface between global policies and national action, and among research, policy and operational activities.

The five **regional commissions** facilitate similar exchanges of economic and social information and policy analysis in the regions of Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Western Asia (see www.un.org/issues/reg-comm.html).

The various **United Nations funds and programmes** deal with operational activities for development in programme countries, while the **United Nations specialized agencies** provide support and assistance for countries' development efforts. At a time of increasingly limited resources, both human and financial, enhanced coordination and cooperation among the various arms of the system are vital if development goals are to be realized.

Economic development

The world has witnessed enormous economic development in recent decades, but the generation of wealth and prosperity has been very uneven — so uneven that economic imbalances are seen to exacerbate social problems and political instability in virtually every region of the world. The end of the cold war and the accelerating integration of the global economy have not solved persistent problems of extreme poverty, indebtedness, underdevelopment and trade imbalance.

One of the founding principles of the United Nations is the conviction that economic development for all peoples is the surest way to achieve political, economic and social security. It is a central preoccupation of the Organization that some 3 billion people, or half the world's population, must live on less than \$2 per day — mostly in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Some 781 million adults, two-thirds of them women, are illiterate; 117 million children have no access to school; 1.2 billion people lack access to safe water; and 2.6 billion lack access to proper sanitation. At the end of 2006, 195.2 million workers were unemployed worldwide, while the “working poor” — those who earn less than \$2 a day — had risen to 1.37 billion.

The United Nations continues to be the sole institution dedicated to finding ways to ensure that economic expansion and globalization are guided by policies aimed at ensuring human welfare, sustainable development, the eradication of poverty, fair trade and the reduction of crippling foreign debt.

The United Nations urges the adoption of macroeconomic policies that address current imbalances — particularly the growing gap between the North and South — as well as the persistent problems of the least developed countries, and the unprecedented needs of countries in transition from centralized to market economies. All over the world, UN programmes of assistance promote poverty reduction, child survival, environmental protection, women's progress and human rights. For millions in poor countries, these programmes *are* the United Nations.

Official development assistance

Through their policies and loans, the lending institutions of the United Nations system have, collectively, an enormous influence on the economies of developing countries. This is especially

The United Nations competitive advantage

The United Nations system has unique strengths in promoting development:

- Its *universality*: all countries have a voice when policy decisions are made.
- Its *impartiality*: it does not represent any particular national or commercial interest, and can thus develop special relations of trust with countries and their people to provide aid with no strings attached.
- Its *global presence*: it has the world's largest network of country offices for delivering assistance for development.
- Its *comprehensive mandate*, encompassing development, security, humanitarian assistance, human rights and the environment.
- Its *commitment* to “the peoples of the United Nations”.

true for the least developed countries (LDCs), which include 50 nations whose extreme poverty and indebtedness have marginalized them from global growth and development. These nations, 34 of which are in Africa, are given priority attention in several United Nations assistance programmes.

Small island developing states, landlocked developing countries and countries with economies in transition also suffer from critical problems requiring special attention from the international community. These, too, are given priority in the assistance programmes of the UN system, as well as through official development assistance (ODA) from member states.

Of the world's 31 landlocked developing countries, 16 are LDCs. Of the 38 small island developing states, 10 are LDCs.

In 1970, the General Assembly set an ODA target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) — now referred to as gross national income (GNI)¹. For years, the collective effort of members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), now comprising 22 industrialized countries, hovered at around half that level.

During the 1990s, ODA fell sharply, bringing it to an all-time low. Within the reduced total, however, more assistance went to basic social services — up from 4 per cent of ODA in 1995, to 14 per cent by the year 2000 (nearly \$4 billion). And more than four-fifths of aid was no longer tied to the procurement of goods and services in the donor country.

ODA levels began to recover during the new century. Among DAC members, total ODA was up to 0.30 per cent of combined GNI in 2006, at \$103.9 billion. To date, only five countries — Denmark, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden — have met and maintained the 0.7 per cent target for ODA.

¹ GDP is the sum of value added by all resident producers plus any product taxes (less subsidies) not included in the valuation of output. GNI is GDP plus net receipts of primary income (compensation of employees and property income) from abroad.

The International Conference on Financing for Development, held at Monterrey, Mexico, in 2002, stimulated commitments from major donors to increase ODA as a first step towards reversing its decline in the 1990s. It also sought to shift the focus of such assistance more towards poverty reduction, education and health (see *box*).

United Nations ODA is derived from two sources: grant assistance from United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes; and support from lending institutions of the UN system, such as the World Bank and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

The World Bank provided \$24.7 billion in fiscal year 2007, working in more than 100 developing countries. At the end of 2006, IFAD was financing 186 ongoing programmes and projects worth a total investment cost of \$6.2 billion — about \$2.9 billion provided by IFAD, and some \$3.3 billion by its partners. In addition, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) works to ensure the viability of the international monetary and financial system through dialogue and policy advice, technical assistance and lending.

Funding for United Nations development activities reached \$15.54 billion in 2005 — nearly double the \$8.55 billion received in 2001. ODA from UN agencies, funds and programmes is widely distributed among the many countries in need.

Promoting development worldwide

The **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** is the developing countries' development agency, committed to making a pivotal contribution to halving world poverty by 2015. UNDP provides sound policy advice and helps build institutional capacity that generates equitable economic growth.

With a global network of 166 country offices, UNDP works on the ground to help people help themselves. Its focus is on helping countries build and share solutions to the challenges of: poverty reduction and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; democratic governance, including the governance of HIV/AIDS responses; crisis prevention and recovery; and environment and sustainable development. In each of these areas, UNDP advocates for the protection of human rights and, especially, the empowerment of women. It is a hands-on organization, with the vast majority of its staff working in the countries where people need help.

The majority of UNDP's core programme funds go to those countries which are home to the world's extreme poor. In 2005, 2.5 billion people — 40 per cent of the world population — lived on less than \$2 per day, with some 1.7 billion people living on less than \$1 a day. During that year, UNDP spending on operational activities of the UN system increased to \$3.65 billion. Contributions to UNDP are voluntary, and come from nearly every government in the world. Countries that receive UNDP-administered assistance contribute to project costs through personnel, facilities, equipment and supplies.

To ensure maximum impact from global development resources, UNDP coordinates its activities with other UN funds and programmes and the international financial institutions,

International Conference on Financing for Development

(www.un.org/esa/ffd)

The International Conference on Financing for Development was held from 18 to 22 March 2002 in Monterrey, Mexico. This UN-hosted Conference on key financial and development issues attracted 50 heads of state or government and over 200 ministers, as well as leaders from the private sector, civil society and all the major intergovernmental financial, trade, economic and monetary organizations.

The Monterrey Conference also marked the first quadripartite exchange of views between governments, civil society, the business community and the institutional stakeholders on global economic issues. These global discussions involved over 800 participants in 12 separate roundtables — co-chaired by heads of governments, the heads of the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization and the regional development banks, as well as ministers of finance, trade and foreign affairs. The outcome of the Conference, known as the Monterrey Consensus, provides a picture of the new global approach to financing development.

Subsequently, the General Assembly decided to reconstitute its high-level dialogue on strengthening international cooperation for development as the intergovernmental focal point for follow-up on the Conference and related issues — to be held during odd-numbered years beginning in 2003. It includes a policy dialogue, with the participation of the relevant stakeholders, on implementation of the results of the Conference, as well as on the coherence and consistency of the international monetary, financial and trading systems in support of development.

The Assembly also decided that interactions between representatives of the Economic and Social Council, the directors of the executive boards of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and representatives of the appropriate intergovernmental body of the World Trade Organization would continue each spring. The April 2002 consultation was expanded to include roundtables with representatives from civil society and the business community.

The Fourth World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference, held at Doha, Qatar, in 2001, also addressed the means of implementing sustainable development. Subsequent WTO Ministerial Conferences were held at Cancun in 2003, and in Hong Kong in 2005. A Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development was to be held in Doha in the second half of 2008.

including the World Bank and the IMF. In addition, UNDP's country and regional programmes draw on the expertise of developing country nationals and NGOs. Seventy-five per cent of all UNDP-supported projects are implemented by local organizations.

At the country level, UNDP promotes an integrated approach to the provision of United Nations development assistance. In several developing countries, it has established a **United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)** made up of United Nations teams under the leadership of the local United Nations resident coordinator, who is in many instances

the resident representative of UNDP. The frameworks articulate a coordinated response to the main development challenges identified for the United Nations by governments. Resident coordinators serve as coordinators of humanitarian assistance in cases of human disasters, natural disasters and complex emergency situations.

In addition to its regular programmes, UNDP administers various special-purpose funds. Among these: The **UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)** offers a combination of investment capital, capacity-building and technical advisory services, to promote microfinance and local development in the least developed countries. The **United Nations Volunteers (UNV)** is the UN focal point for promoting and harnessing volunteerism for effective development. And the mission of the **UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)** is the empowerment of women and gender equality in all levels of development planning and practice.

UNDP, together with the World Bank and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), is one of the managing partners of the **Global Environment Facility** (see www.gefweb.org). UNDP is also one of the sponsors of the **Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)**.

Lending for development

The **World Bank**, comprising the **International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)** and the **International Development Association (IDA)**, works in more than 100 developing countries, bringing finance and/or technical expertise to help them reduce poverty. Its current portfolio of projects covers Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa, Europe and Central Asia, East Asia and the Pacific, Africa, and South Asia.

The Bank is currently involved in more than 1,800 projects in virtually every sector and developing country. The projects are as diverse as providing microcredit in Bosnia and Herzegovina, raising AIDS-prevention awareness in Guinea, supporting education of girls in Bangladesh, improving health-care delivery in Mexico, helping Timor-Leste rebuild upon independence, and helping India rebuild Gujarat after a devastating earthquake.

One of the world's largest sources of development assistance, the Bank supports the efforts of developing country governments to build schools and health centres, provide water and electricity, fight disease and protect the environment. It does this through the provision of loans, which are repaid. Developing countries borrow from the Bank because they need capital, technical assistance and policy advice.

There are two types of World Bank lending. The first type is for higher-income developing countries, some of which can borrow from commercial sources, but generally only at high interest rates. These countries receive loans from the IBRD, which allow them more time to repay than if they borrowed from a commercial bank — 15 to 20 years with a three-to-five-year grace period before the repayment of principal begins. Funds are borrowed for specific programmes in support of poverty reduction, delivery of social services, environmental protection and economic growth. In fiscal year 2007, IBRD provided loans totalling \$12.8 billion in support of 112 new projects in

34 countries. The Bank, which has a AAA credit rating, raises nearly all its money through the sale of its bonds in the world's financial markets.

The second type of loan goes to the poorest countries, which are usually not creditworthy in the international financial markets and are unable to pay near-market interest rates on the money they borrow. Lending to the poorest countries is done by a World Bank affiliate, the **International Development Association (IDA)**. Funded largely by contributions from 40 rich member countries, IDA helps the world's poorest countries by providing grant financing and credits. These "credits" are actually interest-free loans with a 10-year grace period and maturities of 35 to 40 years. In fiscal year 2007, IDA provided \$11.9 billion in financing for 189 new projects in 64 low-income countries. It is the world's largest source of concessional assistance for the world's poorest countries.

Under its regulations, the Bank can lend only to governments, but it works closely with local communities, NGOs and private enterprise. Its projects are designed to assist the poorest sectors of the population. Successful development requires that governments and communities "own" their development projects. The Bank encourages governments to work closely with NGOs and civil society to strengthen participation by people affected by Bank-financed projects. NGOs based in borrowing countries collaborate in about half of these projects.

The Bank encourages the private sector by advocating stable economic policies, sound government finances, and open, honest and accountable governance. It supports many sectors in which private-sector development is making rapid inroads — finance, power, telecommunications, information technology, oil and gas and industry. The Bank's regulations prohibit it from lending directly to the private sector, but a Bank affiliate — the **International Finance Corporation (IFC)** — exists expressly to promote private sector investment by supporting high-risk sectors and countries. Another affiliate, the **Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA)**, provides political risk insurance (guarantees) to those who invest in or lend to developing countries.

But the World Bank does much more than lend money. It also routinely includes technical assistance in the projects it finances. This may include advice on such issues as the overall size of a country's budget and where the money should be allocated, or how to set up village health clinics, or what sort of equipment is needed to build a road. The Bank funds a few projects each year devoted exclusively to providing expert advice and training. It also trains people from borrowing countries on how to create and carry out development programmes.

The IBRD supports sustainable development projects in such areas as reforestation, pollution control and land management; water, sanitation and agriculture; and conservation of natural resources. It is the main funder of the **Global Environment Facility (GEF)**, as well as the world's largest long-term financier of HIV/AIDS programmes, having committed about \$4 billion since 1988. It has also put significant resources into the **Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC)** Initiative, aimed at providing poor countries with debt relief amounting to \$41 billion over time.

Africa: a United Nations priority

The United Nations, reflecting the concern of the international community, has made the critical socio-economic conditions in Africa a priority concern. In affirming its commitment to support the region's development, it has devised special programmes to find durable solutions to external debt and debt-service problems, to increase foreign direct investment, to enhance national capacity-building, to deal with the shortage of domestic resources for development, to facilitate the integration of the African countries into international trade, and to tackle HIV/AIDS.

In 1996, the General Assembly launched the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa. Under that Initiative, ILO's Jobs for Africa Programme aimed to develop and strengthen national and regional capacity to combat poverty by generating employment. UNDP's Africa 2000 Initiative provided support to rural women for sustainable development activities, while UNESCO, UNICEF and World Bank-led activities focused on improving primary education in countries where primary school enrolment was low.

The Special Initiative was brought to a close in 2002 following a review by the Assembly, which then adopted the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) — an African-owned and led initiative, launched by the Organization of African Unity (now the African Union) in July 2001, as the framework of international efforts for Africa's development (see www.nepad.org).

The UN participates at the country, regional and global levels, through such efforts as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, as well as programmes led by the Economic Commission for Africa, which provide a framework for increased coordination and collaboration at the subregional and regional levels. The Office of the Special Adviser on Africa reports on support provided by the UN system and the international community and coordinates global advocacy in support of the New Partnership (see www.un.org/africa/osaa).

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) has intensified its campaign against HIV/AIDS in Africa. Seeking as broad a base as possible for its campaign, UNAIDS has brought together governments, regional bodies, development agencies, non-governmental organizations and the corporate sector, including pharmaceutical corporations, under an umbrella group known as the International Partnership Against AIDS in Africa.

The Secretary-General and United Nations agencies have called on industrialized countries to ease Africa's economic hurdles — by arranging deeper debt relief, by lowering tariffs that penalize African exports and by increasing official development assistance. The United Nations efforts are also linked with other development undertakings, such as the Tokyo International Conference on African Development, the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative and the Alliance for African Industrialization.

At their July 2005 summit, the leaders of the “Group of Eight” developed nations proposed 100 per cent cancellation of debt owed to the IDA, the IMF and the African Development Fund by some of the world’s poorest countries, mostly in Africa and Latin America. Debt relief under the resulting **Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI)** is estimated at about \$50 billion, including \$37 billion from IDA alone, which began implementing it at the start of fiscal year 2007.

Lending for stability

Many countries turn to the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)**, a United Nations specialized agency, when internal or external factors seriously undermine their balance-of-payments position, fiscal stability or capacity to meet debt-service commitments. The IMF offers advice and policy recommendations to overcome these problems, and often makes financial resources available to member countries in support of economic reform programmes.

Members with balance-of-payments problems generally avail themselves of the IMF’s financial resources by “purchasing” reserve assets — in the form of other members’ currencies and Special Drawing Rights — with an equivalent amount of their own currencies. The IMF levies charges on these loans, and requires that members repay the loans by repurchasing their own currencies from the IMF over a specified time.

The main IMF facilities are:

- *Stand-by arrangements*, designed to provide short-term balance-of-payments assistance for deficits of a temporary or cyclical nature; these must be repaid within 5 years.
- *Extended Fund Facility*, designed to support medium-term programmes aimed at overcoming balance-of-payments difficulties stemming from macroeconomic and structural problems; these must be repaid within 10 years.
- *Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF)*, a concessional facility designed for low-income member countries with the explicit goal of reducing poverty. Members qualifying for funding may borrow up to 140 per cent of their quota under a three-year arrangement (and up to 185 per cent under exceptional circumstances). Loans carry an annual interest rate of 0.5 per cent; repayments are made beginning 5 1/2 years and ending 10 years after disbursement. As of August 2006, 78 low-income countries were eligible for this assistance.
- *Exogenous Shocks Facility*, provides PRGF-type support for low-income countries that do not have PRGR programmes in place, when facing such exogenous shocks as commodity price changes (including oil), natural disasters, and crisis in neighbouring countries that disrupt trade.
- *Compensatory Financing Facility*, which provides timely financing for members experiencing temporary export shortfalls or excesses in cereal import costs.

- *Contingent Credit Lines*, which aim to prevent the spread of a crisis by enabling countries that are pursuing sound policies to have quick access to financing should a crisis threaten.
- *Supplemental Reserve Facility*, which provides financial assistance in financial crises for exceptional balance-of-payments difficulties due to a large short-term financing need resulting from a sudden and disruptive loss of market confidence; repayments are expected within 2 1/2 years but can be extended to 3 years.

To provide debt relief to heavily indebted poor countries following sound policies, the IMF and the World Bank jointly provide, under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, exceptional assistance to eligible countries to reduce their external debt burdens to sustainable levels. They have now also joined in supporting the **Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative** (see above), which was developed to supplement the HIPC Initiative.

Surveillance is the process by which the IMF appraises its members' exchange rate policies through a comprehensive analysis of the general economic situation and policies of each member. The IMF carries out surveillance through annual consultations with individual countries; multilateral surveillance twice a year; regional surveillance through discussion with regional groupings; as well as precautionary arrangements, enhanced surveillance and programme monitoring, which provide a member with close IMF monitoring in the absence of the use of IMF resources.

The IMF provides technical assistance to its members in several broad areas: the design and implementation of fiscal and monetary policy; institution-building, such as the development of central banks or treasuries; and the collection and refinement of statistical data. It also provides training to member countries' officials at the IMF institutes in Washington, D.C., Brasilia, Tunis, Dalian (China), Vienna, Abu Dhabi and Singapore.

Investment and development

As foreign direct investment (FDI) has continued to expand dramatically, developing countries have increasingly opened up their economies to such investment, and to invest more in other developing countries as well. Various parts of the United Nations system — such as FAO, UNDP and UNIDO — monitor and assess developments, and assist developing country governments in attracting investment.

Two affiliates of the World Bank — the International Finance Corporation and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency — help promote investment in developing countries. Through its advisory work, the **International Finance Corporation (IFC)** helps governments create conditions that stimulate the flow of both domestic and foreign private savings and investment. IFC stimulates and mobilizes private investment in the developing world by demonstrating that investments there can be profitable. As of fiscal year 2007, IFC had committed more than \$64 billion of its own funds, and had arranged \$27 billion in syndications for some 3,760 companies in 140 developing countries since its founding in 1956.

The **Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA)** is an investment insurance affiliate of the Bank. Its goal is to facilitate the flow of private investment for productive purposes to developing member countries, by offering investors long-term political risk insurance — that is, coverage against the risks of expropriation, currency transfer, war and civil disturbance — and by providing advisory services. MIGA carries out promotional programmes, disseminates information on investment opportunities, and provides technical assistance that enhances the investment promotion capabilities of countries. Since its inception in 1988, MIGA has issued nearly 900 guarantees for projects in 96 developing countries, worth more than \$17.4 billion and facilitated several times that amount in foreign direct investment.

The **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)** helps developing countries and economies in transition promote foreign direct investment and improve their investment climate — with a view to minimizing its negative impact and maximizing its benefits for development. UNCTAD helps governments understand the policy implications of FDI and to formulate and implement policies accordingly.

UNCTAD promotes understanding of the linkages between investment, trade, enterprise development and technological capacity-building, and conducts research on global FDI trends. These are presented in its annual *World Investment Report*, *Investment Policy Reviews*, *World Investment Directory* and other studies.

Trade and development

In 2007, for the fifth consecutive year, world trade was expected to maintain its momentum, with estimated overall output growth of 3.6 per cent, according to the 2007 *Trade and Development Report* of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

Developing countries in particular increased their per capita gross domestic product (GDP) by nearly 30 per cent between 2003 and 2007, UNCTAD reports, compared to 10 per cent in the highly industrialized countries. In East and South Asia, owing mainly to strong performances by China and India, economic growth allowed these subregions to more than double their per capita GDP in only 14 years.

Africa was set to continue expanding at around 6 per cent in 2007, while growth rates in Latin America and West Asia were expected to be close to 5 per cent — raising hopes of greater progress towards the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Nevertheless, imbalances in the world economy continue to increase; some see this as a matter of serious concern, while others view it as a natural and ultimately harmless consequence of an increasingly integrated global economy.

The **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)** is tasked with ensuring the integration of all countries in global trade. As the UN's focal point for dealing

Foreign direct investment and development

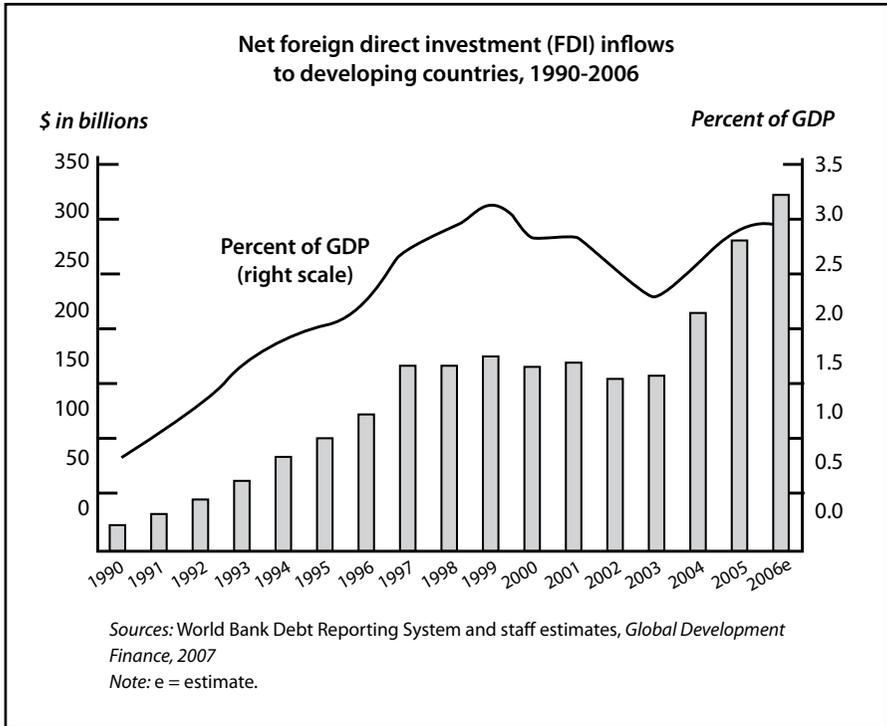
Foreign direct investment (FDI) continues to be a driving force in the world economy. The continuing expansion of investment flows underscores the central role played by transnational corporations (TNCs) in both industrialized and developing countries. According to UNCTAD's *World Investment Report 2007*:

- For the third consecutive year, FDI inflows rose by 38 per cent in 2006, to \$1.3 trillion. This was close to the 2000 record of \$1.4 trillion, with growth in all main subregions.
- The universe of TNCs includes some 78,000 parent companies with over 780,000 foreign affiliates, which in turn employed about 73 million workers in 2006. The affiliates also exported goods and services valued at more than \$4 trillion.
- The TNC universe continues to be dominated by firms from the European Union, Japan and the United States. The world's top 100 TNCs have remained relatively stable, with General Electric, Vodafone and General Motors having the largest foreign assets. Although the foreign assets of the top 100 have remained virtually unchanged since 2004, their foreign sales and employment increased by about 10 per cent in 2005.
- The number of developing-country firms among the world's 100 largest non-financial TNCs rose from five in 2004 to seven in 2005, in line with the overall rise of TNCs from the South.

* The World Investment Report focuses on global, regional and national trends in FDI, and on emerging measures to improve its contribution to development.

with development-related issues in the areas of trade, finance, technology, investment and sustainable development, UNCTAD works to maximize the trade, investment and development opportunities of developing countries. It helps them face the challenges arising from globalization and integrate into the world economy on an equitable basis. UNCTAD pursues these goals through research and policy analysis, intergovernmental deliberations, technical cooperation, and interaction with civil society and the business sector. In particular, UNCTAD:

- examines trends in the global economy and evaluates their impact on development;
- helps developing countries, and particularly the least developed among them, to become part of the international trading system and actively involved in international trade negotiations;
- examines global trends in foreign direct investment flows and their impact on trade, technology and development;
- helps developing countries attract investment;
- helps developing countries develop enterprises and entrepreneurship; and
- helps developing countries and transition economies improve the efficiency of their trade-supporting services.



UNCTAD’s work helps clarify trends and shape thinking and policies regarding the trade-development nexus in the context of globalization. It also enables developing countries to participate effectively in international trade in goods, services and commodities. It was one of the main authors of the concept of special and differential treatment for developing countries, and a key actor in its incorporation into the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and, later, the World Trade Organization. UNCTAD is also the UN system’s focal point on trade logistics. By providing institutional, legal and operational solutions to reduce transaction costs and increase transport connectivity, it helps improve developing countries’ access to world markets.

Current UNCTAD research highlights the fact that a “second generation” of trade-driven globalization is emerging, characterized by economic multi-polarity, and with the emerging South and South-South trade playing a significant role. Nevertheless, UNCTAD has raised the question of how the international trading system might be reshaped so as to sustain the current expansion of trade and its changing geography — while dealing decisively with the continuing spectre of worsening poverty and underdevelopment in some countries.

UNCTAD also promotes enterprise development, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises, through regular intergovernmental discussions and through technical cooperation. UNCTAD’s technical cooperation activities involve nearly 300 projects in

close to 100 countries, for which UNCTAD provides about \$31 million annually — some 37 per cent of it going to LDCs. These activities include:

- The *Automated System for Customs Data*, using state-of-the-art technology, helps governments modernize customs procedures and management. Used by more than 80 countries, the system is fast becoming the internationally accepted standard for customs automation. It is also an instrument for improving economic governance.
- The *EMPRETEC Programme* promotes small and medium-sized enterprise development. An information network provides entrepreneurs with access to business databases.

The **International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO (ITC)** is the focal point in the United Nations system for technical cooperation with developing countries in trade promotion. It works with developing countries and countries with economies in transition in setting up trade promotion programmes to expand their exports and improve their import operations (see www.intracen.org).

ITC conducts programmes in the seven key areas: market analysis; business advisory services; trade information management; export training; product and market development; trade in services; and international purchasing and supply chain management.

Technical cooperation projects in trade promotion are carried out by ITC specialists working in close liaison with local trade officials. National projects often take the form of a broad-based package of services to expand country exports and improve import operations.

Agricultural development

The majority of people on the planet continue to live in rural areas and derive their livelihood, directly or indirectly, mostly from agriculture. In recent decades, rural poverty has spread and deepened and, in the rush to industrialization, insufficient investment has been made in the agricultural sector. The United Nations has addressed this imbalance in a variety of ways.

The **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)** is the lead agency for agriculture, forestry, fisheries and rural development. It gives practical help to developing countries through a wide range of technical assistance projects. A specific priority is to encourage rural development and sustainable agriculture — a long-term strategy for increasing food production and food security while conserving and managing natural resources.

In promoting sustainable agricultural development, FAO encourages an integrated approach, with environmental, social and economic considerations included in the formulation of development projects. In some areas, for example, particular combinations of crops can improve agricultural productivity, provide a source of fuel wood for local villagers, improve soil fertility and reduce the impact of erosion.

FAO has more than a thousand field projects operating worldwide at any given time. They range from integrated land management projects, to emergency response, to policy and planning advice to governments in areas as diverse as forestry and marketing strategies. FAO usually takes

Promoting equitable trade for inclusive development

Intergovernmental negotiations, research and technical assistance under UNCTAD auspices have resulted in the following:

- Agreement on a Generalized Systems of Preferences (1971), which facilitates the preferential treatment of over \$70 billion of developing-country exports to industrialized countries annually.
- Agreement on a Global System of Trade Preferences among developing countries (1989).
- International commodity agreements, including those for cocoa, coffee, sugar, natural rubber, jute and jute products, tropical timber, tin, olive oil and wheat.
- The Common Fund for Commodities, which provides financial backing for the operation of international stocks and for R&D projects in the area of commodities.
- The General Assembly's 1980 adoption of the only universally applicable, voluntary code on competition — the Set of Multilaterally Agreed Equitable Principles and Rules for the Control of Restrictive Business Practices — which is reviewed every five years, most recently in 2005.
- The creation of the East African Organic Standard (EAOS) in 2007. The EAOS will become the second regional organic standard in the world after the European Union's.
- The Trade Analysis and Information System (TRAINS), the most comprehensive publicly available international database on trade, tariffs and non-tariff measures.

one of three roles: implementing its own programme; executing a programme on behalf of other agencies and donors; or providing advice and management assistance to national projects.

FAO's Investment Centre assists developing countries in formulating investment operations in agricultural and rural development, in partnership with international financing institutions. Each year, the Centre carries out more than 600 field missions for some 140 investment programmes and projects in around 100 countries. It spends some \$25 million annually (of which FAO provides around \$9 million) to help mobilize funding commitments of about \$3 billion a year for approved investment proposals.

FAO is active in land and water development, plant and animal production, forestry, fisheries, economic, social and food security policy, investment, nutrition, food standards and food safety, and commodities and trade. For example:

Projects throughout Pakistan support sustainable crop production, diversification of crop production, management of revolving funds, and farm service centres. Farmers are actively involved in FAO projects, and training is provided to build capacities in rural community organizations, including village-based business support services.

FAO has provided important technical support to Brazil's Zero Hunger Programme since its inception — a programme which improved the lives and nutritional intake of more than 8 million families during the period 2003-2005. In addition, a Food Products Procurement

Programme aims to ensure a market and a reasonable price for products coming from small-scale farmers.

“Njaa Marufuku Kenya”, a 10-year programme of the government of Kenya, which FAO helped to formulate, aims to increase food availability and reduce chronic hunger in Kenya. Its initial focus is on community capacity-building, school feeding programmes, and food-for-work activities in support of natural resource conservation, involving 50,000 households. The programme, which began in 2005, will target 1 million rural families by 2010.

Since its creation in 1976, FAO’s Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) has funded some 8,800 projects valued at more than \$1.1 billion. It also manages the Edouard Saouma Award, which honours national or regional institutions for particularly effective implementation of a TCP-funded project.

The **International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)** finances agricultural development programmes and projects that enable rural people to overcome poverty. IFAD provides loans and grants for programmes and projects that promote the economic advancement and food security of poor rural people. IFAD-supported initiatives enable these people to access the land, water, financial resources and agricultural technologies and services they need to farm productively, and to access markets and opportunities for enterprise that could help them increase their incomes.

IFAD tests new and innovative approaches to reducing poverty, shares knowledge widely, and works with its member countries and other partners to replicate and scale up successful approaches. It also works to build the knowledge, skills and organizations of poor rural people.

IFAD-supported programmes and projects benefit the poorest of the world’s people: small farmers, landless labourers, nomadic pastoralists, artisanal fishing communities, indigenous peoples and — across all groups — poor rural women. Most of IFAD’s resources are made available to poor countries on highly concessional terms, repayable over 40 years, including a grace period of 10 years, and a 0.75 per cent service charge per annum. In 2007, IFAD adopted a debt sustainability framework based on the International Development Association’s model, to provide grants instead of loans to countries with low debt sustainability.

Since its establishment in 1977, IFAD has financed 731 projects in well over 100 countries and independent territories. These have reached more than 300 million poor rural people with \$9.5 billion in loans and grants. A further \$16.1 billion was contributed in cofinancing — \$9 billion from governments, and other financing sources in recipient countries, and \$7.1 billion from external cofinanciers, including bilateral and multilateral donors and non-governmental organizations.

Industrial development

Globalization of industry has created unprecedented industrial challenges and opportunities for developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The **United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)** is the specialized agency helping these countries to pursue sustainable industrial development in the new global environment.

UNIDO designs and implements technical cooperation programmes to support the industrial development efforts of its clients. Its thematic priorities are:

- *Poverty reduction through productive activities*, by promoting industry, especially through small and medium enterprises, in less developed areas, with a focus on employment creation, income generation and institutional capacity-building;
- *Trade capacity-building*, by helping countries to develop both production and trade-related capacities, including the capacity to conform to the standards of international markets;
- *Environment and energy*, by promoting industrial energy efficiency and renewable sources of energy, particularly in rural areas, and supporting other activities for sustainable industrial development.

UNIDO assists governments, business associations and the private industrial sector with services which translate its core functions and thematic priorities into action: industrial governance and statistics; investment and technology promotion; industrial competitiveness and trade; private sector development; agro-industries; sustainable energy and climate change; the *Montreal Protocol* on substances that deplete the ozone layer; and environmental management.

UNIDO also serves as a global forum to generate and disseminate industry-related knowledge in its three thematic priority areas, and to provide a platform for all actors in the public and private sectors.

UNIDO's 13 investment and technology promotion offices, financed by the countries in which they are located, promote business contacts between industrialized countries and developing countries and countries with economies in transition. It has 5 investment promotion units, 35 national cleaner production centres and 10 international technology centres. Headquartered in Vienna, UNIDO is represented in 43 developing countries.

Labour

Concerned with both the economic and social aspects of development, the **International Labour Organization (ILO)** is one of the specialized agencies that predates the United Nations, as it was established in 1919. Its long and diverse work in the setting and monitoring of labour standards in the workplace has provided a framework of international labour standards and guidelines which have been adopted in national legislation by virtually all countries.

ILO is guided by the principle that social stability and integration can be sustained only if they are based on social justice — particularly the right to employment with fair compensation in a healthy workplace. Over the decades, ILO has helped to create such hallmarks as the eight-hour day, maternity protection, child-labour laws, and a whole range of policies that promote safety in the workplace and peaceful industrial relations.

Specifically, ILO engages in:

- the formulation of international policies and programmes to promote basic human rights, improve working and living conditions and enhance employment opportunities;
- the creation of international labour standards — backed by a unique system to supervise their application — to serve as guidelines for national authorities in putting sound labour policies into practice;
- an extensive programme of technical cooperation, formulated and carried out in partnership with beneficiaries, to help countries make these policies effective; and
- training, education, research and information activities to help advance all these efforts.

Decent work. The central purpose of ILO is to promote opportunities for decent work for all people. The International Labour Conference has approved four objectives that must converge on this primary goal. They are:

- to promote and realize fundamental principles and rights at work;
- to create greater opportunities for women and men to secure decent employment and income;
- to enhance the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all; and
- to strengthen dialogue among governments, labour and business.

To implement these objectives, ILO is focusing on such areas as the progressive abolition of child labour, safety and health at work; socio-economic security; promoting small and medium-sized enterprises; developing skills, knowledge and employability; eliminating discrimination and gender inequality; and promoting the *ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*, adopted by the International Labour Conference in 1998.

Technical cooperation. ILO's technical cooperation focuses on support for democratization, poverty alleviation through employment creation, and the protection of workers. In particular, ILO helps countries to develop their legislation and take practical steps towards putting ILO standards into effect — for instance, by developing occupational health and safety departments, social security systems and worker education programmes. Projects are carried out through close cooperation between recipient countries, donors and the ILO, which maintains a network of area and regional offices worldwide. ILO has technical cooperation programmes in some 140 countries and territories; in the last decade, it spent an average of \$130 million annually on technical cooperation projects.

ILO's **International Training Centre**, located in Turin, Italy, carries out training for senior and mid-level managers in private and public enterprises, leaders of workers' and employers' organizations, government officials and policy makers. It runs more than 350 courses each year for some 8,000 people from over 170 countries.

ILO's **International Institute for Labour Studies**, located in Geneva, promotes policy research and public discussion of emerging issues of concern to ILO. The organizing theme is the relationship between labour institutions, economic growth and social equity. The Institute acts as a global forum on social policy, maintains international research networks and carries out educational programmes.

International aviation

In 2006, more than 2.1 billion passengers flew on some 24 million flights, and 39 million tonnes of freight were shipped by air. The safe and orderly growth of international flight is overseen by a United Nations specialized agency, the **International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)**.

ICAO aims to meet the public's need for the safety, security, efficiency and continuity of international civil aviation and to minimize its adverse effects on the environment. It also works to strengthen the law governing civil aviation.

To meet these objectives, ICAO:

- adopts international standards and recommendations which are applied to the design and performance of aircraft and much of their equipment; the performance of airline pilots, flight crews, air traffic controllers, and ground and maintenance crews; and security requirements and procedures at international airports;
- formulates visual and instrument flight rules, as well as the aeronautical charts used for international navigation. Aircraft telecommunications systems, radio frequencies and security procedures are also its responsibility;
- works towards minimizing the impact of aviation on the environment through reductions in aircraft emissions and through noise limits; and
- facilitates the movement of aircraft, passengers, crews, baggage, cargo and mail across borders, by standardizing customs, immigration, public health and other formalities.

As acts of unlawful interference continue to pose a serious threat to the safety and security of international civil aviation, ICAO continues to pursue policies and programmes designed to prevent them. In the wake of the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001 in the United States, ICAO developed an aviation security plan of action — including a universal audit programme to evaluate the implementation of security standards and recommend remedial action where necessary.

In addition, ICAO meets requests from developing countries for help in improving air transport systems and training for aviation personnel. It has helped to establish regional training centres in several developing countries. Each year, the agency is involved in more than 200 technical cooperation projects in about 100 countries. Projects may include the procurement of aviation goods and services ranging in value from \$100,000 to more than \$100 million. The criteria for ICAO assistance are based on what countries need to make civil aviation safe and efficient, in accordance with ICAO's Standards and Recommended Practices.

ICAO works in close cooperation with such UN specialized agencies as the IMO, the ITU and the WMO. The International Air Transport Association, the Airports Council International, the International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations and other international organizations also participate in many ICAO meetings.

International shipping

When the **International Maritime Organization (IMO)** held its first Assembly in 1959, it had less than 40 member states. Today it has 167 member states and over 98 per cent of the world's merchant fleets (by tonnage) adhere to the key international shipping conventions developed by IMO.

The adoption of maritime legislation is IMO's best known responsibility. IMO has adopted around 40 conventions and protocols — most of them updated in line with changes taking place in world shipping — and some 1,000 codes and recommendations concerning maritime safety, the prevention of pollution and related matters. Maritime security has been added to IMO's objectives of improving the safety of international shipping and preventing marine pollution from ships. Key environmental concerns being addressed include the transfer of harmful aquatic organisms in ballast water and sediments, the emission of greenhouse gases from ships, and ship recycling.

Initially, IMO focused on developing international treaties and other legislation concerning ship safety and marine pollution prevention. Today, the main focus is on implementation of IMO's international standards, while continuing to amend and update existing legislation and to fill in any gaps in the regulatory framework.

The main IMO treaties on maritime safety and prevention of marine pollution by ships which are in force worldwide include:

- *International Convention on Load Lines (LL)*, 1966
- *International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREG)*, 1972
- *International Convention for Safe Containers (CSC)*, 1972
- *International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships*, 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978 relating thereto (MARPOL 73/78)
- *International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS)*, 1974
- *International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW)*, 1978
- *International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR)*, 1979

Numerous codes, some of which have been made mandatory, address specific issues, such as carriage of dangerous goods and high-speed craft. The International Safety Management Code, made mandatory by means of SOLAS amendments adopted in 1994, addresses the people who operate and run ships. Special attention has been paid to crew standards, including the complete revision in 1995 of the 1978 seafarers' training and certification convention, which for the first time gave IMO the task of monitoring compliance with the Convention.

Safety of life at sea remains one of the key objectives of IMO. In 1999, the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System became fully operational, guaranteeing assistance to a ship in distress virtually anywhere in the world; even if its crew does not have time to radio for help, the message is transmitted automatically.

Various IMO conventions address liability and compensation issues. The most significant include the 1992 *Protocol of the International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage* (CLC Convention, 1969) and the 1992 *Protocol of the International Convention on the Establishment of an International Fund for Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage* (IOPC Fund, 1971), which together provide compensation to victims of oil pollution damage. The *Athens Convention relating to the Carriage of Passengers and their Luggage by Sea* (PAL, 1974) sets compensation limits for passengers on ships.

In December 2002, the IMO adopted an International Ship and Port Facility Security Code, which requires compliance with new measures aimed at protecting shipping against terrorist attacks. Adopted under amendments to the *International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea* (SOLAS), the Code became mandatory on 1 July 2004. In 2005, IMO adopted amendments to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Maritime Navigation, 1988 and its related Protocol, introducing the right of a state party to board a ship flying the flag of another state party when the requesting party has reasonable grounds to suspect that the ship or a person on board the ship is, has been, or is about to be involved in, the commission of an offence under the Convention.

IMO's technical cooperation programme aims to support the implementation of its international standards and regulations, particularly in developing countries, and to assist governments in operating a shipping industry successfully. The emphasis is on training, and IMO has under its auspices the **World Maritime University** in Malmö, Sweden, the International Maritime Law Institute in Malta and the International Maritime Academy in Trieste, Italy.

Telecommunications

Telecommunications have become a key to the global delivery of services. Banking, tourism, transportation and the information industry all depend on quick and reliable global telecommunications. The sector is being revolutionized by powerful trends, such as globalization, deregulation, restructuring, value-added network services, intelligent networks and regional arrangements. Such developments have transformed telecommunications from its earlier status as a public utility to one having strong links with commerce and trade. It has been projected that the \$2.1 trillion global telecommunications market will grow to \$2.5 trillion in 2008 and \$3 trillion in 2010.

The **International Telecommunication Union (ITU)** is the world's oldest intergovernmental organization, dating back to 1865. It coordinates the public and private sectors to provide global telecommunications networks and services.

Specifically, ITU:

- develops standards which foster the interconnection of national communications infrastructures into global networks, allowing the seamless exchange of information — be it data, faxes or phone calls — around the world;

- works to integrate new technologies into the global telecommunications network, allowing for the development of new applications, such as the Internet, electronic mail, multimedia and electronic commerce;
- adopts international regulations and treaties governing the sharing of the radio frequency spectrum and satellite orbital positions — finite natural resources which are used by a wide range of equipment including television and radio broadcasting, mobile telephones, satellite-based communications systems, aircraft and maritime navigation and safety systems, and wireless computer systems;
- strives to expand and improve telecommunications in the developing world by providing policy advice, technical assistance, project management and training, and by fostering partnerships between telecommunications administrations, funding agencies and private organizations.

As the UN specialized agency for information and communication technologies, ITU had the leading managerial role for the **World Summit on the Information Society**, which was held in Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003, and in Tunis from 16 to 18 November 2005. The Summit adopted a *Declaration of Principles* and *Plan of Action* aimed at building a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society, where everyone can create, access, use and share information and knowledge.

Taking the lead in implementing the Summit goals, ITU organized the Connect Africa Summit in Kigali, Rwanda, in October 2007, bringing together governments, the private sector and funding agencies to invest in ICT infrastructure in Africa. Participants at Kigali committed \$55 billion towards the target of connecting all African cities by 2012.

In today's fast-moving telecommunications environment, membership in ITU gives governments and private organizations a unique opportunity to make an important and valued contribution to the developments rapidly reshaping the world. ITU membership represents a cross-section of the telecommunications and information technology industry — from the world's largest manufacturers and carriers, to small, innovative new players working in fields like Internet Protocol (IP) networking.

In addition to its 191 member states, ITU has over 600 sector members and nearly 140 associates, representing scientific and industrial companies, public and private operators and broadcasters, and regional and international organizations. Founded on the principle of international cooperation between government and the private sector, ITU is a global forum through which government and industry can work towards consensus on a wide range of issues affecting the future of this increasingly important industry.

International postal service

Some 5.5 million postal employees worldwide process and deliver 437 billion letter-posts every year, as well as 6 billion parcels, international and domestic. There are also more than 665,000 points of access for postal services worldwide. The United Nations specialized agency regulating this service is the **Universal Postal Union (UPU)**.

The UPU forms a single postal territory of countries for the reciprocal exchange of letter-post items. Every member state agrees to transmit the mail of all other members by the best means used for its own mail. As the primary vehicle of cooperation between national postal services, the UPU works to improve international postal services, provide postal customers in every country with harmonized and simplified procedures for their international mail, and make available a universal network of up-to-date products and services.

The UPU sets indicative rates, maximum and minimum weight and size limits, and the conditions of acceptance of letter-post items, including priority and non-priority items, letters, aerogrammes, postcards, printed matter and small packets. It prescribes the methods for calculating and collecting transit charges (for letter-post items passing through one or more countries) and terminal dues (for imbalance of mails). It also establishes regulations for registered and air mail, and for items requiring special precautions, such as infectious and radioactive substances.

Thanks to UPU, new products and services are integrated into the international postal network. In this way, such services as registered letters, postal money orders, international reply coupons, small packets, postal parcels and expedited mail services have been made available to most of the world's citizens.

The agency has taken a strong leadership role in certain activities, such as the application of electronic data interchange technology by the postal administrations of member countries and the monitoring of quality of postal services worldwide.

The UPU provides technical assistance through multi-year projects aimed at optimizing national postal services. It also conducts short projects which may include study cycles, training fellowships, and the expertise of development consultants who carry out on-the-spot studies on training, management or postal operations. The UPU has also made international financial institutions increasingly aware of the need for investment in the postal sector.

Around the world, postal services are making a determined effort to revitalize the postal business. As part of a communications market that is experiencing explosive growth, they have to adapt to a rapidly changing environment, becoming more independent, self-financing enterprises and providing a wider range of services. The UPU is playing a leadership role in promoting this revitalization.

Intellectual property

Intellectual property in various forms — including books, feature films, artistic performance media and computer software — has become a central issue in international trade relations. Millions of patent, trademark and industrial design registrations are currently in force worldwide. In today's knowledge-based economy, intellectual property is a tool for promoting wealth creation as well as economic, social and cultural development.

A United Nations specialized agency, the **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)**, is responsible for promoting the protection of intellectual property all over the world through cooperation among states, and for administering various international

treaties dealing with the legal and administrative aspects of intellectual property. Intellectual property (IP) comprises two main branches: industrial property, which primarily means inventions, trademarks, industrial designs and appellations of origin; and copyright, covering chiefly literary, musical, artistic, photographic and audiovisual works.

WIPO administers 24 treaties covering all aspects of intellectual property, some dating back to the 1880s. The two pillars of the international IP system are the *Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property* (1883) and the *Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works* (1886). Most recently, WIPO member states concluded the *Singapore Treaty on the Law of Trademarks* (2006). WIPO's policy of adopting recommendations on such themes as the protection of well-known marks (1999), trademark licenses (2000) and marks on the Internet (2001), complements the treaty-based approach to international legal standard-setting.

WIPO's **Arbitration and Media Centre** helps individuals and companies from around the world resolve their disputes, particularly those relating to technology, entertainment and other disputes involving intellectual property. It is also the leading dispute resolution service for challenges relating to abuses in the registration and use of Internet domain names — commonly known as “cybersquatting”. It provides this service both for the generic top-level domains, such as .com, .net, .org, and .info, and for certain country-code domains. WIPO's dispute resolution mechanism is much faster and cheaper than litigation in the courts; a domain name case is normally concluded within two months using online procedures.

WIPO helps countries strengthen their intellectual property infrastructure, institutions and human resources, while promoting the progressive development of international IP law. It also provides a forum for formulation of policies in response to emerging demands, and hosts international discussions on intellectual property with respect to traditional knowledge, folklore, biodiversity and biotechnology.

WIPO offers expert advice to developing countries to strengthen their capacity for the strategic use of intellectual property to promote economic, social and cultural development. It provides legal and technical advice and expertise in drafting and revising national legislation. Training programmes are organized for a range of beneficiaries, including policy makers, officials and students. The organization's focal point for training is the WIPO Worldwide Academy (www.wipo.int/academy/en).

WIPO also provides services to industry and the private sector to facilitate the process of obtaining IP rights in multiple countries — in a simple, efficient and cost-effectively manner. These include services offered under the Patent Cooperation Treaty, the Madrid System for the International Registration of Trademarks, the Hague System for the International Registration of Industrial Designs, the Lisbon Agreement for the International Registration of Geographical Indications and the Budapest Treaty for the International Deposit of Micro-organisms. The revenues from these services generate some 95 per cent of WIPO's income.

Global statistics

Governments, public institutions and the private sector rely heavily on relevant, accurate, comparable and timely statistics at national and global levels, and the United Nations has served as a global focal point for statistics since its founding.

The **Statistical Commission** is the United Nations intergovernmental body mandated to strengthen the harmonization of official statistics worldwide. Composed of 24 member states, it oversees the work of the UN **Statistics Division** in developing methodologies and standards for the collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics.

The Statistics Division offers a broad range of services for producers and users of statistics. Its yearbooks and compendiums — including the *Statistical Yearbook*, *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics*, *World Statistics Pocketbook*, the official *Millennium Development Goals Indicators* database, and the *UN-data* portal — present a broad cross-section of information, in print and online. Its specialized publications cover such matters as demographic, social and housing statistics, national accounts, economic and social classifications, energy, international trade, and the environment.

The Division also aims to improve national capabilities in developing countries by providing technical advisory services, training programmes and workshops organized throughout the world on various topics. (See <http://unstats.un.org/unsd>. For the *UN-data* portal, see <http://data.un.org>)

Public administration

A country's public sector is arguably the most important component in the successful implementation of its national development programmes. The new opportunities created by globalization, the information revolution and democratization have dramatically affected the state and how it functions. Managing the public sector in an environment of unremitting change has become a demanding challenge for national decision-makers, policy developers and public administrators.

The United Nations, through its Programme on Public Administration and Finance, assists countries in their efforts to strengthen, improve and reform their governance systems and administrative institutions. Managed by DESA's **Division for Public Administration and Development Management**, the Programme helps governments ensure that their governance — including their public economic, administrative and financial institutions — functions in an effective, responsive, pro-poor and democratic manner. The Division promotes sound public policies, effective and responsive public administration, efficient, engaging service delivery, and openness to change. (See www.unpan.org/dpepa.asp)

Activities include helping governments in developing countries design national programmes for improving ethics; transparency and accountability in public policies; strengthening capacities for local governments and decentralized governance; innovations in the delivery of public services; civil service reforms; reconstructing governance and public administration institutions after severe conflict; human resources development and management in the public sector;

redesigning and strengthening governance systems and institutions; applying information and communications technology for development; and promoting participatory governance.

Many activities foster South-South cooperation by emphasizing the success of such cooperation and disseminating best practices — including through the United Nations Online Network of Public Administration and Finance. The Division also helps to introduce systems, tools, techniques, procedures and processes, including the use of information technology in government operations and service delivery, to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

Science and technology for development

The United Nations has been promoting the application of science and technology for the development of its member states since the 1960s. The 43-member **Commission on Science and Technology for Development** was established in 1992 to examine science and technology questions and their implications for development; promote the understanding of science and technology policies in respect of developing countries; and formulate recommendations on science and technology matters within the UN system. (See www.unctad.org/cstd)

The Commission also serves as a focal point for the Economic and Social Council, its parent body, in the systemwide follow-up to the **World Summit on the Information Society**. The theme for its 2006-2007 session was “Promoting the building of a people-centred, development-oriented and inclusive information society”. Substantive and secretariat support for the Commission is provided by UNCTAD.

UNCTAD also promotes policies favouring technological capacity-building, innovation and technology flows to developing countries. It helps these countries review their science and technology policies, promotes South-South scientific networking, and provides technical assistance on information technologies.

FAO, IAEA, ILO, UNDP, UNIDO and WMO all address scientific and technological issues within their specific mandates. Science for development is also an important element in the work of UNESCO.

Social development

Inextricably linked to economic development, social development has been a corner-stone of the work of the United Nations from its inception. Over the decades, the United Nations has emphasized the social aspects of development to ensure that the aim of better lives for all people remains at the centre of development efforts.

In its early years, the United Nations organized ground-breaking research and data gathering in the areas of demographics, health and education, which witnessed the compilation, often for the first time, of reliable data on global social indicators. It also undertook efforts to protect the cultural heritage, from architectural monuments to languages, reflecting concern for those societies particularly vulnerable to the rapid processes of change.

The Organization has been in the forefront of supporting government efforts to extend social services relating to health, education, family planning, housing and sanitation to all people. In addition to developing models for social programmes, the United Nations has helped to integrate economic and social aspects of development. Its evolving policies and programmes have always stressed that the components of development — social, economic, environmental and cultural — are interconnected and cannot be pursued in isolation.

Globalization and liberalization are posing new challenges to social development. There is a growing desire to see a more equitable sharing of the benefits of globalization. There is a need to better direct the benefits of liberalized trade and investment towards reducing poverty, increasing employment and promoting social integration.

The United Nations takes a people-centred approach in the social area, placing individuals, families and communities at the centre of development strategies. It places great emphasis on social development — in part to offset the tendency of economic and political problems to dominate the international agenda at the expense of such social issues as health, education and population, or such groups as women, children and the elderly.

Many UN global conferences have focused on these issues. The World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995) marked the first time the international community came together to advance the struggle against poverty, unemployment and social disintegration — to create a new awareness of social responsibility for the 21st century. The Summit's originality lay in its universality, its scope, its ethical basis, and its call for renewed forms of partnership within and among nations. The *Copenhagen Declaration for Social Development* and its 10 commitments represent a social contract at the global level.

The diverse issues of social development represent a challenge for developing and developed countries alike. To differing degrees, all societies are confronted by the problems of unemployment, social fragmentation and persistent poverty. And a growing number of social problems — from forced migration to drug abuse, organized crime and the spread of diseases — can be successfully tackled only through concerted international action.

The United Nations addresses the issues of social development through the General Assembly and the **Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**, where system-wide policies and priorities are set and programmes endorsed. One of the Assembly's six main committees, the **Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee**, takes up agenda items relating to the social sector. Under ECOSOC, the main intergovernmental body dealing with social concerns is the **Commission for Social Development**. Composed of 46 member states, the Commission advises ECOSOC and governments on social policies and on the social aspects of development. The theme for its 2007 session was "Promoting Full Employment and Decent Work for All".

Within the Secretariat, the **Division for Social Policy and Development** of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs services these intergovernmental bodies, providing research, analysis and expert guidance. Throughout the UN system, there are many specialized agencies, funds, programmes and offices that address different aspects of social development.

Progress in attaining the Millennium Development Goals

In 1990, more than 1.2 billion people, 28 per cent of the developing world's population, lived in extreme poverty. By 2002, the proportion had decreased to 19 per cent, according to *The Millennium Development Goals Report, 2006*, but progress was uneven. While extreme poverty fell rapidly in much of Asia, where the number of people living on less than \$1 a day dropped by nearly a quarter of a billion people, poverty actually *increased* in the transition economies of south-eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) — although recent data suggest that their poverty rates are again dropping. In sub-Saharan Africa, although the poverty rate declined marginally, the number of persons living in extreme poverty increased by 140 million people. (See www.undp.org/mdg)

While chronic hunger, as measured by the *proportion* of people lacking the food needed to meet their daily needs, has declined in the developing world, progress overall has not been fast enough to reduce the *number* of people going hungry — some 82 million people in 2003. Primary school enrolment has increased to 86 per cent in the developing world, ranging from 95 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean to 64 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa. Unfortunately, more than one in five girls of primary-school age worldwide were not in school, compared to about one in six boys. Of particular concern was the wide gender gap in sub-Saharan Africa and southern Asia, where almost 80 per cent of the world's out-of-school children live.

Women's political participation has increased significantly since 1990 — one in five parliamentarians elected in 2005 were women — but striking disparities remain among regions. The most encouraging progress has been in Latin America and the Caribbean, where women now hold 20 per cent of parliamentary seats. Although survival prospects for children have improved in every region of the world, 10.5 million died before their fifth birthday in 2004 — mostly from preventable causes. Sub-Saharan Africa, with only 20 per cent of the world's young children, accounted for half the total deaths. And although maternal mortality has shown improvement in all regions, ratios of maternal mortality seem to have changed little in sub-Saharan Africa and southern Asia, where most such deaths occur. Moreover, some 200 million women who desire to space or limit their childbearing lack access to contraception.

Global HIV prevalence — the percentage of people living with the virus — has levelled off and the number of new infections has fallen, in part as a result of the impact of HIV programmes, according to the *2007 AIDS Epidemic Update*, produced by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

The number of people living with HIV rose to 33.2 million in 2007, from 29 million in 2001 — a factor of longer survival times in a continuously growing general population. Some 2.5 million people were newly infected with the virus in 2007, and 2.1 million died of AIDS-related illnesses.

Since 2001, sub-Saharan Africa has seen a significant reduction in new HIV infections. Nevertheless, it remains the most severely affected region, with an estimated 1.7 million new

Major world conferences since 1990

- World Conference on Education for All, 1990, Jomtien, Thailand
- World Summit for Children, 1990, New York
- International Conference on Nutrition, 1992, Rome
- United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), 1992, Rio de Janeiro
- World Conference on Human Rights, 1993, Vienna
- International Conference on Population and Development, 1994, Cairo
- Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, 1994, Barbados
- World Summit for Social Development, 1995, Copenhagen
- Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace, 1995, Beijing
- Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), 1996, Istanbul
- World Food Summit, 1996, Rome
- World Education Forum, 2000, Dakar
- Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, 2001, Brussels
- World Conference against Racism, 2001, Durban
- World Food Summit: five years after, 2002, Rome
- International Conference on Financing for Development, 2002, Monterrey
- Second World Assembly on Ageing, 2002, Madrid
- World Summit on Sustainable Development, 2002, Johannesburg
- International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and Representatives of International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation, 2003, Almaty, Kazakhstan
- World Conference on Disaster Reduction, 2005, Kobe, Japan
- World Summit on the Information Society, 2003 (Geneva) and 2005 (Tunis)

Special sessions of the General Assembly have reviewed progress made five years after the United Nations Conferences on Environment and Development (1997), Small Island Developing States (1999), Population and Development (1999), Women (2000), Social Development (2000), Human Settlements (2001), Children (2002), the *Millennium Declaration* (2005), Small Arms (2006). Another special session addressed the problems of HIV/AIDS (2001, reviewed in 2006).

World Summit for Social Development

The World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995) was part of a series of global conferences convened by the United Nations to raise awareness of major issues, through cooperation by member states and the participation of other development actors. Some 117 heads of state or government, supported by ministers representing another 69 countries, adopted the *Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action*.

Governments pledged to confront the profound social problems of the world by addressing three core issues common to all countries: eradication of poverty, promotion of full employment, and promotion of social integration, particularly of the disadvantaged groups. The Summit signalled the emergence of a collective determination to treat social development as one of the highest priorities of national and international policies, and to place the human person at the centre of development.

Five years later, a special session of the General Assembly (Geneva, 2000) reaffirmed the centrality of these principles and agreed on new initiatives to advance them, including a coordinated international strategy on employment, and developing innovative sources of public and private funding for social development and poverty eradication. And for the first time, it set as a global target halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015 — a theme later picked up by the Millennium Development Goals.

infections in 2007. More than two thirds (68 per cent) of all people infected with HIV live in sub-Saharan Africa, where more than three quarters (76 per cent) of all AIDS-related deaths occurred in 2007. Yet the region is home to just over 10 per cent of the world's people.

While the percentage of women living with HIV has remained relatively stable for the past several years, their actual numbers are rising, because the overall number of people living with HIV is rising. UNAIDS estimates that about half of all new HIV infections worldwide are among children and young people up to 25 years.

As for goals relating to environmental sustainability, deforestation is continuing at an alarming rate (some 13 million hectares of land per year), but the net loss of forest area is slowing down — resulting in a net loss of about 200 square kilometres per day. Energy use has become more efficient in most regions, but CO₂ emissions continue to rise globally. Although 1.2 billion people gained access to sanitation between 1990 and 2004, half of developing-country populations still lack basic sanitation. On the other hand, the share of people with access to safe drinking water in the developing world increased from 71 per cent in 1990 to 80 per cent in 2004. However, in 2007, for the first time in history, the majority of the world's people would be living in urban areas, resulting in larger slum populations and their attendant challenges.

On 1 November 2007, a new online tool, “MDG Monitor”, was launched, to track real-time progress towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in a number

of categories in nearly every country in the world. Designed as a tool for policy-makers, development practitioners, journalists, students and others, it can be used to track progress through interactive maps and country-specific progress, learn about countries' challenges and achievements and get the latest news, and support organizations working on the MDGs around the world. The MDG Monitor was compiled by UNDP, in close cooperation with various UN agencies and with private-sector support from Cisco and Google. It is located online at www.mdgmonitor.org.

The international financial institutions of the UN system play a central role in funding numerous programmes that focus on the social aspects of poverty eradication, in support of the Millennium Development Goals. The World Bank, comprising the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Development Association (IDA), provided some \$24.7 billion for operations during fiscal year 2007. Its projects include support for water reforms in Morocco, poverty alleviation in Indonesia, helping curb HIV/AIDS in India, reducing emissions connected with climate change in Bolivia, building infrastructure in rural Senegal, dramatically improving access to primary school education in Afghanistan, rebuilding Timor-Leste's health system, and promoting growth in middle-income countries.

Reducing poverty

The United Nations system put poverty reduction at the top of the international agenda when it proclaimed 1997-2006 the **International Decade for the Eradication of Poverty**. In their 2000 *Millennium Declaration*, world leaders resolved to halve, by 2015, the number of people living on less than \$1 a day, and also set targets in the fight against poverty and disease.

A key player in this effort is the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**, which has made poverty alleviation its chief priority. UNDP works to strengthen the capacity of governments and civil society organizations to address the whole range of factors that contribute to poverty. These include increasing food security; generating employment opportunities; increasing people's access to land, credit, technology, training and markets; improving the availability of shelter and basic services; and enabling people to participate in the political processes that shape their lives. The heart of UNDP's anti-poverty work lies in empowering the poor.

Fighting hunger

Food production has increased at an unprecedented rate since the United Nations was founded in 1945, and during the period 1990-1997, the number of hungry people worldwide fell dramatically — from 959 million to 791 million. However, today that number has risen again, and some 854 million people do not have enough to eat — more than the populations of the United States, Canada and the European Union combined. This is despite the fact that there is enough food in the world today for every man, woman and child to lead a healthy and productive life. Of the chronically hungry, 820 million live in developing countries.

Most of the United Nations bodies fighting hunger have important social programmes to advance food security for the poorer sectors of the population, particularly in rural areas. Since its establishment, the **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)** has been working to alleviate poverty and hunger by promoting agricultural development, improved nutrition and the pursuit of food security — physical and economic access by all people at all times to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

FAO's Committee on World Food Security is responsible for monitoring, evaluating and consulting on the international food security situation. It analyses the underlying causes of hunger and food shortages, assesses availability and stock levels, and monitors policies aimed at food security. FAO, through its *Global Information and Early Warning System*, also implements an extensive monitoring system including meteorological and other satellites, which monitors conditions affecting food production and alerts governments and donors to any potential threat to food supplies.

FAO's *Special Programme for Food Security* is its flagship initiative for reaching the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target of halving the proportion of hungry in the world by 2015. Through projects in over 100 countries, it promotes effective solutions for the elimination of hunger, undernourishment and poverty. It seeks to achieve food security in two ways: by assisting national governments to run focused national food security programmes, and by working with regional economic organizations to optimize regional conditions for attaining food security in such areas as trade policy.

At the World Food Summit (Rome, 1996), hosted by FAO, 186 countries approved a *Declaration and Plan of Action on World Food Security* aiming to halve hunger by 2015 and outlining ways to achieve universal food security. The World Food Summit: five years later (Rome, 2002) was attended by 179 countries plus the European Community, including 73 heads of state or government or their deputies.

The Summit unanimously adopted a declaration calling on the international community to fulfil the pledge made at the 1996 Summit to reduce the number of hungry by half, to about 400 million, by 2015. Reaffirming the importance of respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, it asked FAO to elaborate guidelines in support of the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security. Those Voluntary Guidelines — also known as the Right to Food Guidelines — were adopted by the FAO Council in 2004.

Nevertheless, despite international efforts, insufficient progress is being made towards attaining the world food security target, according to FAO's hunger report, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World*. While the Millennium Development Goal on hunger can still be reached, FAO has emphasized the need for peace and stability, greater political will, sound policies and increased investment in order to achieve it.

The **International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)** provides development funding to combat rural poverty and hunger in the poorest regions of the world.

Millennium Declaration targets for poverty, disease and the environment

At the Millennium Summit in September 2000, world leaders committed themselves to the following targets:

- By 2015, cut in half the proportion of the world's people whose income is less than one dollar a day and the proportion of people unable to reach or afford safe drinking water.
- Also by 2015, ensure that both male and female children everywhere will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling and have equal access to all levels of education.
- Reduce maternal mortality by three quarters and under-five child mortality by two thirds.
- Halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other major diseases.
- Provide special assistance to children orphaned by HIV/AIDS.
- By 2020, achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.
- Promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate sustainable development.
- Develop and implement strategies that give young people everywhere a chance to find decent and productive work.
- Encourage the pharmaceutical industry to make essential drugs more widely available and affordable for all who need them in developing countries.
- Develop partnerships with the private sector and civil society organizations in pursuit of development and poverty eradication.
- Ensure that the benefits of new technologies — especially information and communication technologies — are available to all.

In the *Millennium Declaration*, world leaders also resolved to take action on a number of environmental issues, namely:

- Ensure the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol, preferably by 2002, and begin the required reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases.
- Press for full implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention to Combat Desertification, especially in Africa.
- Stop unsustainable exploitation of water resources by developing water management strategies at the regional, national and local levels.
- Intensify cooperation to reduce the number and effects of natural and man-made disasters.
- Ensure free access to information on the human genome sequence.

(See box, *2005 World Summit Outcome*, in chapter 1)

The majority of the world's poorest people — those living on less than \$1 a day — live in rural areas of developing countries and depend on agriculture and related activities for their livelihoods. To ensure that development aid actually reaches those who need it most, IFAD involves poor rural men and women in their own development, working with them and their organizations to develop opportunities that enable them to thrive economically in their own communities.

IFAD-supported initiatives enable the rural poor to access the land, water, financial resources and agricultural technologies and services needed to farm productively. These initiatives also enable them to access markets and enterprise opportunities. In addition, IFAD helps them to build their knowledge, skills and organizations, so they can take the lead in their own development, and influence the decisions and policies that affect their lives.

Since starting operations in 1978, IFAD has invested \$9.5 billion in 731 programmes and projects, reaching more than 300 million poor rural people — with its partners contributing \$16.1 billion in cofinancing (through the end of 2006).

The World Food Programme (WFP) is the United Nations front-line agency in the fight against global hunger. In 2006, WFP provided 4 million tonnes of food to nearly 87.8 million people — 87 per cent of them women and children — in 78 countries. With around half of its received donations in cash, the agency was able to purchase 2 million tonnes of food — three quarters of it in 70 developing countries. With the aim of reinforcing local economies, WFP buys more goods and services from developing countries than any other UN agency or programme.

Serving the world's hungry since 1962, WFP's efforts to combat hunger focus on emergency assistance, relief and rehabilitation, development aid and special operations. In emergencies, WFP is often first on the scene, delivering food aid to the victims of war, civil conflict, drought, floods, earthquakes, hurricanes, crop failures and natural disasters. When the emergency subsides, WFP uses food aid to help communities rebuild their shattered lives and livelihoods.

Under the ongoing UN reform process, WFP retains overall responsibility for the food assistance sector. It is also the lead agency with respect to logistics, and co-lead on emergency communications.

Food and food-related assistance is one of the most effective weapons in the struggle to break the perpetual cycle of hunger and poverty that entraps so many in the developing world. WFP development projects, which benefited 24 million people in 2006, focus on nutrition, especially for mothers and children, through programmes such as school feeding. WFP also builds in-country capacity and infrastructure to help governments and their people in a number of areas, including disaster mitigation — now and in the future.

Breaking the hunger cycle requires that humanitarian responses include long-lasting measures that address the root causes of crises. To meet these challenges, WFP has developed programmes that focus on selected vulnerable sectors of society. These include food and nutrition programmes, such as school feeding; livelihood support

On the verge of a polio-free world

When the Global Polio Eradication Initiative was launched in 1988, there were 350,000 cases of the disease worldwide — paralysing more than 1,000 children in more than 125 countries on 5 continents every day. After a concerted campaign, including National Immunization Days to immunize millions of children under five, that figure has dropped to 1,951 reported cases in 2005 — more than a 99 per cent reduction. In 2006, only four countries in the world remained endemic for the disease — Afghanistan, India, Nigeria and Pakistan.

More than 5 million people in the developing world, who would otherwise have been paralysed, are walking today because they have been immunized against polio. Tens of thousands of public health workers and millions of volunteers have been trained. Transport and communications systems for immunization have been strengthened. Since 1988, more than 2 billion children worldwide have been immunized. In 2006, partners in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative vaccinated 375 million children during 187 immunization campaigns in 36 countries, with 2.1 billion doses of vaccine.

This success has been possible through an unprecedented partnership for health spearheaded by WHO, UNICEF, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Rotary International. As the largest private sector donor, Rotary has already contributed more than \$600 million to the effort. Health ministries, donor governments, foundations, corporations, celebrities, philanthropists, health workers and volunteers have also been engaged. (See www.polioeradication.org)

The public health savings of polio eradication, once immunization stops, are estimated to be \$1.5 billion a year.

programmes, such as food-for-training and food-for-work; programmes to address the generational hunger cycle, such as mother-and-child nutrition; and nutritional support to HIV/AIDS victims.

WFP relies entirely on voluntary contributions to finance its humanitarian and development projects. Despite having no independent source of funds, it has the largest budget of any major UN agency or programme — as well as the lowest overhead. Governments are its principal source of funding, but WFP's corporate partners are making an increasingly vital contribution to its mission. WFP also works with more than 3,200 NGOs, whose grass-roots and technical knowledge is invaluable in assessing how to deliver its food aid to the right people.

Health

In most parts of the world, people live longer, infant mortality is decreasing and illnesses are kept in check as more people have access to basic health services, immunization, clean water and sanitation. The United Nations has been deeply involved in many of these advances, particularly in developing countries, by supporting health services, delivering essential drugs,

Malaria and tuberculosis

The Roll Back Malaria (RBM) Initiative, sponsored by WHO, was launched in 1998 with the declared objective of halving the global burden of malaria by 2010 (www.rollbackmalaria.org). Its founding partners — UNDP, UNICEF, the World Bank and WHO — are working to bring about a world in which malaria is no longer a major cause of mortality or a barrier to social and economic development. The RBM Partnership has expanded exponentially to include malaria-endemic countries, the bilateral and multilateral development partners, the private sector, non-governmental and community-based organizations, foundations, and research and academic institutions.

Two million people die every year from tuberculosis, a disease that is treatable. The Global “Stop TB” Partnership, a WHO initiative, comprises more than 500 international organizations, countries, public and private-sector donors and non-governmental and governmental organizations (see www.stoptb.org). It gave rise, in 2001, to The Global Plan to Stop Tuberculosis, a five-year plan based on a health strategy known as DOTS (“Directly Observed Treatment, Short-course”). During that period, the Plan was able to double the number of patients treated, from 2 million to 4 million, and several “high-burden countries”, including India and China, were brought close to the target of 70 per cent detection of the disease. In 2005 alone, Stop TB delivered more than 2.4 million treatments to patients in 65 countries.

The Global Plan to Stop TB, 2006-2015 aims to halve TB prevalence and deaths by 2015, as compared with 1990 levels. It aims to treat 50 million people, save 14 million lives, and expand equitable access to quality diagnosis and treatment. By 2010, it expects to be using diagnostic tests that will allow rapid, sensitive and inexpensive detection of active TB at the point of care, and to introduce the first new TB drug in 40 years. It also expects to see a new, safe, effective and affordable vaccine available by 2015. (See www.stoptb.org/globalplan)

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria is a major contributor to all these efforts (www.theglobalfund.org).

making cities healthier, providing health assistance in emergencies and fighting infectious diseases. The *Millennium Declaration* includes measurable targets to be achieved by countries in nutrition, access to safe water, maternal and child health, infectious disease control, and access to essential medicines by 2015.

Illness, disability and death caused by infectious diseases have a massive social and economic impact. New diseases, including avian influenza and SARS (“severe acute respiratory syndrome”), add to the urgency of the need to control epidemics. However, the causes and the solutions for most infectious diseases are known, and illness and death can in most cases be avoided at an affordable cost. The major infectious diseases are HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis (see *boxes*). Stopping and reversing transmission is a key Millennium Development Goal.

For decades, the United Nations system has been in the forefront of the fight against disease through the creation of policies and systems that address the social dimensions of health

The UN combats HIV/AIDS

(www.unaids.org)

The number of people dying from AIDS-related illnesses has declined in the past two years, due in part to the life-prolonging effects of antiretroviral therapy (ART), according to the *2007 AIDS Epidemic Update* — produced by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

Global HIV incidence — the number of new HIV infections per year — is estimated to have peaked in the 1990s at over 3 million. In 2007, it was 2.5 million — an average of more than 6,800 new infections each day. Nevertheless, AIDS is among the leading causes of death globally and remains the primary cause of death in Africa.

“Unquestionably, we are beginning to see a return on investment”, UNAIDS Executive Director Dr. Peter Piot says. “But with more than 6,800 new infections and over 5,700 deaths each day due to AIDS we must expand our efforts in order to significantly reduce the impact of AIDS worldwide.”

As the leading advocate for a worldwide response to AIDS, UNAIDS is on the ground in 75 countries. Its priorities include: leadership and advocacy; developing information; evaluating the effectiveness of policy commitments and national responses; mobilizing resources; and promoting global, regional and national partnerships among people living with HIV, civil society, and high-risk groups.

UNAIDS keeps AIDS on the international political agenda. It played a key role in sponsoring the General Assembly’s 2001 special session on HIV/AIDS, which produced a unanimous *Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS*. It manages the World AIDS Campaign, intended to hold governments accountable for the promises they have made, particularly in the *Declaration* (<http://worldaidscampaign.info>). It also initiated the Global Coalition on Women and AIDS (<http://womanandaids.unaids.org>).

Active since 1996, UNAIDS promotes the role of civil society, mobilizes the private sector, and engages media companies in the fight against AIDS. It has negotiated with pharmaceutical companies to reduce drug prices in developing countries, and works closely with those countries to help them achieve universal access to HIV prevention, care and treatment.

UNAIDS is a combined effort of 10 UN agencies: ILO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, WHO, WFP and the World Bank. Its core budget for 2006-2007 was \$320.5 million. AIDS funding is also provided by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (www.theglobalfund.org) and bilateral donors.

In their 2000 *Millennium Declaration*, world leaders resolved to halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015, and to provide assistance to children orphaned by the disease.

problems. The **United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)** focuses on child and maternal health, and the **United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)** focuses on reproductive health and family planning. The specialized agency coordinating global action against disease is the **World Health Organization (WHO)**. WHO has set ambitious goals for achieving health

for all, making reproductive health available, building partnerships and promoting healthy lifestyles and environments.

WHO was the driving force behind various historic achievements, including the global eradication of smallpox in 1980, achieved after a 10-year campaign. Together with its partners, WHO eliminated poliomyelitis from the Americas in 1994 and remains engaged in the effort to eliminate this disease entirely.

Another achievement was the adoption of a ground-breaking public health treaty to control tobacco supply and consumption. The *WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control* covers tobacco taxation, smoking prevention and treatment, illicit trade, advertising, sponsorship and promotion, and product regulation. It was adopted unanimously by WHO's member states in June 2003 and became binding international law on 27 February 2005. The Convention is a key part of the global strategy to reduce the worldwide epidemic of tobacco use, which kills nearly 5 million people every year. If action is not taken, annual tobacco-related deaths will reach 10 million by the late 2020s — with 70 per cent of these occurring in developing countries.

Between 1980 and 1995, a joint UNICEF-WHO effort raised global immunization coverage against six killer diseases — polio, tetanus, measles, whooping cough, diphtheria and tuberculosis — from 5 to 80 per cent, saving the lives of some 2.5 million children a year. A similar initiative is the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI). It extends immunization services to include protection against hepatitis B, which kills more than 521,000 people a year, and haemophilus influenza type B, which kills 450,000 children under age five each year. Launched in 1999 with initial funds from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Alliance incorporates WHO, UNICEF, the World Bank and private sector partners. (See www.gavialliance.org)

The incidence of guinea-worm disease has been dramatically reduced, thanks to new and better methods of treatment, and leprosy is also being overcome, with the help of free supplies of multi-drug therapies. River blindness has been virtually eliminated from the 11 West African countries once affected — an achievement benefiting millions. WHO is now targeting elephantiasis for elimination as a public health problem.

WHO's priorities in the area of communicable diseases are: to reduce the impact of malaria and tuberculosis through global partnership; to strengthen surveillance, monitoring and response to communicable diseases; to reduce the impact of diseases through intensified and routine prevention and control; and to generate new knowledge, intervention methods, implementation strategies and research capabilities for use in developing countries. WHO is also a key player in promoting primary health care, delivering essential drugs, making cities healthier, promoting healthy lifestyles and environments, and in tackling health emergencies, such as outbreaks of Ebola haemorrhagic fever.

During the biennium ending in December 2005, a WHO-UNAIDS initiative helped increase the number of people receiving antiretroviral treatment for HIV/AIDS in low- and

middle-income countries to 1.3 million — up from 400,000 at the end of 2003. A WHO/UNICEF strategy helped reduce the number of measles deaths worldwide from 871,000 in 1999 to 454,000 in 2004 — a 48 per cent decrease. During 2004-2005, WHO procured and distributed 1.3 million insecticide-treated nets, protecting some 2.5 million people from mosquitoes that transmit malaria; and tens of millions of nets were procured and distributed by other partners and countries.

A motor for health research. Working with its partners in health research, WHO gathers data on current conditions and needs, particularly in developing countries. These range from epidemiological research in remote tropical forests to monitoring the progress of genetic research. WHO's tropical disease research programme has focused on the resistance of the malaria parasite to the most commonly used drugs, and on fostering the development of new drugs and diagnostics against tropical infectious diseases. Its research also helps to improve national and international surveillance of epidemics, and to develop preventive strategies for new and emerging diseases.

Standard-setting. WHO establishes international standards on biological and pharmaceutical substances. It has developed the concept of “essential drugs” as a basic element of primary health care.

WHO works with countries to ensure the equitable supply of safe and effective drugs at the lowest possible cost and with the most effective use. To this end, it has developed a “model list” of several hundred drugs and vaccines considered essential to help prevent or treat over 80 per cent of all health problems. Nearly 160 countries have adapted the list to their own requirements, and the list is updated every two years. WHO also cooperates with member states, civil society and the pharmaceutical industry to develop new essential drugs for priority health problems in poor and middle-income countries, and to continue production of established essential drugs.

Through the international access afforded to the United Nations, WHO oversees the global collection of information on communicable diseases, compiles comparable health and disease statistics, and sets international standards for safe food, as well as for biological and pharmaceutical products. It also provides unmatched evaluation of the cancer-producing risks of pollutants, and has put into place the universally accepted guidance for global control of HIV/AIDS.

Human settlements

In 1950, New York City was the only metropolitan area with a population of over 10 million. By the year 2005, there were 20 such “mega-cities” — all but four in developing countries. In 1950, only 30 per cent of the world's population was urban. Today, more than half of its 6.5 billion people live in towns and cities. Nearly 1 billion of the world's people live in slums; in developing countries, nearly 42 per cent of the urban population live in slums.

The **United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT)** — formerly known as the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements — is the lead agency within the United Nations system for addressing this situation (see www.unhabitat.org). It is mandated

by the General Assembly to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities, with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all. To that end, it has 95 technical programmes and projects in 60 countries, most of them in the least developed countries. Its budget for 2006-2007 was \$166.3 million.

At Habitat II, the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Istanbul, 1996), agreement was reached on the *Habitat Agenda* — a global plan of action in which governments committed themselves to the goals of adequate shelter for all and sustainable urban development. UN-HABITAT is the focal point for implementing the Agenda, assessing its implementation, and monitoring global trends and conditions.

UN-HABITAT runs two major worldwide campaigns — the Global Campaign on Urban Governance, and the Global Campaign for Secure Tenure:

- *Global Campaign on Urban Governance.* In many cities, poor governance and inappropriate policies have led to environmental degradation, increased poverty, low economic growth and social exclusion. This campaign aims to increase local capacity for good urban governance — the efficient, effective response to urban problems by democratically elected and accountable local governments, working in partnership with civil society.
- *Global Campaign for Secure Tenure.* This campaign identifies the provision of secure tenure as vital for a sustainable shelter strategy and the promotion of housing rights. It aims to spearhead a shelter strategy that promotes the rights and interests of the poor, and to promote the rights and role of women in successful shelter policy.

Through various means, the agency focuses on a range of issues and special projects which it helps implement. Together with the World Bank, it began a slum upgrading initiative called the *Cities Alliance* (see www.citiesalliance.org). Other initiatives have addressed post-conflict land management and reconstruction in countries devastated by war or natural disasters, and ensuring that women's rights and gender issues are brought into urban development and management policies. The agency also helps strengthen rural-urban linkages, as well as infrastructure development and public service delivery.

Its programmes include:

- *Best Practices and Local Leadership Programme* — a global network of government agencies, local authorities and civil society organizations dedicated to identifying and disseminating best practices to improve the living environment and apply lessons learned to policy development and capacity-building.
- *Housing Rights Programme* — a joint UN-HABITAT and OHCHR initiative to assist states and other stakeholders to implement their commitments in the Habitat Agenda to ensure the full and progressive realization of the right to adequate housing as provided for in international instruments.
- *Rapid Urban Sector Profiling for Sustainability* — an accelerated assessment of urban conditions in a city, focusing on governance, slums, gender and HIV/AIDS, urban

environment, local economic development, basic urban services, and cultural heritage. The studies aim at developing urban poverty reduction policies at local, national and regional levels.

- *Sustainable Cities Programme* — a joint UN-HABITAT/UNEP initiative that builds capacities in urban environmental planning and management, using participatory methods. With its sister programme, *Localizing Agenda 21*, it currently operates in over 30 cities worldwide.
- *Localizing Agenda 21* — promotes the global plan of action for sustainable development adopted at the 1992 “Earth Summit” (*Agenda 21*), by translating its human settlements components into action at the local level and stimulating joint venture initiatives in selected medium-sized cities.
- *Safer Cities Programme* — launched in 1996 at the request of African mayors, it seeks to promote the development of strategies at the city level to adequately address and ultimately prevent urban crime and violence.
- *Urban Management Programme* — a joint effort by UN-HABITAT, UNDP and external support agencies. This network of over 40 anchor and partner institutions, covering 140 cities in 58 countries, works to strengthen the contribution that cities and towns in developing countries make towards economic growth, social development and poverty alleviation.
- *Water and Sanitation Programme* —to improve access to safe water and help provide adequate sanitation to millions of low-income urban dwellers, and measuring that impact. It supports the MDG target to “reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water by 2015”, and the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development target “to halve by 2015, the proportion of people who do not have access to basic sanitation”.

Education

Great strides have been made in education in recent years, marked by a significant increase in the number of children in schools. Nevertheless, some 77 million children have no access to primary education, and many who start attending are forced to leave because of poverty or family and social pressures. Despite enormous literacy efforts, 781 million adults remain illiterate, two thirds of them women. The United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012) seeks to draw greater attention to this pressing issue.

Research has shown the close relationship between access to education and improved social indicators. Schooling has a special multiplier effect for women. A woman who is educated will typically be healthier, have fewer children and have more opportunities to increase household income. Her children, in turn, will experience lower mortality rates, better nutrition and better overall health. For this reason, girls and women are the focus of the education programmes of many United Nations agencies.

Many parts of the United Nations system are involved in the funding and development of a variety of education and training programmes. These range from traditional basic schooling to technical training for human resources development in areas such as public administration, agriculture and health services, to public awareness campaigns to educate people about HIV/AIDS, drug abuse, human rights, family planning, and many other issues. **UNICEF**, for example, devotes more than 20 per cent of its annual programme expenditure to education, paying special attention to girls' education.

The lead agency in the area of education is the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)**. Together with other partners, it works to ensure that all children are enrolled in schools that are child-friendly and have trained teachers providing quality education.

UNESCO is providing the secretariat for the most ambitious United Nations inter-agency campaign ever launched to achieve universal, quality-based primary education by 2015 — based on a framework for action adopted by more than 160 nations at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, in the year 2000. This goal was reconfirmed by world leaders in their *Millennium Declaration* in September of that year.

At the Forum, governments committed themselves to the achievement of quality education for all, with particular emphasis on girls and such groups as working children and children affected by war. Donor countries and institutions pledged that no nation committed to basic education would be thwarted by lack of resources. The Forum drew from the results of the largest, most comprehensive and statistically rigorous stocktaking of education in history: the two-year “Education for All Assessment” and six high-level regional conferences.

UNESCO's education sector focuses on: providing educational access to all, at all levels; the success of special-needs and marginalized populations; teacher training; developing competencies for work forces; success through education; ensuring opportunities for non-formal and lifelong learning; and using technology to enhance teaching and learning, and to expand educational opportunities.

It undertakes these actions in the context of the 2000 *Dakar Framework for Action*; the UN Literacy Decade, 2003-2012; the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, 2005-2014; and the Global Initiative on Education and HIV/AIDS. It is also working towards the MDG targets: to ensure that all boys and girls complete primary school; and to eliminate disparities in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015.

More than 7,700 schools in 170 countries are involved in UNESCO's Associated Schools Project, an international network elaborating ways and means for enhancing the role of education in learning to live together in a world community. Some 3,700 UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations in more than 90 countries, mainly comprising teachers and students, carry out a wide range of educational and cultural activities.

Research and training

Academic work in the form of research and training is carried out by a number of specialized United Nations organizations. This work is aimed at enhancing understanding of the global problems we face, as well as fostering the human resources required for the more technical aspects of economic and social development and the maintenance of peace and security.

The mission of the **United Nations University (UNU)** is to contribute, through research and capacity-building, to efforts to resolve the pressing global problems of concern to the United Nations, its peoples and member states. An international community of scholars, UNU is a bridge between the UN and the international academic community — a think-tank for the United Nations system; a builder of capacities, particularly in developing countries; and a platform for dialogue and new creative ideas. UNU partners with over 40 United Nations entities and hundreds of cooperating research institutions around the world.

UNU's academic work addresses specific issues of concern to the United Nations. Its current thematic focus covers five areas: peace and security; good governance; economic and social development; science, technology and society; and environment and sustainability. Academic activities are carried out at the UNU Centre in Tokyo, and through research and training centres and programmes located in various parts of the world. These include:

- *UNU Food and Nutrition Programme for Human and Social Development*, Ithaca, New York, and Boston, Massachusetts, United States (1975) — focuses on food and nutrition capacity-building.
- *UNU Geothermal Training Programme*, Reykjavik, Iceland (1979) — geothermal research, exploration and development.
- *UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER)*, Helsinki, Finland (1985) — economic and social development.
- *UNU Programme for Biotechnology in Latin America and the Caribbean*, Caracas, Venezuela (1988) — biotechnology and society.
- *UNU - Maastricht Economic and Social Research and Training Centre on Innovation and Technology*, Maastricht, the Netherlands (1990) — social and economic impact of new technologies.
- *UNU Institute for Natural Resources in Africa*, Accra, Ghana (1990) — natural resources management.
- *UNU International Institute for Software Technology*, Macau, China (1992) — software technologies for development.
- *UNU Institute of Advanced Studies*, Yokohama, Japan (1995) — economic restructuring for sustainable development.
- *UNU International Leadership Academy*, Amman, Jordan (1995) — leadership development.

- *UNU International Network on Water, Environment and Health*, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada (1996) — the global water crisis.
- *UNU Fisheries Training Programme*, Reykjavik, Iceland (1998) — fisheries research and development.
- *UNU Programme on Comparative Regional Integration Studies*, Bruges, Belgium (2001) — development of a global network on these integration studies.
- *UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security*, Bonn, Germany (2003) — environment and human security.
- *UNU International Institute for Global Health*, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (2007) — global health issues.

The **United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)** works to enhance the effectiveness of the UN through appropriate training and research. It conducts training and capacity development programmes in multilateral diplomacy and international cooperation for diplomats accredited to the United Nations, as well as for national officials working on international issues. It also carries out a wide range of training programmes in the fields of social and economic development, and the maintenance of peace and security.

Each year, UNITAR conducts over 300 different fellowships, seminars and workshops, benefiting more than 10,000 participants, as well as some 30,000 trainees who benefit from its e-learning courses. It conducts research on training methodologies and knowledge systems, encompassing capacity development, e-learning and adult training. It also develops pedagogical materials — including distance learning training packages, workbooks, software and video training packs. To date, UNITAR is supported entirely from voluntary contributions (see www.unitar.org).

The **United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC)** is mandated to help strengthen leadership and management development capacities throughout the UN system. It develops, provides and coordinates cross-organizational learning programmes to strengthen collaboration within the UN system; increase operational effectiveness systemwide; enhance cooperation between the UN system and member states, NGOs and civil society; and to develop and maintain a coherent, systemwide management culture. In addition to its UN System Learning and Training Services, the College has three main programmes, focused on management and leadership, peace and security, and development cooperation, respectively. All these activities are geared to supporting the Millennium Development Goals and the Organization's ongoing reform agenda. The College was established in January 2002 and is a distinct entity within the UN system (see www.unssc.org).

The **United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)** engages in multidisciplinary research on the social dimensions of contemporary development issues. Its efforts are guided by two core values: that every human being has the right to a decent livelihood, and that all people should be able to participate on equal terms in decisions that affect their lives. Working through a global network of researchers and institutes, the Institute provides governments, development agencies, civil society organizations and scholars with a better understanding of how

development policies and processes affect different social groups. It works to stimulate dialogue and contributes to policy debate within and outside the UN system. Its research themes during the first decade of the 21st century include social policy and development; markets, business and regulation; gender and development; civil society and social movements; democracy, governance and well-being; and identities, conflict and cohesion (see www.unrisd.org).

Population and development

The UN estimates that despite significant reductions in fertility as contraceptive use has increased in most countries, both developed and developing, population continues to increase globally by about 1.14 per cent per year. At this rate, assuming continued fertility declines, world population is expected to increase from 6.7 billion in July 2007, to 9.2 billion by the year 2050. Rapid population growth weighs heavily on the earth's resources and environment, often outstripping efforts towards development. The UN has addressed the relationship between population and development in many ways, placing special emphasis on advancing the rights and status of women, which is seen as key to social and economic progress.

Moreover, patterns are shifting, creating new needs. For example, the global number of persons aged 60 or over is expected to increase from 705 million in 2007 to nearly 2 billion in 2050, when the number of older persons will exceed the number of children for the first time in history. By 2008, half the world will be living in cities for the first time ever — with more than twice the number of urban dwellers living in the less developed regions. That ratio is expected to reach 10 to 1 by 2019.

Over the decades, the UN has been carrying out operational activities in many developing countries in response to population trends. Various parts of the Organization have worked together to build national statistical offices, take censuses, make projections and disseminate reliable data. The United Nations quantitative and methodological work, particularly its authoritative estimates and projections of population size and change, has been pioneering. This has led to a significant increase in national capacities to plan ahead, incorporate population policies into development planning, and take sound economic and social decisions.

The **Commission on Population and Development**, composed of 47 member states, is charged with studying and advising ECOSOC on population changes and their effects on economic and social conditions. It has primary responsibility for reviewing the implementation of the programme of action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development.

The **Population Division** of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs serves as the secretariat of the Commission. It also provides the international community with up-to-date and scientifically objective information on population and development. It undertakes studies on population levels, trends, estimates and projections, as well as on population policies and the link between population and development. The Division maintains major databases, including *The Population, Resources, Environment and Development Databank*, which is available to the public on CD-ROM. The Division

issues reports on a range of subjects, including *World Population Prospects* and *World Population Policies*. It also coordinates the *Population Information Network* (POPIN), which promotes use of the Internet to facilitate global sharing of population information. (See www.unpopulation.org)

The **United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)** leads the operational activities of the UN system in this field, helping developing countries and those with economies in transition find solutions to their population problems. It assists states in improving reproductive health and family planning services on the basis of individual choice, and in formulating population policies in support of sustainable development. It also promotes awareness of population problems, and helps governments deal with them in ways best suited to each country's needs. (See www.unfpa.org)

According to its Mission Statement, UNFPA “promotes the right of every woman, man and child to enjoy a life of health and equal opportunity. UNFPA supports countries in using population data for policies and programmes to reduce poverty and to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, every young person is free of HIV/AIDS, and every girl and woman is treated with dignity and respect.” Its primary role, in fulfilling this mission, is as a funding organization for population projects and programmes carried out by governments, UN agencies and NGOs.

Its core programme areas are:

- *Reproductive health, including safe motherhood, family planning and sexual health*, which helps people achieve their desired family size and enjoy greater freedom in planning their future, saves lives, supports the fight against HIV/AIDS, and contributes to slower and more balanced population growth.
- *Population and development strategies*, which helps countries incorporate population issues in policy making, design strategies to improve the quality of life of their people, and improve their own capacity to develop population programmes.
- *Promoting gender equality*, which allows women to live in dignity, and in freedom from want and from fear; and to empower them play an indispensable role in advancing development and reducing poverty in their communities and countries.

UNFPA does not provide any support for abortion services. Rather, it seeks to prevent abortion by helping to increase access to family planning. It also addresses the reproductive health needs of adolescents, with programmes to prevent teenage pregnancy, prevent and treat fistula, prevent HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, reduce recourse to abortion, and improve access to reproductive health services and information.

The ability of parents to choose the number and spacing of their children is an essential component of reproductive health and an internationally recognized basic human right. While the number of couples using family planning has risen dramatically in recent years, at least 350 million couples worldwide lack access to a full range of family planning methods.

Surveys show that an additional 134 million women would currently be using a modern family planning method if more accurate information, affordable services and appropriate

counselling were available, and if their husbands, extended families and communities were more supportive. UNFPA works with governments, the private sector and NGOs to meet people's family planning needs.

UNFPA is the lead United Nations organization for advancing the programme of action adopted at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). In meeting the ICPD goals, UNFPA also brings its expertise in reproductive health and population issues to the worldwide collaborative effort to meet the Millennium Development Goals.

Gender equality and empowerment of women

Promotion of equality between women and men and the empowerment of women is central to the work of the United Nations. Gender equality is not only a goal in its own right, but is also recognized as a critical means for achieving all other development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. Eradicating poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary education and health for all, combating HIV/AIDS and facilitating sustainable development all require systematic attention to the needs, priorities and contributions of women as well as men. The UN actively promotes women's human rights and works to eradicate the scourge of violence against women, including in armed conflict and through trafficking. The UN also adopts global norms and standards and supports follow-up and implementation at the national level, including through its development assistance activities. (See www.un.org/womenwatch)

The **Commission on the Status of Women**, under ECOSOC, monitors progress towards gender equality throughout the world by reviewing implementation of the platform for action that emerged from the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995). The Commission makes recommendations for further action to promote women's rights, and to address discrimination and inequality in all fields. The major contributions of the 45-member Commission during more than 60 years of activity include the preparation of and follow-up to four world conferences on women, including the Beijing Conference, and development of the treaty on women's human rights — the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*.

The **Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)** monitors adherence to the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*. The 23-member Committee holds constructive dialogues with states parties on their implementation of the Convention, based on reports they submit. Its recommendations have contributed to a better understanding of women's rights, and of the means to ensure the enjoyment of those rights and the elimination of discrimination against women.

The **Division for the Advancement of Women**, in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, supports the efforts of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly to advance the global policy agenda for gender equality and strengthen the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in all areas of the United Nations.

The **Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women** provides advice to the Secretary-General. She plays a leadership and coordinating role within the UN on gender equality issues, and provides advice and support on gender mainstreaming in all areas of its work, as well as on improving the status of women within the Organization — including the achievement of 50/50 gender balance. She provides support at the senior level to intergovernmental and expert bodies, including to the Security Council, on women, peace and security. The Special Adviser also chairs the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, which is comprised of the gender equality advisers and focal points from all parts of the UN system.

Beyond the Secretariat, all the organizations of the United Nations family address issues relating to women and gender in their policies and programmes. Women are central to UNICEF's work for children. Much of UNFPA's mandate revolves around women's health and reproductive rights. UNDP, UNESCO, WFP, ILO and others have programmes specifically focused on women and the promotion of gender equality, while also mainstreaming gender perspectives in their work generally. In addition, two other entities have an exclusive focus on women's issues: UNIFEM and UN-INSTRAW.

The **United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)** provides financial and technical assistance to innovative programmes and strategies to foster women's empowerment and gender equality. Placing the advancement of women at the centre of all of its efforts, UNIFEM focuses on four strategic areas: strengthening women's economic security and rights; ending violence against women; reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS among women and girls; and achieving gender equality in democratic governance in times of peace as well as war. (See www.unifem.org)

Working together with UN member states, international organizations, academia, civil society, the private sector and others, the **United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW)** conducts action-oriented research with a gender perspective. Its research promotes the empowerment of women and the achievement of gender equality, by strengthening the capacities of key stakeholders to integrate gender perspectives in their policies, programmes and projects. (See www.un-instraw.org)

Promoting the rights of the child

Up to 10 million children die every year before their fifth birthday, and tens of millions more are left physically or mentally disabled because they lack what is needed to survive and flourish. Many of the deaths — more than 6 million — are caused by preventable or easily treated illnesses; others by the pernicious effects of poverty, ignorance, discrimination and violence. In their entirety, they represent an acute loss to families, communities, nations and the world.

Beyond infancy, the young still confront forces that threaten their lives and wellbeing. They are made more vulnerable because their rights are often denied them, including their right to education, participation and protection from harm.

The **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)** acts to protect children's rights to survival, protection and development. It advocates for full implementation of the *Convention*

World conferences on women

Building on the energy of national women's movements, United Nations conferences in Mexico City (1975), Copenhagen (1980), Nairobi (1985) and Beijing (1995) have galvanized understanding, commitment and action concerning gender equality and the empowerment of women around the world.

At the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995), representatives of 189 governments adopted the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, to address discrimination and inequality and ensure the empowerment of women in all spheres of public and private life. The *Platform* identifies 12 critical areas of concern:

- the persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women;
- unequal access to and inadequate educational opportunities;
- inequalities in health status, inadequate health-care services, and unequal access to health care;
- violence against women;
- effects of conflict on women;
- inequality in women's participation in the definition of economic structures and policies, and in the production process;
- inequality in the sharing of power and decision-making;
- insufficient mechanisms to promote the advancement of women;
- lack of awareness of, and commitment to, internationally and nationally recognized women's human rights;
- insufficient mobilization of mass media to promote women's contribution to society;
- lack of adequate recognition and support for women's contribution to managing natural resources and safeguarding the environment;
- the girl child.

At its twenty-third special session in 2000, the General Assembly conducted a five-year review of the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*. Countries reaffirmed the commitments they made in Beijing and pledged additional initiatives, such as strengthening legislation against all forms of domestic violence, and enacting laws and policies to eradicate such harmful practices as early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation. Targets were set to ensure free compulsory primary education for both girls and boys, and to improve women's health through wider access to health care and prevention programmes.

In 2005, the Commission on the Status of Women conducted a 10-year review, in which member states reaffirmed the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* and committed themselves to accelerated action to address the gap between global policies and implementation at the national level.

on the Rights of the Child and the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*. UNICEF works in partnership with governments, international organizations, civil society and young people to advance health, education, equality and protection for every child. In its work in 191 countries and territories, UNICEF emphasizes sustainable, low-cost programmes in which communities are encouraged to take an active part. (See www.unicef.org)

UNICEF's current priorities are child survival and development, quality education for all children, and providing a protective environment for children affected by HIV/AIDS, violence, abuse, exploitation, war and natural disasters. These aims are congruent with the Millennium Development Goals and with the objectives expressed within *A World Fit for Children*, the outcome document of the 2002 special session of the General Assembly on children.

The UN Children's Fund is widely engaged in every facet of child health, from before birth through adolescence. It acts to ensure that pregnant women have access to proper prenatal and delivery care, strengthens families' ability to manage childhood illnesses at home, and offers guidance to communities in achieving the best health care possible. UNICEF works to reduce the risks of HIV/AIDS to young people by sharing information that will keep them safe. It makes special efforts to see that children who lose their parents to HIV/AIDS receive the same kind of care as their peers. And it helps women and children afflicted with AIDS to live their lives with dignity.

UNICEF is also involved worldwide in the process of immunization, from the purchase and distribution of vaccines to safe inoculation. More than 100 million children are now immunized against the most common illnesses — a programme that saves 2.5 million lives every year. It is estimated that the vaccinations carried out in 2003 alone will prevent more than 2 million deaths from vaccine-preventable diseases, and an additional 600,000 deaths related to hepatitis B that would otherwise have occurred in adulthood among the children immunized that year.

In its support for many different initiatives that educate children from pre-school age through adolescence, UNICEF mobilizes teachers, registers children, prepares school facilities and organizes curricula, sometimes rebuilding educational systems from the ground up. It makes sure that children have the chance to play and learn, even in times of conflict, because sports and recreation are equally important to a child's progress. UNICEF also works to ensure that every child is registered at birth, so that he or she has access to health care and education. It encourages proper nutrition for pregnant mothers and breastfeeding after birth. It improves water and sanitation facilities at kindergartens and child-care centres.

The UN Children's Fund helps create protective environments for the young. It encourages legislation that bans child labour, condemns female genital mutilation, and acts to make it more difficult to exploit children for sexual and economic ends. UNICEF designs landmine awareness campaigns and helps to demobilize child soldiers. In addition, it helps reunite parents with their children when they've been separated by conflict, and makes certain that children who are orphaned receive care and protection. UNICEF pioneered the idea of "days of tranquillity", when hostile forces agree to ceasefires for long enough to allow all children to be vaccinated.

“A World Fit for Children”

From 8 to 10 May 2002, more than 7,000 people participated in the most important international conference on children in more than a decade — the special session of the United Nations General Assembly on children. It was convened to review progress since the World Summit for Children in 1990 and re-energize global commitment to children's rights. The special session was a landmark — the first one devoted exclusively to children and the first to include them as official delegates.

The special session culminated in the official adoption, by some 180 nations, of its outcome document, *A World Fit for Children*. The new agenda for and with the world's children comprised 21 specific goals and targets for the next decade, with a focus on four key priority areas: promoting healthy lives; providing quality education for all; protecting children against abuse, exploitation and violence; and combating HIV/AIDS.

The document's Declaration committed leaders to completing the unfinished agenda of the 1990 World Summit for Children, and to achieving other goals and objectives, in particular those of the UN *Millennium Declaration*. It also reaffirmed leaders' obligation to promote and protect the rights of each child, acknowledging the legal standards set by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols.

The Plan of Action sets out three necessary outcomes: the best possible start in life for children; access to a quality basic education, including free and compulsory primary education; and ample opportunity for children and adolescents to develop their individual capacities. It includes strong calls to support families, eliminate discrimination and tackle poverty. It also calls upon a wide range of actors and partners to play key roles, including: children, parents, families and other caregivers; local governments and parliamentarians; NGOs and the private sector; religious, spiritual, cultural and indigenous leaders; the mass media; regional and international organizations; and people who work with children.

To achieve these goals, the plan calls for the mobilization of resources at both national and international levels. It supports the development of local partnerships, as well as the pursuit of such global targets as the allocation by industrialized countries of 0.7 per cent of their gross national product for official development assistance (ODA). And it supports the 20/20 Initiative — a compact between developing and industrialized countries calling for 20 per cent of developing countries' budgets and 20 percent of ODA to be allocated to basic social services.

Social integration

(www.un.org/esa/socdev)

There are several social groups that the United Nations has come to recognize as deserving special attention, including youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, minorities and indigenous populations. Their concerns are addressed by the General Assembly, ECOSOC and the Commission for Social Development. Specific programmes for these groups are carried out within the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

The United Nations has been instrumental in defining and defending the human rights of vulnerable groups. It has helped to formulate international norms, standards and recommendations for action regarding these groups, and strives to highlight their concerns through research and data gathering, as well as through the declaration of special years and decades aimed at encouraging awareness and international action.

Families

The United Nations recognizes the family as the basic unit of society. Families have been transformed to a great degree over the past 50 years as a result of changes in their structure (smaller-sized households, delayed marriage and childbearing, increased divorce rates and single parenthood), global trends in migration, the phenomenon of demographic ageing, the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the impacts of globalization. These dynamic social forces have had a manifest impact on the capacities of families to perform such functions as the socialization of children and caregiving for their younger and older members.

By proclaiming 1994 as the International Year of the Family, with the theme, “Family: Resources and Responsibilities in a Changing World”, the General Assembly emphasized family issues in the international dialogue on development. As a result, governments formulated national action plans on the family, established ministries devoted to the family and passed family-oriented legislation. The Assembly also convened an International Conference on Families in 1994, and in 2004 marked the tenth anniversary of the International Year.

Specific activities to benefit families are undertaken by many bodies within the UN system. The United Nations also promotes the annual worldwide observance of the International Day of Families on 15 May of each year, aimed at increasing awareness of issues relating to the family and encouraging appropriate action.

Youth

(www.un.org/youth)

The General Assembly has adopted several resolutions and campaigns specific to youth — defined as those between 15 and 24 years of age — and the Secretariat has overseen the related programmes and information campaigns, with the aim of increasing the global awareness of youth issues and increasing the participation of youth in society:

- In 1965, the General Assembly adopted the *Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples*, stressing the importance of the role of youth in today’s world.
- Two decades later, the Assembly proclaimed 1985 as International Youth Year, adopting guidelines for further planning, as well as a global long-term strategy on youth employment. The UN has promoted implementation of these guidelines, helping governments to develop policies and programmes relating to youth.
- In 1995, the United Nations adopted the *World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond* — an international strategy to address the problems of

young people and increase opportunities for their participation in society. It also called for a World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth to meet regularly under the aegis of the United Nations. Its first session, held in Lisbon in 1998, adopted the ***Lisbon Declaration on Youth*** and recommended initiatives at the national, regional and global levels.

- In 1999, the General Assembly declared that 12 August be commemorated each year as International Youth Day. It recommended that public information activities be organized to support the Day as a way to promote better awareness of the *World Programme of Action for Youth*.
- Governments include youth delegates regularly in their official delegations to the General Assembly and other UN meetings.
- Various UN forums also consider the social and economic impact of globalization on young people, with particular attention to its policy implications.

In their *Millennium Declaration*, the heads of state or government at the Millennium Summit resolved to “develop and implement strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work”. In 2001, the Secretary-General’s Youth Employment Network was established as a joint initiative of the UN, the ILO and the World Bank to translate the Summit commitments into action (www.ilo.org/ye).

Older persons

(www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing)

The world is in the midst of an historically unique and irreversible process of demographic transition that will result in older populations everywhere. Mainly as a result of declining fertility rates, the proportion of persons aged 60 and over is expected to double between 2007 and 2050, and their actual number will more than triple — reaching 2 billion by 2050. In most countries, the population aged 80 or over is growing faster than any other group and is likely to quadruple in coming years — from 94 million in 2007, to 394 million in 2050.

Europe and North America are already well advanced in the process of population ageing. But the less developed regions, where 64 per cent of all older persons live today — a number expected to be close to 80 per cent by 2050 — may benefit from a large, younger workforce. Even in those countries where this first “dividend” dissipates as the support ratio stops growing, continued ageing of the population may produce a *second* “dividend”, as people, expecting to live longer, accumulate wealth to cover consumption needs after retirement.

The world community has come to recognize the need to integrate the emerging process of global ageing into the larger context of development, and to design policies within a broader “life course” and a society-wide perspective. In the light of recent global initiatives and the guiding principles emerging from major UN conferences, older persons are increasingly seen as contributors to development, whose abilities to act for the betterment of themselves and their societies should be woven into policies and programmes at all levels.

In response to the challenge and opportunities of global ageing, the United Nations has taken several initiatives:

- The first World Assembly on Ageing (Vienna, 1982) adopted the *Vienna International Plan of Action on Ageing*, which recommended action in such areas as employment and income security, health and nutrition, housing, education and social welfare. It saw older persons as a diverse and active population group with wide-ranging capabilities and, at times, particular health-care needs.
- The *United Nations Principles for Older Persons*, adopted by the General Assembly in 1991, established universal standards pertaining to the status of older persons in five areas: independence, participation, care, self-fulfilment and dignity.
- In 1992 — the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the *Plan of Action* — the Assembly held an International Conference on Ageing. It adopted the *Proclamation on Ageing*, laying out the main direction for further action on ageing, and proclaimed 1999 as the International Year of Older Persons.
- The General Assembly in 1999 met to follow up on the International Year. Sixty-four countries spoke, offering wide support for the objectives of the Year and its theme, “Towards a society for all ages”.
- The Second World Assembly on Ageing met at Madrid in 2002 to design international policy on ageing for the 21st century. It adopted the *Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing*, by which member states committed themselves to action in three priority areas: older persons and development; advancing health and well-being into old age; and ensuring the existence of enabling and supportive environments.

Indigenous issues

(www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii)

There are more than 370 million indigenous peoples in some 70 countries worldwide, where they often face systemic discrimination and exclusion from political and economic power. Overrepresented among the poorest, the illiterate and the destitute of the world, indigenous peoples are displaced by wars and environmental disasters, removed from their ancestral lands, and deprived of resources needed for physical and cultural survival. They also see their traditional knowledge marketed and patented without their consent and participation.

The **Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**, established by the Economic and Social Council in July 2000, considers indigenous issues relating to economic and social development, culture, education, environment, health and human rights. It provides expert advice and recommendations to the Council and, through it, to the programmes, funds and agencies of the United Nations, as it seeks to raise awareness, promote the integration and coordination of activities relating to indigenous issues within the UN system, and prepare and disseminate information on indigenous issues.

The Forum seeks to produce targeted recommendations aimed at generating catalytic policies with tangible results. It is also addressing ways in which indigenous issues may best be pursued in meeting the Millennium Development Goals — given the fact that, in many countries, attention to indigenous communities will directly contribute to the goal of halving extreme poverty by 2015.

In addition, the General Assembly has declared 2005-2015 as the Second International Decade on the World's Indigenous People. Its main objectives are:

- Promoting non-discrimination and the inclusion of indigenous peoples in the design, implementation and evaluation of laws, policies, resources, programmes and projects;
- Promoting the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples in decisions which affect their lifestyles, traditional lands and territories, cultural integrity, collective rights, or any other aspect of their lives;
- Re-evaluating development policies that depart from a vision of equity, including respect for the cultural and linguistic diversity of indigenous peoples;
- Adopting targeted policies, programmes, projects and budgets for the development of indigenous peoples, including concrete benchmarks, with particular emphasis of indigenous women, children and youth; and
- Developing strong monitoring mechanisms and enhancing accountability at all levels in the implementation of legal, policy and operational frameworks for the protection of indigenous peoples and the improvement of their lives.

On 13 September 2007, the General Assembly adopted the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights on Indigenous Peoples*, setting out the individual and collective rights of indigenous peoples, including their rights to culture, identity, language, employment, health and education. The *Declaration* emphasizes the rights of indigenous peoples to maintain and strengthen their own institutions, cultures and traditions and to pursue their development in keeping with their own needs and aspirations. It prohibits discrimination against them, and promotes their full and effective participation in all matters that concern them, as well as their right to remain distinct and to pursue their own visions of economic and social development.

Persons with disabilities

(www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable)

Persons with disabilities are often excluded from the mainstream of society. Discrimination takes various forms, ranging from invidious discrimination, such as the denial of educational opportunities, to more subtle forms of discrimination, such as segregation and isolation because of the imposition of physical and social barriers. Society also suffers, since the loss of the enormous potentials of persons with disabilities impoverishes humankind. Changes in the perception and concepts of disability involve both changes in values and increased understanding at all levels of society.

Since its inception, the United Nations has sought to advance the status of persons with disabilities and to improve their lives. The concern of the United Nations for the well-being and rights of such persons is rooted in its founding principles, which are based on human rights, fundamental freedoms and the equality of all human beings.

In the 1970s, the concept of the human rights of persons with disabilities gained wider international acceptance. In 1971, the General Assembly adopted the *Declaration on the Rights*

of *Mentally Retarded Persons* and, in 1975, the *Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons*, which set the standards for equal treatment and access to services. The International Year of Disabled Persons (1981) led to the adoption of the *World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons*. The United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons (1983-1992) led to the adoption of the UN *Standard Rules for the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities*. In 1992, the Assembly proclaimed 3 December as the International Day of Disabled Persons.

The *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* and its *Optional Protocol* were adopted by the General Assembly on 13 December 2006 and opened for signature on 30 March 2007, following five years of negotiations by an ad hoc committee of the Assembly. A human rights instrument with an explicit, social development dimension, the Convention codified all categories of human rights and fundamental freedoms to be applied to all persons with disabilities. It entered into force on 3 May 2008.

The Convention is based on the following principles: respect for inherent dignity and individual autonomy; non-discrimination; full and effective participation and inclusion in society; respect for differences and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity; equal opportunity; accessibility; equality of men and women; respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and their right to preserve their identities.

The Convention focuses in particular on areas where rights have been violated, where protections must be reinforced, and where adaptations are needed to enable such persons to exercise their rights. It requires states to monitor its implementation at the national level by setting up national focal points within their governments, as well as independent monitoring mechanisms — usually in the form of an independent human rights institution.

A **Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**, composed of 18 expert members serving in their individual capacities, will monitor implementation of the Convention. Under the Convention's *Optional Protocol*, states parties recognize the Committee's competence to receive and consider communications from or on behalf of individuals or groups of individuals subject to its jurisdiction who claim to be victims of a violation by that state party of the Convention's provisions, and lays out provisions relating to such communications. (See www.un.org/disabilities/convention)

Uncivil society: crime, illicit drugs and terrorism

Transnational organized crime, illicit drug trafficking and terrorism have become social, political and economic forces capable of altering the destinies of countries and regions. Such practices as the large-scale bribery of public officials, the growth of “criminal multinationals”, trafficking in human beings, and the use of terrorism to intimidate communities large and small and to sabotage economic development are threats that require effective international cooperation. The United Nations is addressing these threats to good governance, social equity and justice for all citizens, and is orchestrating a global response.

The Vienna-based **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)** leads the international effort to combat drug trafficking and abuse, organized crime and international

terrorism — what have been called the “uncivil” elements of society. The Office — which has 21 field offices and liaison offices in New York — is composed of a crime programme, which also addresses terrorism and its prevention, and a drug programme. (See www.unodc.org)

Drug control

More than 110 million people worldwide use illicit drugs at least once a month, and some 25 million persons are addicts or “problem users”. Drug abuse is responsible for lost wages, soaring health-care costs, broken families and deteriorating communities. In particular, drug use by injection is fuelling the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS and hepatitis in many parts of the world.

There is a direct link between drugs and an increase in crime and violence. Drug cartels undermine governments and corrupt legitimate businesses. Revenues from illicit drugs fund some of the most deadly armed conflicts.

The financial toll is staggering. Enormous sums are spent to strengthen police forces, judicial systems and treatment and rehabilitation programmes. The social costs are equally jarring: street violence, gang warfare, fear, urban decay and shattered lives.

The United Nations is addressing the global drug problem on many levels. The **Commission on Narcotic Drugs**, a functional commission of ECOSOC, is the main intergovernmental policy-making and coordination body on international drug control. Made up of 53 member states, it analyses the world drug abuse and trafficking problem and develops proposals to strengthen international drug control. It monitors implementation of the international drug control treaties and the guiding principles and measures adopted by the General Assembly. (See www.unodc.org)

The **International Narcotics Control Board (INCB)** is a 13-member, independent, quasi-judicial body that monitors governments’ compliance with international drug control treaties and assists them in this effort. It strives to ensure that drugs are available for medical and scientific purposes and to prevent their diversion into illegal channels. It sends investigative missions and technical visits to drug-affected countries, and conducts training programmes for drug control administrators, particularly those from developing countries. (See www.incb.org)

A series of treaties, adopted under United Nations auspices, require that governments exercise control over the production and distribution of narcotic and psychotropic substances, combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking, and report to international organs on their actions. These treaties are:

- The *Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs* (1961), which seeks to limit the production, distribution, possession, use and trade in drugs exclusively to medical and scientific purposes, and obliges states parties to take special measures for particular drugs such as heroin. The *1972 Protocol* to the Convention stresses the need for treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts.
- The *Convention on Psychotropic Substances* (1971), which establishes an international control system for psychotropic substances. It responds to the diversification and expansion of the spectrum of drugs, and introduces controls over a number of synthetic drugs.

- The *United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances* (1988), which provides comprehensive measures against drug trafficking, including provisions against money laundering and the diversion of precursor chemicals. As the main instrument for international cooperation against drug trafficking, it provides for the tracing, freezing and confiscation of proceeds and property derived from drug trafficking; the extradition of drug traffickers; and the transfer of criminal prosecution proceedings. States parties commit themselves to eliminate or reduce drug demand.

Through its drug programme, UNODC provides leadership for all United Nations drug control activities. It helps to prevent developments that could aggravate drug production, trafficking and abuse; assists governments in establishing drug control structures and strategies; provides technical assistance in drug control; promotes the implementation of drug control treaties; and acts as a worldwide centre of expertise and repository of information.

UNODC's multifaceted approach to the global drug problem works with NGOs and civil society, and includes community-based programmes in prevention, treatment and rehabilitation, as well as the provision of new economic opportunities to economies which depend on illicit crops. Better training and technology to curb drug trafficking makes law enforcement agencies more effective, while assistance to business and NGOs helps them create programmes to reduce demand. For instance:

- The *Illicit Crop Monitoring Programme*, carried out in Afghanistan, Bolivia, Colombia, Laos, Morocco, Myanmar and Peru, integrates satellite sensing, aerial surveillance and on-the-ground assessment, in order to enable countries to gain a wide-ranging picture of illicit growing areas and trends.
- The *Global Assessment Programme on Drug Abuse* supplies accurate and current statistics on illicit drug consumption worldwide. Such a picture of drug abuse trends is crucial for finding the best strategies for prevention, treatment and rehabilitation.
- The *Legal Advisory Programme* works with states to implement drug control treaties by helping to draft legislation and train judicial officials. More than 2,400 judges, magistrates, prosecutors, senior law enforcement officials and other key officials from 160 countries have benefited from this programme.

At a 1998 special session of the General Assembly on countering the world drug problem, governments pledged to work together to streamline strategies and strengthen activities aimed at curtailing illicit production and consumption. These included: campaigns to reduce drug demand; programmes to restrict availability of materials that can be used in drug production; improving judicial cooperation among countries to better control drug trafficking; and stepped-up efforts to eradicate illicit crops.

Crime prevention

Crime is increasing in scope, intensity and sophistication. It threatens the safety of citizens around the world and hampers the social and economic development of countries. Globalization

has opened up new forms of transnational crime. Multinational criminal syndicates have expanded the range of their operations from drug and arms trafficking to money laundering. Traffickers move millions of illegal migrants each year, generating gross earnings of up to \$10 billion. A country plagued by corruption is likely to attract less investment than a relatively uncorrupt country, and to lose economic growth as a result.

The **Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice**, made up of 40 member states, is a functional body of ECOSOC. It formulates international policies and coordinates activities in crime prevention and criminal justice.

Through its crime programme, UNODC carries out the mandates established by the Commission, and is the United Nations office responsible for crime prevention, criminal justice and criminal law reform. It pays special attention to combating transnational organized crime, corruption, terrorism and trafficking in human beings. Its strategy is based on international cooperation and the provision of assistance for those efforts. It fosters a culture based on integrity and respect for the law, and promotes the participation of civil society in combating crime and corruption.

UNODC supports the development of new international legal instruments on global crime, including the *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime* and its three *Protocols*, which entered into force in September 2003; and the *United Nations Convention against Corruption*, which entered into force in December 2005. It is now promoting their ratification and helping states put their provisions into effect.

UNODC also provides technical cooperation to strengthen the capacity of governments to modernize their criminal justice systems. In 1999, in cooperation with United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), it launched the *Global Programme against Corruption*, and the *Global Programme in Trafficking in Human Beings* and *Global Studies on Organized Crime*. And UNODC's Anti-Organized Crime and Law Enforcement Unit assists states in taking effective, practical steps, in line with the UN Convention against Corruption, to fight organized crime.

The UN Office on Drugs and Crime promotes and facilitates the application of United Nations standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice as cornerstones of humane and effective criminal justice systems — basic requisites for fighting national and international crime. More than 100 countries have relied on these standards for elaborating national legislation and policies. The Office also analyses emerging trends in crime and justice, develops databases, issues global surveys issued, gathers and disseminates information, and undertakes country-specific needs assessments and early warning measures — for example, on the escalation of terrorism.

A *Global Programme against Terrorism* was launched in 2002, with the provision of legal technical assistance to countries on becoming party to and implementing the 12 universal anti-terrorism instruments.

In January 2003, UNODC expanded its technical cooperation activities to strengthen the legal regime against terrorism, providing legal technical assistance to countries on becoming party to and implementing the universal anti-terrorism instruments. Between 2003 and 2006,

there were 353 ratifications of these instruments by states which had received such technical support, and by the end of 2006, 85 states had ratified all of the first 12 instruments — up from 26 in January 2003. In addition, some 35 states had new or revised counter-terrorism legislation in different stages of adoption. Moreover, in about 100 countries, the capacity of the national criminal justice system to implement the legal regime against terrorism has been strengthened through the training of 4,600 of their criminal justice officials.

The *Global Programme against Money Laundering* assists governments in confronting criminals who launder the proceeds of crime through the international financial system. Estimates of laundered money range between \$500 billion and \$1 trillion a year. In close cooperation with international anti-money laundering organizations, the Programme provides governments, law enforcement and financial intelligence units with anti-money laundering schemes, advises on improved banking and financial policies, and assists national financial investigation services.

At the beginning of 2007, UNODC launched the *Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking* (UN.GIFT), aimed at producing a turning point in the worldwide movement against this crime (see www.ungift.org).

The **United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI)** operates as the interregional research body in close association with UNODC's crime programme. It undertakes and promotes action-oriented research aimed at the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders. Its dissemination of research and information contributes to the formulation of improved policies on crime prevention and control. (See www.unicri.it)

As decided by the General Assembly, a **United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders** is held every five years, as a forum to exchange policies and stimulate progress in the fight against crime. Participants include criminologists, penologists and senior police officers, as well as experts in criminal law, human rights and rehabilitation. The Eleventh Crime Congress met in Bangkok in April 2005, on the theme, "Synergies and responses: strategic alliances in crime prevention and criminal justice". (See www.unodc.org)

Science, culture and communication

The United Nations sees cultural and scientific exchanges, as well as communication, as instrumental to the advancement of international peace and development. In addition to its central work concerning education, the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** focuses its activities on three other areas: science in the service of sustainable development; cultural development — heritage and creativity; and communication and information.

Science

UNESCO's focus on science in the service of development fosters the advancement, transfer and sharing of knowledge in the natural, social and human sciences. UNESCO's international and intergovernmental programmes include the Man and the Biosphere Programme; the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission; the Management of Social Transformations

Programme; the International Hydrological Programme; the International Basic Sciences Programme; and the International Geoscience Programme. In addition, through science education and capacity-building initiatives, UNESCO helps to increase the scientific capacity of developing countries to enable their sustainable development.

In the wake of advances in cloning living beings, UNESCO member states in 1997 adopted the *Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights* — the first international text on the ethics of genetic research. The *Declaration* sets universal ethical standards on human genetic research and practice, balancing the freedom of scientists to pursue their work with the need to safeguard human rights and protect humanity from potential abuses. In 2003, UNESCO's General Conference adopted the *International Declaration on Human Genetic Data*, and in 2005, it adopted the *Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights*.

In the social and human sciences, UNESCO focuses on promoting philosophy and social sciences research; promoting and teaching human rights and democracy; combating all forms of discrimination; improving the status of women; and addressing forms of discrimination arising from illnesses such as HIV/AIDS.

Culture and development

UNESCO's cultural activities are concentrated on protecting and safeguarding cultural heritage in all its forms, and promoting intercultural dialogue. Under the 1972 *Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*, 184 states have pledged their cooperation to protect 851 outstanding sites in 141 countries — towns, monuments and natural environments that have been placed on the World Heritage List. A 1970 UNESCO convention prohibits the illicit import, export and transfer of cultural property.

In 2003, the UNESCO General Conference unanimously adopted the *UNESCO Declaration concerning the Intentional Destruction of Cultural Heritage* — mainly in response to the tragic destruction in March 2001 of the Buddhas of Bamiyan in Afghanistan. UNESCO's 2003 *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* encompasses oral traditions, customs, languages, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, traditional knowledge, traditional crafts, the protection of endangered languages and the promotion of linguistic diversity. The 2005 *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*, recognizing cultural goods and services as vehicles of identity and values, seeks to strengthen their creation, production, distribution and enjoyment, particularly by sustaining related industries in developing countries.

UNESCO's activities in all these areas focus on strengthening the contribution of culture to sustainable development and promoting its crucial role for building social cohesion, intercultural dialogue and peace.

Communication and information

UNESCO is a world leader in promoting press freedom and pluralistic, independent media. It works to promote the free flow of information and to strengthen the communication

capacities of developing countries. It assists member states in adapting their media laws to democratic standards, and in pursuing editorial independence in public and private media. And when violations of press freedom occur, UNESCO's Director-General intervenes through diplomatic channels or public statements.

At the initiative of UNESCO, 3 May is observed annually as **World Press Freedom Day**. And **World Information Society Day** is celebrated each year on 17 May to remind the world of the vision of the **World Summit on the Information Society** (Geneva, 2003, and Tunis, 2005) to build "a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society" based on fundamental human rights.

With the aim of reinforcing developing countries' communication infra-structures and human resources, UNESCO provides training and technical expertise and helps develop national and regional media projects — especially through its International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC). Over the past 25 years, IPDC has mobilized over \$90 million for over 1,000 projects in 139 developing countries and countries in transition.

UNESCO helps developing countries set up their own informatics systems and secure access to global information flows, in order to bridge the digital divide. Its emphasis is on training, as well as on establishing computer networks to link scientific and cultural institutions and hook them up to the Internet.

The new information and communication technologies (ICTs), by multiplying the possibilities for producing, disseminating and receiving information on an unprecedented scale, are extending the principle of the free flow of ideas. UNESCO seeks to ensure that as many people as possible benefit from these opportunities. Additional issues being addressed by UNESCO include the social and cultural impact of these technologies, and policy approaches to legal and ethical issues relating to cyberspace.

In April 2006, the Secretary-General approved the launching of a **Global Alliance for Information and Communication Technologies and Development**. Its aim is to facilitate and promote the integration of ICT into development activities, by providing a platform for an open, inclusive, multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral policy dialogue on the role of ICT in development. (See www.un-gaid.org)

The Global Alliance for ICT organizes thematic events on the role of ICT in economic development, poverty eradication, employment and enterprise in "pro-poor" growth scenarios, with a particular focus on health, education, gender, youth, and the disabled and disadvantaged segments of society. It builds on existing initiatives and institutions, and on the work of the ICT Task Force (2001-2005), which addressed such issues as: ICT policy and governance; national and regional e-strategies; human resources development and capacity-building; low-cost connectivity access; and business enterprise and entrepreneurship. (See www.unicttaskforce.org)

The Global Alliance functions primarily as a decentralized network, open to participation of all stakeholders, including governments, business, civil society and

An Alliance of Civilizations

On 14 July 2005, Secretary-General Kofi Annan announced the launch of a new initiative — an Alliance of Civilizations — in response to concerns that extremists had been exploiting the sense of a widening gap between Islamic and Western societies.

The Alliance was established as a coalition against such forces — to advance mutual respect for religious beliefs and traditions, and to reaffirm humanity's increasing interdependence in all areas. It represents a committed international effort to bridge divides and overcome prejudice, misconceptions, misperceptions and polarization which threaten world peace.

A high-level group of eminent persons was established to guide the Alliance, including such renowned theologians as Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa, author Karen Armstrong of the United Kingdom, Rabbi Arthur Schneier of the United States, and Prof. Mehmet Aydın of Turkey, as well as administrators of cultural institutions, such as Ismail Serageldin of Egypt's Bibliotheca Alexandria. It is co-chaired by Mr. Aydın and former UNESCO Director-General, Federico Mayor.

The high-level group's first report, issued in November 2006, analysed the state of relations between Muslim and Western societies and put forward a range of proposals in the areas of education, media, youth and migration, to build bridges and promote a culture of respect. It also recommended the appointment a high representative to help defuse crises that arise at the intersection of culture and politics, take steps to restart the Middle East peace process, and encourage political pluralism in Muslim countries.

On 26 April 2007, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appointed former Portuguese President Jorge Sampaio as the first UN High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations. From 15 to 16 January 2008, in Madrid, the Alliance will hold its first Annual Forum — a high-level, action-driven event, aimed at developing partnerships to promote cross-cultural understanding at the global level.

The Alliance was originally proposed by Spanish Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero and co-sponsored by Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, and both countries continue to act as its co-sponsors. (For additional information, see www.unaoc.org).

international organizations. By making extensive use of the latest web-based collaborative technologies, it aims to minimize the need for physical meetings. It also aims significantly to expand the circle of participants in policy and partnership debates by actively engaging non-governmental participants from developing countries, media, academia, youth and women's groups.

It held its inaugural meeting on 19 June 2006 in Kuala Lumpur.

Sustainable development

(www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/sdissues.htm)

In the first decades of the United Nations, environmental concerns rarely appeared on the international agenda. The related work of the Organization emphasized the exploration and use of natural resources, while seeking to ensure that developing countries in particular would maintain control over their own resources. During the 1960s, agreements were made concerning marine pollution, especially oil spills. Since then, there has been increasing evidence of the deterioration of the environment on a global scale, and the international community has shown escalating alarm over the impact of development on the ecology of the planet and on human well-being. The United Nations has been a leading advocate for environmental concerns, and a leading proponent of “sustainable development”.

The relationship between economic development and environmental degradation was first placed on the international agenda in 1972, at the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm. After the Conference, governments set up the **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)**, which remains the world’s leading environmental agency.

In 1973, the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office — now UNDP’s **Drylands Development Centre** — was set up to spearhead efforts to reverse the spread of desertification in West Africa, and later took on a global mandate. In 1996, the entry into force of the United Nations *Convention to Combat Desertification* — its full title is the *Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa* (1994) — gave added impetus to this effort. Nevertheless, environmental deterioration remains a major challenge.

The 1980s witnessed landmark negotiations among member states on environmental issues, including treaties protecting the ozone layer and controlling the movement of toxic wastes. The World Commission on Environment and Development, established in 1983 by the General Assembly, brought a new understanding and sense of urgency to the need for a new kind of development that would ensure economic well-being for present and future generations, while protecting the environmental resources on which all development depends. The Commission’s 1987 report to the General Assembly put forward this new concept of *sustainable development*, as an alternative to development based simply on unconstrained economic growth.

After considering the report, the General Assembly called for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development — the *Earth Summit*.

Today, awareness of the need to support and sustain the environment is reflected in virtually all areas of United Nations work. Dynamic partnerships between the Organization and governments, NGOs, the scientific community and the private sector are bringing new knowledge and specific action to global environmental problems. The UN maintains that environment protection must be part of all

Sustainable development summits

At the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) (Rio de Janeiro, 1992), also known as the Earth Summit, it was agreed that environmental protection and social and economic development are fundamental to sustainable development, based on the "Rio Principles". To achieve such development, world leaders adopted a global programme entitled Agenda 21.

In Agenda 21, governments outlined a blueprint for action to move the world away from an unsustainable model of economic growth towards one based on the protection and renewal of environmental resources. It also recommended ways to strengthen the role of women, trade unions, farmers, children and young people, indigenous peoples, the scientific community, local authorities, business, industry and NGOs in achieving sustainable development.

In 1997, the General Assembly held a special session (Earth Summit + 5) on the implementation of Agenda 21. While emphasizing the urgency of putting Agenda 21 into practice, states differed on how to finance sustainable development. The session's final document recommended the adoption of legally binding targets to reduce emission of greenhouse gases leading to climate change; moving more forcefully towards sustainable patterns of energy production, distribution and use; and focusing on poverty eradication as a prerequisite for sustainable development.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development (*Johannesburg, 2002*) reviewed progress since the Earth Summit. Its Johannesburg Declaration and 54-page Plan of Implementation included commitments on specific time-bound goals relating to sanitation; chemical use and production; the maintenance and restoration of fish stocks; and reducing the loss of biodiversity. The special needs of Africa and of the small island developing states were specifically addressed, as were such new issues as sustainable production and consumption patterns, energy and mining.

economic and social development activities. Development cannot be achieved unless the environment is protected.

Agenda 21

Governments took an historic step towards ensuring the future of the planet when the 1992 Earth Summit adopted *Agenda 21*, a comprehensive plan for global action in all areas of sustainable development.

In *Agenda 21*, governments outlined a detailed blueprint for action that could move the world away from its present unsustainable model of economic growth towards activities that will protect and renew the environmental resources on which growth and development depend. Areas for action include: protecting the atmosphere; combating deforestation, soil loss and desertification; preventing air and water pollution; halting the depletion of fish stocks; and promoting the safe management of toxic wastes.

Agenda 21 also addresses patterns of development which cause stress to the environment, including: poverty and external debt in developing countries; unsustainable patterns of

production and consumption; demographic stress; and the structure of the international economy. The action programme also recommends ways to strengthen the part played by major groups — women, trade unions, farmers, children and young people, indigenous peoples, the scientific community, local authorities, business, industry and NGOs — in achieving sustainable development.

The United Nations has acted to integrate the concept of sustainable development in all relevant policies and programmes. Income-generating projects increasingly take environmental consequences into account. Development assistance programmes are more than ever directed towards women, in view of their central roles as producers of goods, services and food, and as caretakers of the environment. The moral and social imperatives for alleviating poverty are given additional urgency by the recognition that poverty eradication and environmental quality go hand in hand.

To ensure full support for the goals of *Agenda 21*, the General Assembly in 1992 established the **Commission on Sustainable Development**. A functional commission of ECOSOC, the 53-member body monitors the implementation of *Agenda 21* and the other Earth Summit agreements, as well as the outcome of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development. It promotes an active and continuous dialogue with governments, civil society and other international organizations, aimed at building partnerships to address key issues relating to sustainable development, and to help coordinate environment and development activities within the United Nations. (See www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/aboutCsd.htm)

The **Division for Sustainable Development** of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs provides the secretariat for the Commission and monitors progress in the implementation of *Agenda 21*, the *Johannesburg Plan of Implementation* and the 1994 *Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States*. It responds to requests for policy recommendations, and provides technical services for capacity-building in sustainable development, as well as analytical and information services. (See www.un.org/esa/sustdev)

World Summit on Sustainable Development

The World Summit on Sustainable Development was held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September 2002, to take stock of achievements, challenges and new issues arising since the 1992 Earth Summit. It was an “implementation” Summit, designed to turn the goals, promises and commitments of *Agenda 21* into concrete, tangible actions.

The Summit brought together a wide range of interests. Over 22,000 people participated, including 100 heads of state, more than 8,000 representatives from NGOs, business and other major groups, and 4,000 members of the press. At least as many people attended related parallel events.

Changing human behaviour

Achieving sustainable development worldwide entails changing patterns of production and consumption — what we produce, how it is produced and how much we consume. Finding ways to do this, particularly in the industrialized countries, was first put on the international agenda at the Earth Summit. Since then, the Commission on Sustainable Development has spearheaded a work programme aimed at challenging the behaviour of individual consumers, households, industrial concerns, businesses and governments. Its actions have included expanding the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection to include a section promoting sustainable consumption.

In 2002, the World Summit on Sustainable Development reaffirmed the importance of such efforts. It identified changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production as crucial. It expressed a renewed commitment to accelerate such change, with developed countries taking the lead by developing and implementing relevant policies; promoting cleaner production; increasing awareness; and enhancing corporate responsibility. Discussions on these issues involved business and industry, governments, consumer organizations, international bodies, the academic community and NGOs.

Using fewer resources and reducing waste is simply better business. It saves money and generates higher profits. It protects the environment by conserving natural resources and creating less pollution, thus sustaining the planet for the enjoyment and well-being of future generations.

Member states agreed to the *Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development* and a 54-page *Plan of Implementation* detailing the priorities for action. The Summit reaffirmed sustainable development as a central element of the international agenda. paved the way for sustained measures to address the world's most pressing challenges, and emphasized the links between economic and social development and the conservation of natural resources. A unique outcome of the Summit was that the internationally agreed commitments were complemented by a range of voluntary partnership initiatives for sustainable development. (See box, *Sustainable development summits*)

Financing sustainable development

At the Earth Summit, it was agreed that most financing for *Agenda 21* would come from within each country's public and private sectors. However, new and additional external funds were deemed necessary to support developing countries' efforts to implement sustainable development practices and protect the global environment.

The **Global Environment Facility (GEF)**, established in 1991, helps developing countries fund projects that protect the global environment and promote sustainable livelihoods in local communities. Over the years, it has provided \$6.8 billion in grants and generated over \$24 billion in cofinancing from recipient governments, international development agencies,

private industry and NGOs, to support 1,900 projects in 160 developing countries and economies in transition.

Every four years, donor nations commit funds to replenish the Facility. During the fourth replenishment, in 2006, 32 nations pledged \$3.13 billion to fund projects between 2006 and 2010. GEF funds are the primary means by which the goals of the conventions on biological diversity, climate change and persistent organic pollutants are achieved. (See www.gefweb.org)

GEF projects — principally carried out by UNDP, UNEP and the World Bank — conserve and make sustainable use of biological diversity, address global climate change, reverse the degradation of international waters, phase out substances that deplete the ozone layer, combat land degradation and drought, and reduce and eliminate the production and use of certain persistent organic pollutants.

The following “Executing Agencies” also contribute to the management and execution of GEF projects: the African Development Bank (www.afdb.org), the Asian Development Bank (www.adb.org), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (www.ebrd.org), the Inter-American Development Bank (www.iadb.org), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (www.ifad.org), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (www.fao.org), and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (www.unido.org).

Action for the environment

The entire United Nations system is engaged in environmental protection in diverse ways. Its lead agency in this area is the **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)**. As the environmental conscience of the UN system, UNEP assesses the state of the world’s environment and identifies issues requiring international cooperation. It helps formulate international environmental law, and helps integrate environmental considerations in the social and economic policies and programmes of the UN system. (See www.unep.org)

UNEP, with its motto of “Environment for Development”, helps solve problems that cannot be handled by countries acting alone. It provides a forum for building consensus and forging international agreements. In doing so, it strives to enhance the participation of business and industry, the scientific and academic communities, NGOs, community groups and others in achieving sustainable development.

One of UNEP’s functions is to promote scientific knowledge and information on the environment. Research and synthesis of environmental information, promoted and coordinated at the regional and global levels by UNEP, has generated a variety of reports on the state of the environment. Reports such as the *Global Environment Outlook* have generated created worldwide awareness of emerging environmental problems. Some reports have triggered international negotiations on environmental conventions. (See www.unep.org/geo)

UNEP facilitates and coordinates the collection and dissemination of the best possible scientific data and information at the global and regional levels. It accomplishes this through

a growing network of centres of excellence, including the UNEP Collaborating Centre on Water and the Environment (www.ucc-water.org), the UNEP Risoe Centre on Energy, Climate Change and Sustainable Development (www.uneprisoe.org), the Global Resource Information Database (GRID) centres (www.unep.org/dewa/partnerships/grid) and the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (www.unep-wcmc.org).

UNEP acts to protect oceans and seas and promote the environmentally sound use of marine resources under its *Regional Seas Programme*, which now covers more than 140 countries. This programme works towards the protection of shared marine and water resources through 13 conventions or action plans, the most recent one dealing with the Caspian Sea under the 2003 *Tehran Convention*; it entered into force on 12 August 2006. Regional conventions and action plans for which UNEP provides the secretariat cover eastern Africa, West and Central Africa, the Mediterranean, the Caribbean, the East Asian seas and the north-west Pacific. (See www.unep.org/regionalseas)

Coastal and marine areas cover some 70 per cent of the earth's surface and are vital to the planet's life-support system. Most pollution comes from industrial wastes, mining, agricultural activities and emissions from motor vehicles, some of which occurs thousands of miles inland. The *Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities*, adopted in 1995 under UNEP auspices, is considered a milestone in international efforts to protect oceans, estuaries and coastal waters from pollution caused by human activities on land. The programme, which has a coordination office in The Hague, addresses what might be the most serious threat to the marine environment: the flow of chemicals, pollutants and sewage into the sea. (See www.gpa.unep.org)

UNEP's Paris-based **Division of Technology, Industry and Economics** is active in UN efforts aimed at encouraging decision-makers in government, industry and business to adopt policies, strategies and practices that are cleaner and safer, use natural resources more efficiently, and reduce pollution risks to people and the environment. The Division facilitates the transfer of safer, cleaner and environmentally sound technologies, especially those which deal with urban and freshwater management; helps countries to build capacities for the sound management of chemicals and the improvement of chemical safety worldwide; supports the phase-out of ozone-depleting substances in developing countries and countries with economies in transition; assists decision-makers to make better, more informed energy choices which fully integrate environmental and social costs; and works with governments and the private sector to integrate environmental considerations in their activities, practices, products and services. (See www.unep.org/resources/business/DTIE)

UNEP Chemicals — the Division's chemicals branch — provides countries with access to information about toxic chemicals; assists countries in building their capacities to produce, use and dispose of chemicals safely; and supports international and regional actions needed to reduce or eliminate chemical risks. (See www.chem.unep.ch)

In collaboration with FAO, UNEP facilitated the negotiation of the *Rotterdam Convention on Prior Informed Consent Procedures for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in*

International Trade (1998). The Convention gives importing countries the power to decide which chemicals they want to receive and to exclude those they cannot manage safely. (See www.pic.int)

UNEP also facilitated the completion, in 2001, of the *Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants* — a legally binding treaty to reduce and eliminate releases of certain chemicals that remain intact in the environment for long periods, become widely distributed geographically, accumulate in the fatty tissue of living organisms and are toxic to humans and wildlife. This include highly toxic pesticides and industrial chemicals and by-products that are highly mobile and accumulate in the food chain. (See www.pops.int)

Over the years, UNEP has been the catalyst for the negotiation of other international agreements that form the cornerstone of UN efforts to halt and reverse damage to the planet (see www.unep.org/dec). The historic *Montreal Protocol* (1987) and its subsequent amendments seek to preserve the ozone layer in the upper atmosphere. The *Basel Convention on the Control of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal* (1989) has reduced the danger of pollution from toxic waste.

The *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species* (1973) is universally recognized for its achievements in controlling the trade in wildlife products. UNEP assisted African governments in developing the *Lusaka Agreement on Cooperative Enforcement Operations Directed at Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora* (1994). The *Convention on Biological Diversity* (1992), and the *Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety* (2000), seek to conserve, and encourage the sustainable and equitable use of the planet's wide variety of plants, animals and micro-organisms, UNEP also helped to negotiate and implement the conventions on desertification and climate change.

Climate change and global warming

Since the dawn of the industrial age, there has been a steady, and now, dangerously increasing build-up of “greenhouse gases” in the atmosphere, leading to a continuing rise in global temperatures. When fossil fuels are burned to generate energy, or when forests are cut down and burned, carbon dioxide is released into the earth's atmosphere. The accumulation of such “greenhouse gases” — including methane, nitrous oxide and others — has increased to such an extent that the planet now faces the prospect of massive and potentially destructive consequences.

In 1988, at a time when the best research available was beginning to indicate the possible severity of the problem, two UN bodies — UNEP and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) — came together to establish the **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)**, to assemble the current knowledge on climate change and to point the way forward. The Panel, a worldwide network of 2,500 leading scientists and experts, reviews scientific research on the issue. Its findings gave impetus to the development of a legally binding and coordinated approach to the problem. In recognition of its work, the Panel was awarded the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize, together with former United States Vice President Albert Arnold (Al) Gore Jr. (See www.ipcc.ch)

Heeding the warnings of scientists worldwide, the nations of the world came together in Rio de Janeiro to sign the 1992 *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*. To date, 191 countries have joined in this international treaty, by which developed countries agreed to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases they release into the atmosphere to 1990 levels by 2000. Those countries, which accounted for 60 per cent of annual carbon dioxide emissions, also agreed to transfer to developing countries the technology and information needed to help them respond to the challenges of climate change. (See www.unfccc.int)

However, in 1995, evidence presented by IPCC scientists made it clear that the 1992 target, even if reached on time, would not be enough to prevent global warming and its associated problems. So in 1997, countries that had ratified the Convention met in Kyoto, Japan, and agreed on a legally binding *Protocol* under which developed countries are to reduce their collective emissions of six greenhouse gases by 5.2 per cent between 2008 and 2012, taking 1990 levels as the baseline. To date, 175 states have become party to the *Protocol*, which also established several innovative “mechanisms” aimed at reducing the costs of curbing emission levels.

The *Kyoto Protocol* entered into force on 16 February 2005. Of the six gases it seeks to control, carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide occur naturally in the atmosphere, but human activities have increased their levels dramatically. Sulfur hexafluoride is a synthetic gas with devastating impact on the atmosphere (1 kg is equal to 22,200 kg of carbon dioxide). Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) and perfluorocarbons (PFCs), also synthetic, are *classes* of chemicals, and 1 kg of each is equivalent in terms of greenhouse warming to many tonnes of carbon dioxide.

When the United Nations first began to mobilize world public opinion to address the threat posed by climate change, there were many who still considered it a theory and “unproven”. Differences in scientific opinion, though minimal, were vocal, and the means required to make predictive models were still being perfected. But by 2006, all that had changed, and in early 2007, the IPCC issued its strongest report ever.

Making use of major advances in climate modelling and the collection and analysis of data, and based on a review of the most up-to-date, peer-reviewed scientific literature, the Panel reported with 90 per cent certainty that significant global warming was in process and increasing — to a degree that was directly attributable to human activity. What’s more, the consequences were already visible and would worsen unless major corrective action was taken.

The report, a consensus agreement of climate scientists and experts from 40 countries and endorsed by 113 governments, indicated that the world faces an average temperature rise of around 3 degrees C by the end of this century if greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise at their current pace.

The result would include more extreme temperatures, heat waves, new wind patterns, worsening drought in some regions, heavier precipitation in others, melting glaciers and Arctic ice, and rising sea levels worldwide. And while the number of tropical cyclones (typhoons and

hurricanes) is projected to decline, their intensity is expected to increase — with higher peak wind speeds and more intense precipitation, due to warmer ocean waters.

The *Hyogo Framework for Action, 2005-2015*, adopted by 168 nations at the UN World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe, Japan, included recommendations that can be effective in reducing the disaster risks caused by climate-related hazards. But, ultimately, the only effective course is to turn back the tide of global warming by restoring the atmosphere to sustainability.

Fortunately, the means to do so have been outlined, and the goal can be accomplished if the nations and peoples of the world come together to make it happen. In addition to the national actions contemplated by the *Climate Change Convention* and its *Kyoto Protocol*, individuals, municipalities, non-governmental organizations and other bodies all have a part to play. For example, one UNEP campaign encouraged the planting of a billion trees worldwide during 2007, to help mitigate the build-up of carbon dioxide.

On 1 March 2007, the UN launched a unique partnership with the City of San Francisco, the Bay Area Council and a wide array of regional businesses — a “Principles on Climate Leadership” initiative — to provide a model for actions that businesses and cities worldwide can take to combat global warming. The UN also welcomed a “green initiative” in New York City, unveiled on Earth Day 2007, that aims to reduce the strain on such natural resources as water, air and land.

Also in early 2007, the UN Foundation and Sigma XI, the Scientific Research Society, published a report entitled “Confronting Climate Change: Avoiding the Unmanageable and Managing the Unavoidable”. It concluded that the world community could significantly slow and then reduce global emissions of greenhouse gases over the next several decades by exploiting cost-effective policies and current and emerging technologies. Its policy recommendations included vehicle efficiency standards, fuel taxes, and support for the purchase of efficient and alternative fuel vehicles.

The report calls on policy makers to improve the design and efficiency of commercial and residential buildings through building codes, standards for equipment and appliances, and the provision of incentives and financing for energy-efficiency investments. It also calls on the international community, through the UN and related multilateral institutions, to help countries in need to finance and deploy energy efficient and new energy technologies.

In April 2007, in an unprecedented move highlighting the urgent need for concerted international action to address the problem of climate change, the UN Security Council held an open debate on energy, security and climate. Addressing that debate, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called for “a long-term global response, in line with the latest scientific findings, and compatible with economic and social development”.

On 1 May 2007, the Secretary-General, describing the problem of climate change as “a defining issue of our era”, identified it as one of his priorities, and named three prominent world figures as his special envoys for climate change. They are: Gro Harlem Brundtland, former Prime Minister of Norway and former Chair of the World Commission of Environment and Development; Ricardo Lagos Escobar, former President of Chile and founder of the

Synthesis Report on Climate Change

On 17 November 2007, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) issued The Synthesis Report, integrating and distilling the wealth of information contained in three reports issued during the year. Among its observations:

- “Warming of the climate system is unequivocal, as is now evident from observations of increases in global average air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snow and ice, and rising global average sea level ... The temperature increase is widespread over the globe, and is greater at higher northern latitudes.”
- “Global GHG [greenhouse gas] emissions due to human activities have grown since pre-industrial times, with an increase of 70% between 1970 and 2004 ... There is high agreement and much evidence that with the current climate change mitigation policies and related sustainable development practices, global GHG emissions will continue to grow over the next few decades.”
- “Continued GHG emissions at or above current rates would cause further warming and induce many changes in the global climate system during the 21st century ... Anthropogenic warming could lead to some impacts that are abrupt or irreversible.”
- “There is new and stronger evidence of observed impacts of climate change on unique and vulnerable systems (such as polar and high mountain communities and ecosystems), with increasing levels of adverse impacts as temperatures increase further.”
- “There is now higher confidence in the projected increases in droughts, heatwaves, and floods as well as their adverse impacts.”
- “There is increasing evidence of greater vulnerability of specific groups such as the poor and elderly in not only developing but also developed countries. Moreover, there is increased evidence that low-latitude and less-developed areas generally face greater risk, for example in dry areas and mega-deltas ... Sea level rise under warming is inevitable.”
- “A wide variety of policies and instruments are available to governments to create the incentives for mitigation action ... There is high agreement and much evidence that notable achievements of the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol are the establishment of a global response to climate change, stimulation of an array of national policies, and the creation of an international carbon market and new institutional mechanisms that may provide the foundation for future mitigation efforts.”

(For the full report, see www.unfccc.int)

Foundation for Democracy and Development, which works for sustainable development; and Han Seung-soo, former President of the General Assembly and current head of the Korea Water Forum.

The special envoys have been discussing the issue with the world’s major political figures, especially national leaders. They also formulated proposals ahead of the Secretary-General’s

high-level event on climate change on 24 September 2007 — in which he discussed the issue with the heads of state and other top officials from more than 150 countries — and the UN-backed Conference of Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Bali, Indonesia, from 3 to 14 December 2007.

In September 2007, the *UN Framework Convention on Climate Change* secretariat and the UNEP launched a website aimed to support the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) in the *Kyoto Protocol*. Under the CDM, projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions in developing countries and contribute to sustainable development can earn certified emission reduction credits (CERs), which industrialized countries can then buy to cover a portion of their emission reduction commitments under the *Protocol*. (See the CDM Bazaar, at www.cdmbazaar.net)

Ozone depletion. The ozone layer is a thin layer of gas in the stratosphere, more than 10 kilometres (6 miles) above the ground, that shields the earth's surface from the sun's damaging ultraviolet rays. In the mid-1970s, it was discovered that certain man-made chemicals, including the chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) used for refrigeration, air conditioning and industrial cleaning, were destroying atmospheric ozone and depleting the ozone layer. This became a matter of increasing international concern, since increased exposure to increased ultraviolet radiation is known to result in skin cancer, eye cataracts and suppression of the human immune system, and to cause unpredictable damage to plants, algae, the food chain and the global ecosystem.

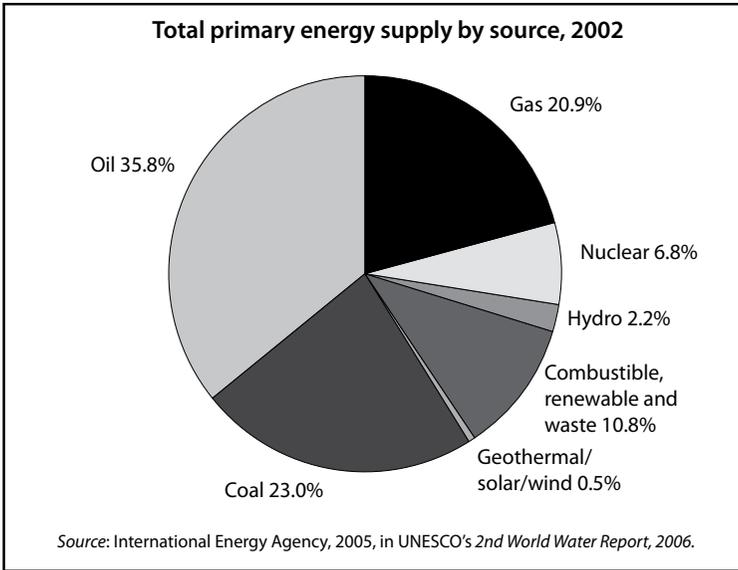
In response to this challenge, UNEP helped to negotiate and now administers the historic *Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer* (1985), and the *Montreal Protocol* (1987) and its amendments. Under these agreements, developed countries have banned the production and sale of chlorofluorocarbons, and developing countries are required to stop their production by 2010. Schedules were also put in place to phase out other ozone-depleting substances.

“The *Montreal Protocol* is working”, according to a scientific assessment of ozone depletion issued by UNEP's Ozone Secretariat in 2006. There is clear evidence of a decrease in the atmospheric burden of ozone-depleting substances in the lower atmosphere and in the stratosphere, as well as early signs of the expected “ozone recovery” of the stratosphere. Failure to continue complying with the *Montreal Protocol* could delay and even prevent recovery of the ozone layer, the assessment notes. However, if states parties were to eliminate all emissions of ozone-depleting substances soon after 2006, it would advance the process by about 15 years, restoring the global ozone level to pre-1980 levels by 2035. (See www.ozone.unep.org)

For additional information on United Nations efforts to address these major environmental issues, see the “Gateway to the UN System's Work on Climate Change” (www.un.org/climatechange).

Small islands

There are some 50 small island developing states and territories in the world, and they share specific disadvantages and vulnerabilities. Their ecological fragility, small size, limited resources and isolation from markets limit their ability to take advantage of globalization and pose a major obstacle to their socio-economic development. This makes sustainable development



a unique challenge for the island states and the international community at large. Since the 1992 Earth Summit, these states and islands have been considered “a special case both for environment and development”.

At the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (Barbados, 1994), a *Programme of Action* was adopted that set forth policies, actions and measures at all levels to promote sustainable development for these states. In January 2005, meeting at Mauritius to conduct a 10-year review of the *Barbados Programme*, the international community approved a wide-ranging set of specific recommendations for its further implementation.

The *Mauritius Strategy* addresses such issues as climate change and rising sea levels; natural and environmental disasters; management of wastes; coastal, marine, freshwater, land, energy, tourism and biodiversity resources; transportation and communication; science and technology; globalization and trade liberalization; sustainable production and consumption, capacity development, and education for sustainable development; health; culture; knowledge management and information for decision-making. (See www.un.org/ohbrlls)

Sustainable forest management

With international trade in forest products totalling some \$270 billion annually, more than 1.6 billion people depend on forests for their livelihoods. As the foundation for indigenous knowledge, forests provide profound socio-cultural benefits. And as ecosystems, forests play a critical role in mitigating the effects of climate change and protecting biodiversity. Yet every year, some 13 million hectares of the world's forests are lost to deforestation, which in turn accounts for up to 20 per cent of the global greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global

warming. The world's forests and forest soils store more than one trillion tons of carbon, twice the amount found in the atmosphere.

Every day, some 350 square kilometres of forest cover are lost worldwide, owing to such causes as unsustainable harvesting of timber, the conversion of forests to agricultural land, unsound land management practices, and the creation of human settlements — the most common reasons for this loss of forested areas. The UN has been in the forefront of the movement towards sustainable forest management since the 1992 Earth Summit, which adopted a non-binding statement of forest principles.

From 1995 to 2000, the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests — under the UN Commission on Sustainable Development — were the main intergovernmental forums for the development of forest policy. In October 2000, the Economic and Social Council established the **United Nations Forum on Forests**, a high-level intergovernmental body charged with strengthening long-term political commitment for sustainable forest management.

In April 2007, after 15 years of negotiation, the Forum adopted a landmark agreement on international forest policy and cooperation. A non-binding instrument, it nevertheless sets a standard in forest management that is expected to have a major impact in the effort to reduce deforestation, prevent forest degradation, promote sustainable livelihoods and reduce poverty for all forest-dependent peoples. It also calls on countries to adopt, by 2009, a voluntary global financing mechanism for forest management.

At the invitation of ECOSOC, the heads of relevant international organizations have also formed a 14-member **Collaborative Partnership on Forests**, which fosters increased cooperation and coordination in support of the goals of the UN Forum on Forests and the implementation of sustainable forest management worldwide. To bolster efforts towards the achievement of these goals, the General Assembly, in December 2006, proclaimed 2011 as the **International Year of Forests**. (See www.un.org/esa/forests)

Desertification

Deserts are harsh, dry environments where few people live. Drylands, which cover 41 per cent of the earth's land area, are characterized by low rainfall and high rates of evaporation. They are home to more than 2 billion people, including half of all those living in poverty worldwide. Some 1.8 billion of these people live in developing countries and lag far behind the rest of the world in human well-being and development indicators.

Desertification is defined as “land degradation in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas resulting from various factors, including climatic variations and human activities”. Land degradation in drylands is defined as the reduction or loss of the biological or economic productivity of drylands. Its main human causes are overcultivation, overgrazing, deforestation and poor irrigation. UNEP estimates that it affects one third of the earth's surface and more than 1 billion people in more than 110 countries. Sub-Saharan Africa, where 66 per cent of the land is either desert or dryland, is particularly at risk.

The consequences of desertification and drought include food insecurity, famine and poverty. The ensuing social, economic and political tensions can create conflicts, cause more impoverishment and further increase land degradation. Growing desertification worldwide threatens to increase by millions the number of poor people forced to seek new homes and livelihoods.

The United Nations *Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa* (1994) seeks to address this problem. It focuses on rehabilitation of land, improving productivity, and the conservation and management of land and water resources. It emphasizes the establishment of an enabling environment for local people to help reverse land degradation. It also contains criteria for the preparation by affected countries of national action programmes, and gives an unprecedented role to NGOs in preparing and carrying out action programmes. The treaty, which entered into force in 1996, has 192 states parties. (See www.unccd.int)

Many UN bodies provide assistance to combat desertification. UNDP funds anti-desertification activities through its Nairobi-based Drylands Development Centre (www.undp.org/drylands). IFAD has committed more than \$3.5 billion over 27 years to support dryland development. The World Bank organizes and funds programmes aimed at protecting fragile drylands and increasing their agricultural productivity. FAO provides practical help to governments for sustainable agricultural development. And UNEP supports regional action programmes, data assessment, capacity-building and public awareness of the problem.

To further mobilize public awareness of the problem, the General Assembly declared 2006 the **International Year of Deserts and Desertification**, inviting the active participation of countries, international organizations and civil society. (See www.iydd.org)

Biodiversity, pollution and overfishing

Biodiversity — the variety of plant and animal species — is essential for human survival. The protection and conservation of the diverse range of species of animal and plant life and their habitats is the aim of the *United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity* (1992), to which 190 states are party. The Convention obligates states to conserve biodiversity, ensure its sustainable development, and provide for the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the use of genetic resources. Its *Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety*, which entered into force in 2003, aims to ensure the safe use of genetically modified organisms. It has 143 states parties. (See www.cbd.int)

Protection of endangered species is also enforced under the 1973 *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species*, administered by UNEP. The 172 states parties meet periodically to update the list of which plant and animal species or products, such as ivory, should be protected by quotas or outright bans (www.cites.org). The 1979 *Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals*, and a series of associated agreements, aims to conserve terrestrial, marine and avian migratory species and their habitats. The treaty has 104 states parties. (See www.cms.int)

UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme develops the basis, within the natural and the social sciences, for the sustainable use and conservation of biological diversity, and for the improvement of the relationship between people and their environment worldwide. The programme encourages interdisciplinary research, demonstration and training, using biosphere reserves as living laboratories for sustainable development. (See www.unesco.org/mab)

Acid rain. Caused by emissions of sulphur dioxide from industrial manufacturing processes, "acid rain" has been significantly reduced in much of Europe and North America thanks to the 1979 *Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution*. The Convention, to which 51 states are party, is administered by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. Its scope has been extended by eight protocols, addressing such issues as ground-level ozone, persistent organic pollutants, heavy metals, further reduction of sulphur emissions, volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides. (See www.unece.org/env/lrtap)

Hazardous wastes and chemicals. To regulate the million of tons of toxic waste that crosses national borders each year, member states negotiated in 1989 the *Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal*, administered by UNEP. The treaty, to which 170 states are party, was strengthened in 1995 to ban the export of toxic waste to developing countries, which often do not have the technology for safe disposal. In 1999, governments adopted the *Basel Protocol on Liability and Compensation* to deal with who is financially responsible in the event of the illegal dumping or accidental spills of hazardous wastes. (See www.basel.int)

High-seas fishing. Overfishing and the near exhaustion of many species of commercially valuable fish, along with the increasing incidence of illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing on the high seas, led governments to call for measures to conserve and sustainably manage fish resources — especially those which migrate across broad areas of the ocean or move through the economic zone of more than one country. The 1995 *United Nations Agreement on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks*, which entered into force in December 2001, provides a regime for the conservation and management of these stocks, with a view to ensuring their long-term conservation and sustainable use. It has 67 states parties, including the European Community. (See link on Law of the Sea website, www.un.org/Depts/los)

Protecting the marine environment

The oceans cover two thirds of the earth's surface, and protecting them has become one of the United Nations primary concerns. UNEP's work, particularly its diverse efforts to protect the marine environment, has focused world attention on the oceans and seas. The **International Maritime Organization (IMO)** is the United Nations specialized agency responsible for measures to prevent marine pollution from ships and to improve the safety of international shipping. In spite of the dramatic expansion of world shipping, oil pollution from ships was cut by around 60 per cent during the 1980s, and has continued to decline. This is partly due to the introduction of better methods of controlling the

disposal of wastes, and partly to the tightening of controls through conventions. (See Global Marine Oil Pollution Information Gateway, <http://oils.gpa.unep.org>)

The pioneer *International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution of the Sea by Oil* was adopted in 1954, and IMO took over responsibility for it in 1959. In the late 1960s, a number of major tanker accidents led to further action. Since then, IMO has developed many measures to prevent accidents at sea and oil spills, to minimize their consequences, and to combat marine pollution — including that caused by the dumping into the seas of wastes generated by land-based activities.

The main treaties are: the *International Convention Relating to Intervention on the High Seas in Cases of Oil Pollution Casualties*, 1969; the *Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matters*, 1972; and the *International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Cooperation*, 1990.

IMO has also tackled the environmental threats caused by routine operations such as the cleaning of oil cargo tanks and the disposal of engine-room wastes — in tonnage terms a bigger menace than accidents. The most important of these measures is the *International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as modified by its 1978 Protocol* (MARPOL 73/78). It covers not only accidental and operational oil pollution, but also pollution by chemicals, packaged goods, sewage and garbage; and a new Annex adopted in 1997 covers the prevention of air pollution from ships. Amendments to the Convention adopted in 1992 oblige all new oil tankers to be fitted with double hulls, or a design that provides equivalent cargo protection in the event of a collision or grounding. The regulations phase out pre-existing single-hull tankers by 2010, with certain tankers exempted up to 2015.

Two IMO treaties — the *International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage* (CLC) and the *International Convention on the Establishment of an International Fund for Oil Pollution Damage* (FUND) — establish a system for providing compensation to those who have suffered financially as a result of pollution. The treaties, adopted in 1969 and 1971 and revised in 1992, enable victims of oil pollution to obtain compensation much more simply and quickly than had been possible before.

Weather, climate and water

From weather prediction to climate-change research and early warnings on natural hazards, the **World Meteorological Organization (WMO)** coordinates global scientific efforts to provide timely and accurate information relating to weather, climate, and the hydrological and atmospheric environment. Its user community includes the general public, governments, and such industrial sectors as aviation, shipping and energy production. WMO's programmes and activities contribute to the safety of life and property, sustainable economic and social development, and the protection of the environment. (See www.wmo.int)

Within the United Nations system, WMO is the authoritative scientific voice on the earth's atmosphere and climate. It organizes and facilitates international cooperation in establishing

and operating networks of stations for making meteorological, hydrological and related observations. It promotes the rapid exchange of meteorological information, standardization of meteorological observations, and uniform publication of observations and statistics. It also furthers the application of meteorology to aviation, shipping, agriculture and other weather-sensitive socio-economic activities; promotes water resources development; and encourages research and training.

The *World Weather Watch* is the backbone of WMO's activities. It offers up-to-the-minute worldwide weather information through observation systems and telecommunication links operated by member states and territories — with more than 15 satellites, 3,000 aircraft, 10,000 land observation stations, 7,300 ship stations, 100 moored buoys and 600 drifting buoys carrying automatic weather stations. The resulting data, analysis and forecasts are exchanged every day, freely and without restriction, between WMO centres and weather offices in every country. As a result, a five-day weather forecast today is as reliable as a two-day forecast was 20 years ago.

It is through WMO that the complex agreements on weather standards, codes, measurements and communications are established internationally. A *Tropical Cyclone Programme* helps more than 50 countries vulnerable to cyclones to minimize destruction and loss of life by improving forecasting and warning systems and disaster preparedness. WMO's *Natural Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Programme* ensures the integration of various WMO programme activities in this area and coordinates them with related activities of international, regional and national organizations, including civil defence bodies — particularly with respect to risk assessment, early warning systems, and capacity-building. It also provides scientific and technical support for WMO's response to disaster situations.

The *World Climate Programme* collects and preserves climate data, helping governments plan for climate change. Such information can improve economic and social planning for and understanding of climate processes. It can also detect and warn governments of impending climate variations (such as the El Niño and La Niña phenomena) and their impact several months ahead — as well as of changes, natural or man-made, which could affect critical human activities. To assess all available information on climate change, WMO and UNEP established in 1988 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

The *Atmospheric Research and Environment Programme* coordinates research on the structure and composition of the atmosphere, the physics and chemistry of clouds, weather modification, tropical meteorology, and weather forecasting. It helps member states to conduct research projects, disseminate scientific information, and incorporate the results of research into forecasting and other techniques. Under the *Global Atmosphere Watch*, a global network of global and regional monitoring stations and satellites assess the levels of greenhouse gases, ozone, radionuclides and other traces of gases and particles in the atmosphere.

The *Applications of Meteorology Programme* helps countries apply meteorology to the protection of life and property and to social and economic development. It seeks to improve public weather services; increase the safety of sea and air travel; reduce the impact

of desertification; and improve agriculture and the management of water, energy and other resources. In agriculture, for instance, prompt meteorological advice can mean a substantial reduction in losses caused by droughts, pests and disease.

The *Hydrology and Water Resources Programme* helps to assess, manage and conserve global water resources. It promotes global cooperation in evaluating water resources and in developing hydrological networks and services, including data collection and processing, hydrological forecasting and warning, and the supply of meteorological and hydrological data for design purposes. The programme, for instance, facilitates cooperation with respect to water basins shared between countries, and provides specialized forecasting in flood-prone areas, thus helping to preserve life and property.

WMO's *Space Programme* was created to contribute to the development of the Global Observing System of the *World Weather Watch* programme, as well as to other WMO-supported programmes and associated observing systems. Its purpose is to provide improved data, products and services continuously, and to facilitate their wider availability and meaningful use worldwide. The *Education and Training Programme* encourages the exchange of scientific knowledge through courses, seminars and conferences, curriculum development, the introduction of new techniques and training materials, and support to training centres. It places several hundred specialists from all over the world in advanced courses each year.

The *Technical Cooperation Programme* helps developing countries obtain technical expertise and equipment to improve their national meteorological and hydrological services. It fosters the transfer of technology, as well as of meteorological and hydrological knowledge and information. The *Regional Programme* supports the implementation of programmes and activities having a regional focus, through four regional and six subregional WMO offices worldwide.

Natural resources and energy

The United Nations has long been assisting countries in managing their natural resources. As early as 1952, the General Assembly declared that developing countries have “the right to determine freely the use of their natural resources” and that they must use such resources towards realizing economic development plans in accordance with their national interests.

An ECOSOC body composed of government-nominated experts, the 24-member **Committee on Energy and Natural Resources for Development** develops guidelines on policies and strategies for ECOSOC and governments in cooperation with the **Commission on Sustainable Development**. Its Sub-group on Energy reviews trends and issues in energy development, as well as coordination of UN system activities in the field of energy. Its Sub-group on Water Resources considers issues relating to the integrated management of land and water resources.

Water resources. It is estimated that 1 billion people lack basic access to a sufficient water supply, defined as a source likely to provide 20 litres per person per day at a distance no greater than 1,000 metres. Such sources would include household connections, public standpipes, boreholes, protected dug wells, protected springs and rainwater collections.

The United Nations has long been addressing the global crisis caused by growing demands on the world's water resources to meet human, commercial and agricultural needs, as well as the need for basic sanitation. The United Nations Water Conference (1977), the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (1981-1990), the International Conference on Water and the Environment (1992) and the Earth Summit (1992) — all focused on this vital resource. The Decade, in particular, helped some 1.3 billion people in the developing countries gain access to safe drinking water.

Causes of inadequate water supply include inefficient use, degradation of water by pollution, and over-exploitation of groundwater reserves. Corrective action aims at achieving better management of scarce freshwater resources, with a particular focus on supply and demand, quantity and quality. UN system activities focus on the sustainable development of fragile and finite freshwater resources, which are under increasing stress from population growth, pollution and the demands of agricultural and industrial uses. (See www.unep.org/themes/freshwater)

The crucial importance of water to so many aspects of human health, development and well-being led to specific water-related targets in support of every one of the Millennium Development Goals. These targets relate to the goals on: eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; achieving universal primary education; promoting gender equality and empowering women; reducing child mortality; improving maternal health; combating HIV, AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability; and developing a global partnership for development.

To help raise public awareness on the importance of intelligent development of freshwater resources, the General Assembly declared 2003 as the United Nations International Year of Freshwater. Also in 2003, the Chief Executives Board (CEB), the coordinating body for the entire UN system, established “UN Water” — an inter-agency mechanism to coordinate UN system actions to achieve the water-related goals of the *Millennium Declaration* and the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development. (See www.unwater.org and www.un.org/issues/m-water.html)

To further strengthen global action to meet the water-related MDG targets, the General Assembly proclaimed the International Decade for Action, “Water for Life”, 2005-2015. The Decade began on 22 March 2005, which is observed annually as World Water Day. In 2006, UNESCO, “UN Water” and its national partners published the second edition of the United Nations triennial *World Water Development Report*, which analyses data and trends affecting the world's freshwater resources. (See www.un.org/waterforlifedecade and www.unesco.org/water/wwap/partners/index.shtml)

According to that report, current global efforts are on target to meet the Millennium Development Goal to “reduce by half, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water”.

Sanitation. The *World Water Development Report 2006* estimates that 2.6 billion people lack access to basic sanitation, defined as connection to a public sewer or septic system, a pour-flush latrine, a simple pit latrine, or a ventilated and improved pit latrine.

To address this problem, the *Johannesburg Plan of Implementation*, adopted by the World Summit on Sustainable Development, set out the following goals: ensuring sanitation coverage in all rural areas by 2025; improving sanitation in public institutions, including schools; promoting safe hygiene practices; promoting affordable and socially and culturally acceptable technologies and practices; integrating sanitation into water resources management strategies; developing innovative partnerships and financing mechanisms; and strengthening existing information networks.

Although there has been significant progress in meeting the international community's goals relating to drinking water, progress with respect to sanitation has fallen short. According to the *World Water Development Report 2006*, much greater input and effort will be required to meet the Johannesburg goal "to halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of people ... who do not have access to basic sanitation". To raise public awareness of the issue, encourage governments to implement effective policies, and mobilize communities to improve and change sanitation and hygiene practices through sanitation-health-education campaigns, the General Assembly has declared 2008 as the International Year of Sanitation.

Energy. Some 1.6 billion people currently lack access to electricity, and 2.4 billion people lack access to modern fuels for cooking and heating. Yet while energy, in adequate supply, is essential to economic advancement and poverty eradication, the environmental and health effects of conventional energy systems are a matter of serious concern. Moreover, the increasing demand for energy per capita, coupled with the rising global population, is resulting in consumption levels that cannot be sustained using current energy systems.

UN system activities on energy help developing countries in many ways — including through education, training and capacity-building, assistance on policy reforms, and the provision of energy services. However, while efforts are being made to move towards renewable sources of energy that are significantly less polluting, additional demand still outpaces the introduction of new capacity. Further efforts are needed to improve energy efficiency and move towards cleaner fossil fuel technologies in the transition towards sustainable development.

The United Nations system has mobilized to meet this challenge, with a particular view towards supporting achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. In 2004, the Chief Executives Board of the UN system established "UN-Energy", as the principal interagency mechanism in the field of energy. Its task is to help ensure coherence in the UN system's response to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, as well as the effective engagement of major actors from the private sector and the NGO community for implementing the Summit's energy-related decisions. (See <http://esa.un.org/un-energy> and www.un.org/esa/progareas/sustdev.html)

Technical cooperation. The United Nations maintains an active programme of technical cooperation in the field of water, minerals, energy and relating to small island developing states. Technical cooperation assistance and advisory services relating to water and mineral resources emphasize environmental protection, investment promotion, legislation and sustainable development. Technical cooperation relating to energy deals with access to energy,

energy sector reform, energy efficiency, renewable energy, rural energy, cleaner fossil fuel technologies and energy for transportation.

During the past two decades, hundreds of technical cooperation and pre-investment projects in water, minerals and energy involving hundreds of millions of dollars have been implemented by the United Nations and its family of organizations. Complementary resources have been provided by recipient governments in the form of national staff, facilities and local operating costs. As a result, each year hundreds of field projects assist developing countries in the sustainable development of their natural resources, through projects which strengthen national capacity and stimulate further investment.

Nuclear safety

Today, 439 nuclear power reactors produce approximately 16 per cent of the world's electricity. In nine countries, over 40 per cent of energy production comes from nuclear power. The **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)**, an international organization in the United Nations family, fosters the development of the safe, secure and peaceful uses of atomic energy, and plays a prominent role in international efforts aimed at ensuring the use of nuclear technology for sustainable development. In the current debate on energy options to curb carbon dioxide emissions which contribute to global warming, the IAEA has stressed the benefits of nuclear power as an energy source free of greenhouse and other toxic gas emissions.

The IAEA serves as the world's central intergovernmental forum for scientific and technical cooperation in the nuclear field. It is a focal point for the exchange of information and the formulation of guidelines and norms in the area of nuclear safety, as well as for the provision of advice to governments, at their request, on ways to improve the safety of reactors and avoid the risk of accidents.

The Agency's responsibility in the area of nuclear safety has increased as nuclear-power programmes have grown and public attention has focused on safety aspects. The IAEA formulates basic standards for radiation protection and issues regulations and codes of practice on specific types of operations — including the safe transport of radioactive materials. It facilitates emergency assistance to member states in the event of a radiation accident, under the *Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency* (1986) and the *Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident* (1986). Other international treaties for which the IAEA is the depositary include the *Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material* (1987), the *Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage* (1963), the *Convention on Nuclear Safety* (1994), and the *Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management* (1997). (See www.iaea.org/Publications/Documents/Conventions/index.html)

The IAEA's technical cooperation programme provides assistance in the form of in-country projects, experts, and training in the application of peaceful nuclear techniques, which help countries in such critical areas as water, health, nutrition, medicine and food

production. Examples include work related to mutation breeding, through which some 2,000 new beneficial varieties of crops have been developed using radiation-based technology — thereby improving food production. Another example is the use of isotope hydrology to map underground aquifers, manage ground and surface waters, detect and control pollution, and monitor dam leakage and safety — thus improving access to safe drinking water. Still another example concerns medical treatment, in which the Agency supplies radiotherapy equipment and trains staff to safely treat cancer patients in developing and middle-income countries.

The IAEA collects and disseminates information on virtually every aspect of nuclear science and technology through its *International Nuclear Information System* (INIS) in Vienna. With UNESCO, it operates the International Centre for Theoretical Physics in Trieste, Italy (www.ictp.trieste.it), and maintains several laboratories. The IAEA works with FAO in research on atomic energy in food and agriculture, and with WHO on radiation in medicine and biology. Its Marine Environment Laboratory in Monaco carries out worldwide marine pollution studies with UNEP and UNESCO (www-naweb.iaea.org/naml).

The **United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR)**, a separate body established in 1955, assesses and reports on the levels and effects of exposure to ionizing radiation. Governments and organizations worldwide rely on its estimates as the scientific basis for evaluating radiation risk, establishing radiation protection and safety standards, and regulating radiation sources.



Chapter 4



HUMAN RIGHTS

One of the great achievements of the United Nations is the creation of a comprehensive body of human rights law — a universal and internationally protected code to which all nations can subscribe and to which all people can aspire. The Organization has defined a broad range of internationally accepted rights, including economic, social and cultural rights and political and civil rights. It has also established mechanisms to promote and protect these rights and to assist governments in carrying out their responsibilities.

The foundations of this body of law are the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the General Assembly in 1945 and 1948, respectively. Since then, the United Nations has gradually expanded human rights law to encompass specific standards for women, children, persons with disabilities, minorities, migrant workers and other vulnerable groups, who now possess rights that protect them from discriminatory practices that had long been common in many societies.

Rights have been extended through ground-breaking General Assembly decisions that have gradually established their universality, indivisibility and interrelatedness with development and democracy. Education campaigns have informed the world's public of their inalienable rights, while numerous national judicial and penal systems have been enhanced through UN training programmes and technical advice. The United Nations machinery to monitor compliance with human rights treaties has acquired a remarkable cohesiveness and weight among member states.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights works to strengthen and coordinate United Nations efforts for the protection and promotion of all human rights of all persons around the world. The Secretary-General has made human rights the central theme that unifies the Organization's work in the key areas of peace and security, development, humanitarian assistance, and economic and social affairs. Virtually every United Nations body and specialized agency is involved to some degree in the protection of human rights. (For the UN and human rights, see *www.un.org/rights*)

Human rights instruments

At the San Francisco Conference in 1945 at which the United Nations was established, some 40 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) representing women, trade unions, ethnic organizations and religious groups joined forces with government delegations, mostly from smaller countries, and pressed for more specific language on human rights than had been proposed by other states. Their determined lobbying resulted in the inclusion of some provisions on human rights in the United Nations Charter, laying the foundation for the post-1945 era of international lawmaking.

Thus, the Preamble to the Charter explicitly reaffirms “faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small”. Article 1 establishes that one of the four principal tasks of the United

Nations is to promote and encourage “respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion”. Other provisions commit states to take action in cooperation with the UN to achieve universal respect for human rights.

International Bill of Human Rights

Three years after the United Nations was created, the General Assembly laid the cornerstone of contemporary human rights law: the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, intended as a “common standard of achievement for all peoples”. It was adopted on 10 December 1948, the day now observed worldwide as **International Human Rights Day**. Its 30 articles spell out basic civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights that all human beings in every country should enjoy (see *box*).

The provisions of the Universal Declaration are considered by many scholars to have the weight of customary international law because they are so widely accepted and used to measure the conduct of states. Many newly independent countries have cited the Universal Declaration or included its provisions in their basic laws or constitutions.

The broadest legally binding human rights agreements negotiated under United Nations auspices are the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. These agreements, adopted by the General Assembly in 1966, take the provisions of the Universal Declaration a step further by translating these rights into legally binding commitments, while committees monitor the compliance of states parties.

The Universal Declaration, together with the two International Covenants on Human Rights and the Optional Protocols to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, comprise the *International Bill of Human Rights*.

Economic, social and cultural rights

The *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* entered into force in 1976, and has 156 states parties. The human rights that the Covenant seeks to promote and protect include:

- The right to work in just and favourable conditions.
- The right to social protection, to an adequate standard of living and to the highest attainable standards of physical and mental well-being.
- The right to education and the enjoyment of benefits of cultural freedom and scientific progress.

The Covenant provides for the realization of these rights without discrimination of any kind. In 1985, the **Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** was established by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to monitor implementation of the Covenant

Defining universal rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the cornerstone of the wide-ranging body of human rights law created over the decades.

Its Articles 1 and 2 state that “all human beings are born equal in dignity and rights” and are entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration “without distinction of any kind such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”.

Articles 3 to 21 set forth the civil and political rights to which all human beings are entitled, including:

- The right to life, liberty and security.
- Freedom from slavery and servitude.
- Freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
- The right to recognition as a person before the law; the right to judicial remedy; freedom from arbitrary arrest, detention or exile; the right to a fair trial and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal; the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty.
- Freedom from arbitrary interference with privacy, family, home or correspondence; freedom from attacks upon honour and reputation; the right to protection of the law against such attacks.
- Freedom of movement; the right to seek asylum; the right to a nationality.
- The right to marry and to found a family; the right to own property.
- Freedom of thought, conscience and religion; freedom of opinion and expression.
- The right to peaceful assembly and association.
- The right to take part in government and to equal access to public service.

Articles 22 to 27 set forth the economic, social and cultural rights to which all human beings are entitled, including:

- The right to social security.
- The right to work; the right to equal pay for equal work; the right to form and join trade unions.
- The right to rest and leisure.
- The right to a standard of living adequate for health and well-being.
- The right to education.
- The right to participate in the cultural life of the community.

Finally, Articles 28 to 30 recognize that everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the human rights set forth in the Declaration may be fully realized; that these rights may only be limited for the sole purpose of securing recognition and respect of the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society; and that each person has duties to the community in which she or he lives.

by states parties. This 18-member body of experts studies reports submitted under special procedures and discusses them with representatives of the governments concerned. The Committee makes recommendations to states based on its review of their reports. It also adopts general comments which seek to outline the meaning of human rights or cross-cutting themes, and the steps required by states parties to implement the Covenant's provisions (see www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cescr).

Civil and political rights

The *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* and its *First Optional Protocol* entered into force in 1976. It has 160 states parties.

- The Covenant deals with such rights as freedom of movement; equality before the law; the right to a fair trial and presumption of innocence; freedom of thought, conscience and religion; freedom of opinion and expression; peaceful assembly; freedom of association; participation in public affairs and elections; and protection of minority rights.
- It prohibits arbitrary deprivation of life; torture, cruel or degrading treatment or punishment; slavery and forced labour; arbitrary arrest or detention; arbitrary interference with privacy; war propaganda; and advocacy of racial or religious hatred.

The Covenant has two optional protocols. The *First Optional Protocol* (1966), a procedural instrument, provides the right of petition to individuals who comply with admissibility criteria, has 109 states parties. The *Second Optional Protocol* (1989) establishes substantive obligations towards abolition of the death penalty and has 61 states parties.

The Covenant established an 18-member **Human Rights Committee**, which considers reports submitted periodically by states parties on measures taken to implement the Covenant's provisions. For states parties to the *First Optional Protocol*, the Committee also considers communications from individuals who claim to be victims of violations of any of the rights set forth in the Covenant. The Committee considers such communications in closed meetings; all related and documents remain confidential. The findings of the Committee, however, are made public and are reproduced in its annual report to the General Assembly (see www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrc).

Other conventions

The Universal Declaration has served as the inspiration for some 80 conventions and declarations that have been concluded within the United Nations on a wide range of issues (www.ohchr.org/english/law). Among the earliest of these were conventions on the crime of genocide and on the status of refugees:

- The *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide* (1948), a direct response to the atrocities of the Second World War, defines the crime of genocide as the commission of certain acts with intent to destroy a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, and commits states to bringing to justice alleged perpetrators. It has 140 states parties.
- The *Convention relating to the Status of Refugees* (1951) defines the rights of refugees, especially their right not to be forcibly returned to countries where they are at risk, and

The United Nations Democracy Fund

The Charter of the United Nations highlights the importance of democracy and democratic values. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and many subsequent UN declarations, conventions and covenants express the United Nations vision and commitment to these values. In the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, in particular, states parties take on binding obligations with respect to elections, the freedoms of expression, association and assembly, and other democratic principles.

During the 1990s, changes in various parts of the world made democracy a key theme of the decade. The UN system increased its operational activities in support of the democratization process, and in 1992 the Electoral Assistance Division was established. In 2000, UNDP placed democratic governance at the heart of its development cooperation programme.

Continuing this process, Secretary-General Kofi Annan, in July 2005, established the **UN Democracy Fund (UNDEF)**. Its aim is to promote democracy throughout the world by providing assistance for projects that consolidate and strengthen democratic institutions and facilitate democratic governance — complementing existing UN efforts on elections, human rights, support to civil society, pluralistic media and the rule of law.

UNDEF does not promote any single model of democracy. Rather, it reflects the view expressed in the outcome document of the 2005 World Summit, that “democracy is a universal value based on the freely expressed will of people to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural system and their full participation in all aspects of their lives”.

The Fund officially began its work on 6 March 2006, with the first meeting of its Advisory Board. (For additional information, see www.un.org/democracyfund)

makes provisions for various aspects of their everyday lives, including their right to work, education, public assistance and social security, and their right to travel documents. It has 144 states parties. The *Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees* (1967) ensures the universal application of the Convention, which was originally designed for refugees from the Second World War. The Protocol also has 144 states parties.

Including the two covenants already mentioned, seven core international human rights treaties are monitored for compliance by states parties (see www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrc). When states become party to these conventions, they agree to have their human rights legislation and practices reviewed by independent expert bodies:

- The *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination* (1966) is accepted by 173 states parties. Beginning with the premise that any policy of superiority based on racial differences is unjustifiable, scientifically false and morally and legally condemnable, it defines “racial discrimination” and commits states parties to take measures to abolish it in both law and practice. The Convention established a monitoring body, the **Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination**, to consider reports from

states parties — as well as petitions from individuals alleging a violation of the Convention, if the state concerned has accepted this optional procedure of the Convention.

- The *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (1979), with 185 states parties, guarantees women's equality before the law and specifies measures to eliminate discrimination against women with respect to political and public life, nationality, education, employment, health, marriage and the family. The Convention established the **Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women** as the body to monitor its implementation and consider reports from states parties. The *Optional Protocol* to the Convention (1999), with 88 states parties, allows individuals to submit to the Committee complaints on violations of the Convention.
- The *Convention against Torture and Other Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* (1984), with 144 states parties, defines torture as an international crime, holds states parties accountable for preventing it and requires them to punish the perpetrators. No exceptional circumstances may be invoked to justify torture, nor may a torturer offer a defence of having acted under orders. The monitoring body set up by the Convention, the **Committee against Torture**, reviews reports of states parties, may receive and consider petitions from individuals whose states have accepted this procedure, and can initiate investigations regarding countries where it believes the practice of torture is serious and systematic. The *Optional Protocol to the Convention* (2002) created the Subcommittee on Prevention and allows in-country inspections of places of detention — to be undertaken in collaboration with national institutions.
- The *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989) recognizes the particular vulnerability of children and brings together in one comprehensive code protections for children in all categories of human rights. The Convention guarantees non-discrimination and recognizes that the best interests of the child must guide all actions. Special attention is paid to children who are refugees, disabled or members of minorities. States parties are to provide guarantees for children's survival, development, protection and participation. The Convention is the most broadly ratified treaty, with 193 states parties. The **Committee on the Rights of the Child**, established by the Convention, oversees its implementation and considers reports submitted by states parties.
- The *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families* (1990) defines basic rights and principles as well as measures to protect migrant workers, whether legal or illegal, throughout the process of migration. It entered into force in 2003 and has 37 states parties. Its monitoring body is the **Committee on Migrant Workers**.

Recently adopted conventions on enforced disappearances and on persons with disabilities will also be subject to monitoring by states parties when they come into force:

- The *International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances* (2006) prohibits the practice of enforced disappearances and calls on states parties to make it an offence under their domestic law. It also affirms the right of victims and

their families to know the circumstances of such disappearances and the fate of the disappeared person, as well as to claim reparations. The Convention will enter into force when it has received 20 ratifications. Opened for signature on 6 February 2007, it currently has 61 signatures and is awaiting its first ratification. A **Committee on Enforced Disappearances** will be established as its monitoring body.

- The *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (2006) will outlaw discrimination against the world's 650 million persons with disabilities in all areas of life, including employment, education, health services, transportation and access to justice. Opened for signature on 30 March 2007, it currently has 101 signatures and 2 states parties, of the 20 needed to enter into force. A **Committee on Rights of Persons with Disabilities** will be established as its monitoring body. An *Optional Protocol* to the Convention will give individuals recourse to that Committee when all national options have been exhausted. It currently has 55 signatures and 1 state party, of the 10 needed to enter into force.

The Universal Declaration and other United Nations instruments have also formed part of the background to several regional agreements, such as the *European Convention on Human Rights*, the *American Convention on Human Rights* and the *African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights*.

Other standards

In addition, the United Nations has adopted many other standards and rules on the protection of human rights. These “declarations”, “codes of conduct” and “principles” are not treaties to which states become party. Nevertheless, they have a profound influence, not least because they are carefully drafted by states and adopted by consensus. Among the most important of these:

- The *Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion and Belief* (1981) affirms the right of everyone to freedom of thought, conscience and religion and the right not to be subject to discrimination on the grounds of religion or other beliefs.
- The *Declaration on the Right to Development* (1986) established that right as “an inalienable human right by virtue of which each person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized”. It adds that “equality of opportunity for development is a prerogative both of nations and of individuals”.
- The *Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities* (1992) proclaims the right of minorities to enjoy their own culture; to profess and practise their own religion; to use their own language; and to leave any country, including their own, and to return to their country. The Declaration calls for action by states to promote and protect these rights.
- The *Declaration on Human Rights Defenders* (1998) seeks to recognize, promote and protect the work of human rights activists all over the world. It enshrines the right of

everyone, individually and in association with others, to promote and strive to protect human rights at the national and international levels, and to participate in peaceful activities against human right violations. States are to take all necessary measures to protect human rights defenders against any violence, threats, retaliation, pressure or other arbitrary action.

Other important non-treaty standards include the *Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners* (1957), the *Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary* (1985), the *Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment* (1988) and the *Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance* (1992).

Human rights machinery

Human Rights Council

The major United Nations body working to promote and protect human rights is the Human Rights Council, which was established by the General Assembly on 15 March 2006 to replace and build upon the achievements of the 60-year-old **Commission on Human Rights**. The Council provides overall policy guidance, studies human rights problems, develops new international norms, and monitors the observance of human rights around the world. As the principal intergovernmental policy-making body for human rights at the United Nations, the Council is authorized to discuss human rights situations anywhere in the world and to examine information from states, NGOs and other sources (see www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil).

The Council provides a forum for states, intergovernmental organizations and NGOs to voice their concerns about human rights issues. Unlike the Commission, whose 53 member states were submitted by the regional groups and could be elected with as few as 28 votes, the Council's 47 members are elected by a secret ballot in the General Assembly and must receive a majority of the Assembly's 192 votes. They are elected for three-year terms, and may serve no more than two consecutive terms.

All members are required to uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights and to fully cooperate with the Council. They are subject to a universal, periodic review, to ensure that they are themselves upholding the standards they seek to enforce. They can be suspended for gross and systemic human rights violations by a two-thirds vote of members of the Assembly present and voting.

Unlike the Commission, which held one annual six-week session, the Human Rights Council is available to address human rights crises as they arise. It holds no fewer than three sessions each year, for no less than 10 weeks total — and special emergency sessions can be declared at any time with the support of one-third of its members.

Mandates of the former Commission which have been assumed by the Human Rights Council include a range of special procedures and thematic working groups, the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, and formal complaints procedures. States and NGOs present information to the Council on situations of concern to them, and the governments involved often submit replies. In response, the Council may

Special rapporteurs and working groups

The special rapporteurs and working groups on human rights are on the front lines in the protection of human rights. They investigate violations and intervene in individual cases and emergency situations, in what are referred to as “special procedures”. Human rights experts are independent. They serve in their personal capacity for a maximum of six years and are not remunerated. The number of such experts has grown steadily over the years. There are currently 38 such special procedure mandates.

In preparing their reports to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly, these experts use all reliable resources, including individual complaints and information from NGOs. They may also activate “urgent-action procedures”, to intercede with governments at the highest level. A significant portion of their research is done in the field, where they meet both with authorities and victims, and gather on-site evidence. Their reports are made public, thus helping to publicize violations and to emphasize the responsibility of governments for the protection of human rights.

These experts examine, monitor and publicly report on human rights situations in specific countries, or on major human rights violations worldwide.

- Country-specific special rapporteurs, independent experts and representatives — currently report on Burundi, Cambodia, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Liberia, Myanmar, the occupied Palestinian territories, Somalia and the Sudan.
- Thematic special rapporteurs, representatives and working groups — currently report on adequate housing, people of African descent, arbitrary detention, the sale of children, education, enforced or involuntary disappearances, summary executions, extreme poverty, the right to food, freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of religion or belief, physical and mental health, human rights defenders, independence of the judiciary, indigenous people, internally displaced persons, mercenaries, migrants, minority issues, racism and racial discrimination, economic reform policies and foreign debt, terrorism, torture, the illicit movement and dumping of toxic and dangerous products and wastes, trafficking in persons, transnational corporations, and violence against women.

designate experts or fact-finding groups, organize on-the-spot visits, pursue discussions with governments, provide assistance, and condemn violations it has uncovered.

If a particular situation is deemed sufficiently serious, the Council may order an investigation by either a group of independent experts (working group) or an individual (special rapporteur or representative). Based on information received from these experts, the Council then calls upon the government concerned to bring about needed changes. (See *box, Special rapporteurs and working groups*.)

The **Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights** (formerly the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities), was established by the former Commission in 1947. Meeting annually, it consists of 26 experts who serve in their personal capacity, not as representatives of their government. Originally dedicated to the issues of discrimination and minority protection, the Subcommission has over the years greatly expanded its scope to cover a broad range of human rights issues. It has initiated many studies, particularly on the development of legal rules, and makes recommendations to the Council. NGOs also take part in its work. The Subcommission will be replaced by a Human Rights Council Advisory Committee in 2009. (See www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/subcom)

The Assembly will review the work and functioning of the Council in 2011 — five years after its establishment — at which time the possibility exists of reaching agreement to elevate its status to that of a principal organ of the United Nations.

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

The **United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights** is the official with principal responsibility for UN human rights activities. Appointed for a four-year term, the High Commissioner is charged with many tasks, including: promoting and protecting the effective enjoyment by all of all human rights; promoting international cooperation for human rights; stimulating and coordinating action on human rights in the UN system; assisting in the development of new human rights standards; and promoting the ratification of human rights treaties. The High Commissioner is also mandated to respond to serious violations of human rights and to undertake preventive action.

On 25 February 2004, the General Assembly approved the appointment of Louise Arbour of Canada as the latest UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. Ms. Arbour was the Chief Prosecutor of the UN International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda from October 1996 to September 1999 — a period of intense activity for both courts. Her four-year term as High Commissioner began on 1 July, following her retirement from the Supreme Court of Canada in June. Her predecessor, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello (Brazil), was killed in the 19 August 2003 attack on UN headquarters in Baghdad, where he was on assignment as head of the UN mission in Iraq. In the interim, Mr. Bertrand Ramcharan (Guyana) served as Acting High Commissioner.

Under the direction and authority of the Secretary-General, the High Commissioner reports to the Human Rights Council, and through ECOSOC to the General Assembly. With the aim of securing respect for human rights and preventing violations, the High Commissioner engages in dialogue with governments. Within the UN system, the High Commissioner works to strengthen and streamline the United Nations human rights machinery to make it more efficient and effective.

World Conference on Human Rights

The Second World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna, 1993) reaffirmed the universality and central role of human rights.

The Conference revealed tensions around many issues — such as national sovereignty, universality, the role of NGOs, and the question of impartiality and non-selectivity in the application of international human rights standards. In the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, 171 states proclaimed that human rights had become the “legitimate concern of the international community” and that “all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated”.

The Declaration states that “while the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind, it is the duty of states, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms.”

“Democracy, development and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are interdependent and mutually reinforcing,” the Declaration states. It thus reaffirms both the universal right to development and the inextricable relationship between development and human rights.

The **Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)** is the focal point for United Nations human rights activities. It serves as the secretariat for the Human Rights Council, the treaty bodies (expert committees that monitor treaty compliance) and other UN human rights organs. It also undertakes human rights field activities, and provides advisory services and technical assistance. In addition to its regular budget, some of the Office’s activities are financed through extrabudgetary resources. (See www.ohchr.org)

The High Commissioner has taken specific steps to institutionalize cooperation and coordination with other UN bodies involved in human rights, such as the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Volunteers (UNV). Similarly, the Office works in the area of peace and security in close cooperation with the departments of the United Nations Secretariat. The Office is also part of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), which oversees the international response to humanitarian emergencies.

Education and information. For the United Nations, education is a fundamental human right and one of the most effective instruments for the promotion of human rights. Human rights education, whether in formal or non-formal settings, seeks to advance a universal culture of human rights through innovative teaching methods, the spreading of knowledge and the modification of attitudes. During the **United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004)**, particular efforts were made to increase global awareness and foster a universal culture of human rights. It led many countries to promote human rights education by including it in their school curriculums and adopting national action plans.

Promoting and protecting human rights

The role and scope of UN action in promoting and protecting human rights continue to expand. Its central mandate is to ensure full respect for the human dignity of the “peoples of the United Nations”, in whose name the Charter was written. Through its international machinery, the United Nations is at work on many fronts:

- As global conscience — The United Nations has set the pace in establishing international standards of acceptable behaviour by nations. It has kept the world’s attention focused on practices that threaten to undermine human rights standards. And the General Assembly, through a wide range of declarations and conventions, has underscored the universality of human rights principles.
- As lawmaker — The United Nations has given impetus to an unprecedented codification of international law. Human rights pertaining to women, children, prisoners, detainees and mentally disabled persons, as well as to such violations as genocide, racial discrimination and torture, are now a major feature of international law, which once focused almost exclusively on inter-state relations.
- As monitor — The United Nations plays a central role in ensuring that human rights are not only defined but also protected. The International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) are among the earliest examples of treaties that empower international bodies to monitor how states live up to their commitments. Treaty bodies, special rapporteurs and working groups of the Human Rights Council each have procedures and mechanisms to monitor compliance with international standards and to investigate alleged violations. Their decisions on specific cases carry a moral weight that few governments are willing to defy.
- As nerve centre — OHCHR receives communications from groups and individuals claiming violations of their human rights. More than 100,000 complaints are received every year. OHCHR refers these communications to the appropriate UN bodies and mechanisms, taking into account the implementation procedures established by conventions and resolutions. Requests for urgent intervention can be addressed to OHCHR by fax (41-22-917-9022) and e-mail (tb-petitions.hchr@unog.ch).
- As defender — When a rapporteur or the chairman of a working group learns that a serious human rights violation, such as torture or imminent extrajudicial execution, is about to occur, he or she addresses an urgent message to the state concerned, requesting clarification and seeking guarantees that the alleged victim’s rights will be protected.
- As researcher — The United Nations compiles data that is indispensable to the development and application of human rights law. Studies and reports prepared by OHCHR at the request of UN bodies point the way towards new policies, practices and institutions to enhance respect for human rights.

- As forum of appeal — Under the First Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, as well as the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention Against Torture and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, individuals can bring complaints against states that have accepted the relevant appeal procedure, once all domestic remedies have been exhausted. In addition, the Human Rights Council hears numerous complaints annually, submitted by NGOs or individuals.
- As fact-finder — The Human Rights Council has mechanisms to monitor and report on the incidence of certain kinds of abuses, as well as on violations in a specific country. The special rapporteurs or representatives and working groups are entrusted with this politically sensitive, humanitarian and sometimes dangerous task. They gather facts, keep contact with local groups and government authorities, conduct on-site visits when governments permit, and make recommendations on how respect for human rights might be strengthened.
- As discreet diplomat — The Secretary-General and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights raise human rights concerns with member states on a confidential basis, on such issues as the release of prisoners and the commutation of death sentences. The Human Rights Council may ask the Secretary-General to intervene or send an expert to examine a specific human rights situation, with a view to preventing flagrant violations. The Secretary-General may also undertake quiet diplomacy in the exercise of his “good offices”, to communicate the United Nations legitimate concern and curb abuses.

The right to development

The principle of equality of opportunity for development is deeply embedded in the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. The *Declaration on the Right to Development*, adopted by the General Assembly in 1986, marked a turning point, by proclaiming this as an inalienable human right, by which each person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development.

The right to development is given prominence in the 1993 Vienna declaration of the Second World Conference on Human Rights, and is cited in the outcomes of other major UN summits and conferences as well, including the 2000 *Millennium Declaration*. In 1998, the Commission on Human Rights established a dual mechanism to address this issue, namely: a working group to monitor progress, analyse obstacles and develop strategies for implementing the right to development; and an independent expert on the right to development, who reports on the current state of progress in implementing the right to development.

Technical cooperation programme

Since human rights are best protected when they are rooted in the local culture, the United Nations has increased its efforts to promote and protect these rights at the national and local level. International human rights norms cannot be applied unless they are incorporated in national legislation and supported by national institutions.

Many obstacles at the national level still hinder the universal enjoyment of human rights. Various member states do not have the infrastructure that would allow them to effectively promote and protect the rights of their citizens. This is particularly true of countries that are just recovering from deadly civil wars or emerging from humanitarian crises.

United Nations advisory services to governments and technical cooperation programmes aim to promote democracy, development and human rights, and to strengthen the capacity of states to advance such rights in their laws and practice. The Programme of Technical Cooperation for Human Rights, supervised by the Office of the High Commissioner, manages a range of such projects. It is funded primarily by contributions from the Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights, which had income of \$13.1 million available at the end of 2006 for future allotments.

The programme encourages ratification and supports implementation of the international human rights instruments. It focuses on four core areas: the administration of justice; human rights education; national institutions; and national plans of action. Special attention is paid to economic, social and cultural rights; the right to development; racism; the rights of indigenous people; trafficking of women and children; the human rights of women; and the rights of the child.

OHCHR has also developed regional strategies through which intergovernmental cooperation is fostered, experience is shared, and common policies and programmes can be developed. OHCHR regional offices serve as resource centres responding to country-level demands. And in keeping with the UN reform programme, which identifies human rights as a cross-cutting element of UN system activities, OHCHR supports this integration of human rights standards, including a human rights approach to assessments and planning, as well as to the development of policy and methodology.

The right to food

Closely related to the right to development is the right to food — a particular focus of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). In support of that right, the FAO Council, in 2004, adopted its *Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realisation of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security*. These “Right to Food Guidelines” cover the full range of actions governments can consider in creating an environment that enables people to feed themselves in dignity — and to establish safety nets for those who are unable to do so. They also recommend measures to strengthen government accountability, while promoting integration of the human rights dimension in the work of agencies dealing with food and agriculture.

The rights of labour

The **International Labour Organization (ILO)** is the UN specialized agency entrusted with defining and protecting the rights of labour. Its tripartite **International Labour Conference** — made up of government, employer and worker representatives — has adopted 187 conventions and 198 recommendations on all aspects of work life, comprising a system of international labour. While its recommendations provide guidance on policy, legislation and practice, its conventions create binding obligations for those states which ratify them (see www.ilo.org/ilolex).

Conventions and recommendations have been adopted on such matters as labour administration, industrial relations, employment policy, working conditions, social security, occupational safety and health. Some seek to ensure basic human rights in the workplace, while others address such issues as the employment of women and children, and such special categories as migrant workers and the disabled. (For information on the ILO's international labour standards, by subject, see www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/norm/subject).

ILO's supervisory procedure to ensure that its conventions are applied both in law and in practice is based on objective evaluations by independent experts, and on the examination of cases by the ILO's tripartite bodies. There is also a special procedure for investigating complaints of infringement of the freedom of association. (See www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/norm/applying)

The ILO has brought about many landmark conventions:

- *On forced labour* (1930) — requires the suppression of forced or compulsory labour in all its forms.
- *On freedom of association and protection of the right to organize* (1948) — establishes the right of workers and employers to form and join organizations without prior authorization, and lays down guarantees for the free functioning of such organizations.
- *On the right to organize and collective bargaining* (1949) — provides for protection against anti-union discrimination, for protection of workers' and employers' organizations, and for measures to promote collective bargaining.
- *On equal remuneration* (1951) — calls for equal pay and benefits for work of equal value.
- *On discrimination* (1958) — calls for national policies to promote equality of opportunity and treatment, and to eliminate discrimination in the workplace on grounds of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, extraction or social origin.
- *On minimum age* (1973) — aims at the abolition of child labour, stipulating that the minimum age for employment shall not be less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling.
- *On the worst forms of child labour* (1999) — prohibits child slavery, debt bondage, prostitution and pornography, dangerous work, and forcible recruitment for armed conflict.

The General Assembly has also taken a number of measures to protect the rights of migrant workers.

The struggle against discrimination

Apartheid

One of the great successes that demonstrated the ways in which the United Nations can bring an end to major injustices in the world is its role in the abolition of South Africa's apartheid rule. Practically from its inception, the United Nations was involved in the struggle against apartheid, a system of institutionalized racial segregation and discrimination imposed by the South African government.

When, in 1994, the newly elected President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, addressed the General Assembly, he observed that this was the first time in its 49 years that the Assembly had been addressed by a South African head of state drawn from among the African majority. Welcoming the vanquishing of apartheid, he said: "That historic change has come about not least because of the great efforts in which the United Nations engaged to ensure the suppression of the apartheid crime against humanity."

Condemned by the United Nations in 1966 as a "crime against humanity" incompatible with the Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, apartheid remained on the General Assembly's agenda from 1948 until its demise in 1994:

- During the 1950s, the General Assembly repeatedly appealed to the South African government to abandon apartheid in the light of the principles of the Charter.
- In 1962, it established the United Nations **Special Committee against Apartheid**, to keep the racial policies of South Africa under review. The Special Committee became the focal point of international efforts to promote a comprehensive programme of action against apartheid.
- In 1963, the Security Council instituted a voluntary arms embargo against South Africa.
- The General Assembly refused to accept South Africa's credentials to its regular sessions from 1970 through 1974. Following this ban, South Africa did not participate in further proceedings of the Assembly until the end of apartheid in 1994.
- In 1971, the General Assembly called for a sports boycott of South Africa, a move which had continuing impact on public opinion within the country and abroad.
- In 1973, the Assembly adopted the *International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid*.
- In 1977, the Security Council made its arms embargo against South Africa mandatory, after determining that the country's aggressions against its neighbours and its potential nuclear capability constituted a threat to international peace and security. This was the first such action by the Council against a member state.
- In 1985, the General Assembly adopted the *International Convention Against Apartheid in Sports*.

- Also in 1985, when the South African government proclaimed a state of emergency and escalated repression, the Security Council, for the first time, called on governments to take significant economic measures against South Africa under Chapter VII of the Charter.

The transition from the apartheid government to a non-racial democracy was facilitated by a 1990 national peace accord between the government and major political parties, with the full support of the United Nations. Two Security Council resolutions in 1992 emphasized the involvement of the international community in facilitating that transition.

To strengthen the structures of the peace accord, the Security Council in 1992 deployed the **United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (UNOMSA)**, which observed the 1994 elections that led to the establishment of a non-racial and democratic government. With the installation of a new government and adoption of the country's first non-racial, democratic constitution, apartheid had come to an end.

Racism

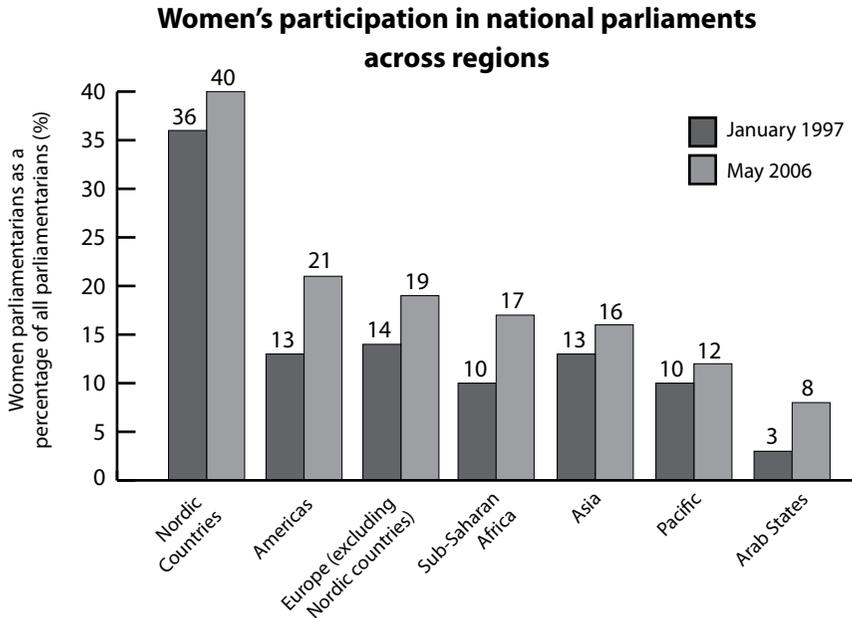
In 1963, the General Assembly adopted the *United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*. The Declaration affirms the fundamental equality of all persons and confirms that discrimination between human beings on the grounds of race, colour or ethnic origin is a violation of the human rights proclaimed in the Universal Declaration and an obstacle to friendly and peaceful relations among nations and peoples.

Two years later, the General Assembly adopted the *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*, which obliges states parties to adopt legislative, judicial, administrative and other measures to prevent and punish racial discrimination.

In 1993, the General Assembly proclaimed the **Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (1993-2003)** and called on all states to take measures to combat new forms of racism, especially through laws, administrative measures, education and information.

Also in 1993, the Commission on Human Rights appointed a special rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. The special rapporteur's continuing mandate is to examine incidents of contemporary forms of racism worldwide; racial discrimination; any form of discrimination against blacks, Arabs and Muslims; xenophobia; anti-Semitism; and related expressions of intolerance, as well as governmental measures to overcome them.

As decided by the General Assembly, the third **World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance** was held in South Africa in 2001. It focused on practical measures to eradicate racism, including measures of prevention, education and protection, and adopted the Durban declaration and programme of action. Previous such conferences had been held in Geneva in 1978 and 1983. The Durban Review Conference to follow up on the Durban Plan of Action will be held in 2009.



Source: UNICEF, *State of the World's Children 2007*. Data drawn from Inter-Parliamentary Union database on "Women in National Parliaments" (www.ipu.org/wmn-el/classif.htm)

The rights of women

Equality for women has been a focus of the work of the United Nations since its founding in 1945. The Organization has played a leading role in the global struggle for the promotion and protection of women's human rights, the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women, and in efforts to ensure that women have full and equal access to, and opportunities for participation in, public life, including all aspects of economic and social development and decision-making. (See www.un.org/womenwatch and www.un.org/womenwatch/daw)

The **Commission on the Status of Women** has elaborated international guidelines and law for women's equality and non-discrimination — notably, the 1979 *Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women* and the 1999 *Optional Protocol* to the Convention. It also prepared the *Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women*, adopted by the General Assembly in 1993, which includes a clear definition of violence as being physical, sexual or psychological violence occurring in the family or the community and perpetrated or condoned by the state.

The **Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women**, a body made up of 23 independent experts, monitors implementation of the Convention by states parties. It considers reports submitted by states parties to assess their progress in giving form to the principle of equality of women and men. The Committee can also examine individual communications and carry out inquiries under the provisions of the Convention's *Optional Protocol*.

The rights of children

Millions of children die every year from malnutrition and disease. Countless others become victims of war, natural disaster, HIV/AIDS and extreme forms of violence, exploitation and abuse. Millions of children, especially girls, do not have access to quality education. The **United Nations Children's Fund** (UNICEF), the only UN agency mandated to advocate for children's rights, strives to sustain global commitment to the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, which embodies universal ethical principles and international legal standards of behaviour towards children.

The General Assembly in 2000 adopted two *Optional Protocols* to the Convention: one prohibits the recruitment of children under 18 into armed forces or their participation in hostilities; the other strengthens prohibitions and penalties concerning the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

The **Committee on the Rights of the Child**, established under the Convention, meets regularly to monitor the progress made by states parties in fulfilling their obligations. The Committee makes suggestions and recommendations to governments and to the General Assembly on ways in which children's rights under the Convention may be met.

On child labour, the United Nations seeks to protect working children from exploitation and hazardous conditions that endanger their physical and mental development; to ensure children's access to quality education, nutrition and health care; and, in the long term, to achieve the progressive elimination of child labour.

- The International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour, an initiative of the **International Labour Organization (ILO)**, seeks to raise awareness and mobilize action through the provision of technical cooperation. Direct interventions focus on the prevention of child labour; the search for alternatives, including decent employment for parents; and rehabilitation, education and vocational training for children.
- UNICEF supports programmes providing education, counselling and care to children working in very hazardous conditions — whether as sex slaves or even as domestic workers — and vigorously advocates against the violation of their rights.
- The General Assembly has urged governments to take action on the problem of street children, who are increasingly involved in and affected by crime, drug abuse, violence and prostitution.
- The Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights has called for steps to halt the recruitment or conscription of children into armed forces. The Secretary-General's special representative for children and armed conflict works to enhance child protection during conflicts.
- The Human Rights Council also receives reports from a special rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.
- A 2006 study by the Secretary-General painted a detailed picture of the nature, extent and causes of violence against children, recommending actions to prevent and respond to it. The study was developed under the leadership of Prof. Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, an independent expert appointed by the Secretary-General, with the support of OHCHR, UNICEF and WHO.

The rights of minorities

Some 1 billion people worldwide belong to minority groups, many of whom are subject to discrimination and exclusion, and are often the victims of violent conflict. Meeting the legitimate aspirations of national, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups strengthens the protection of basic human rights, protects and accommodates cultural diversity, and strengthens the stability of society as a whole.

The United Nations has from its inception placed minority rights high on its human rights agenda. The protection of the human rights of members of minorities is guaranteed specifically in article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, as well as in the principles of non-discrimination and participation, which are basic to all United Nations human rights law.

The adoption of the *Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities* by the General Assembly in 1992 gave new impetus to the United Nations human rights agenda. In 1995, the Commission on Human Rights approved the establishment by its Subcommission of a working group on minorities — the only such forum to which minority representatives have access. It seeks to reach out to minority communities so they can raise their voices in a United Nations meeting and have their concerns heard — and even make suggestions for remedying their situation. The working group's continuing mandate is to offer solutions for minority problems, recommending practical measures to improve the promotion and protection of minority rights.

Indigenous peoples

The United Nations has increasingly taken up the cause of indigenous peoples, who are considered one of the world's most disadvantaged groups. Indigenous peoples are also called first peoples, tribal peoples, aboriginals and autochthons. There are at least 5,000 indigenous groups, made up of some 370 million people, living in over 70 countries on five continents. Excluded from decision-making processes, many have been marginalized, exploited, forcefully assimilated and subjected to repression, torture and murder when they speak out in defence of their rights. Fearing persecution, they often become refugees and sometimes must hide their identity, abandoning their languages and traditional customs.

In 1982, the Subcommission on Human Rights established a working group on indigenous populations, which reviewed developments pertaining to the rights of indigenous peoples, promoted international standards concerning their rights, and also prepared a draft *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

In 1992, the Earth Summit heard the collective voice of indigenous peoples as they expressed their concerns about the deteriorating state of their lands, territories and environment. Various UN bodies — including UNDP, UNICEF, IFAD, UNESCO, the World Bank and WHO — developed programmes to improve their health and literacy

and to combat degradation of their ancestral lands and territories. Subsequently, the General Assembly proclaimed 1993 as the **International Year of the World's Indigenous People**, followed by the **International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (1995-2004)**.

This increased focus on indigenous issues led, in 2000, to the establishment of the **Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues** as a subsidiary organ of ECOSOC. This 16-expert forum, composed of an equal number of governmental and indigenous experts, advises ECOSOC; helps coordinate related UN activities; and considers indigenous concerns relating to economic and social development, culture, education, the environment, health and human rights. In addition, an Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues promotes indigenous-related mandates throughout the intergovernmental system. (See www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii)

As the International Decade was drawing to a close, the General Assembly proclaimed a **Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (2005-2015)**. It has five key aims:

- To promote non-discrimination and the inclusion of indigenous peoples in the design, implementation and evaluation of laws, policies, resources, programmes and projects at all levels.
- To promote their full participation in decisions which directly or indirectly affect their lifestyles, traditional lands, cultural integrity, or any other aspect of their lives.
- To redefine development priorities in support of a vision of equity, including respect for the cultural and linguistic diversity of indigenous populations.
- To adopt targeted programmes, policies, projects and budgets for the development of indigenous peoples, including specific benchmarks, with a particular emphasis on women, children and youth.
- To promote strong monitoring mechanisms and enhance accountability at all levels with respect to the implementation of legal, policy and operational frameworks for the protection of indigenous peoples and the improvement of their lives.

On 29 June 2006, the Human Rights Council adopted the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and recommended it to the General Assembly, which adopted it on 13 September 2007.

The new *United Nations Declaration on the Rights on Indigenous Peoples* sets out the individual and collective rights of indigenous peoples, including their rights to culture, identity, language, employment, health and education. It emphasizes the rights of indigenous peoples to maintain and strengthen their own institutions, cultures and traditions, and to pursue their development in keeping with their own needs and aspirations. It also prohibits discrimination against them, and promotes their full and effective participation in all matters that concern them — including their right to remain distinct and to pursue their own visions of economic and social development.

Persons with disabilities

Some 650 million persons — approximately 10 per cent of the world's population, of whom some 80 per cent live in the developing world — suffer from some type of physical, mental or sensory impairment. (See www.un.org/disabilities/convention/facts.shtml)

Persons with disabilities are often excluded from the mainstream of society. Discrimination takes various forms, ranging from the denial of education opportunities to more subtle forms, such as segregation and isolation through the imposition of physical and social barriers. Society also suffers, since the loss of their enormous potential impoverishes humankind. Changing the perception and concept of disability requires changing values and increasing understanding at all levels of society.

Since its inception, the United Nations has sought to advance the status of persons with disabilities and to improve their lives. United Nations concern for the well-being and rights of persons with disabilities is rooted in its founding principles of human rights, fundamental freedoms and equality of all human beings.

In the 1970s, the concept of human rights for persons with disabilities gained wider international acceptance. Through its adoption of the *Declaration on the Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons* (1971) and the *Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons* (1975), the General Assembly established the standards for equal treatment and equal access to services, thus accelerating the social integration of disabled persons.

The **International Year of Disabled Persons** (1981) led to the adoption by the General Assembly of the *World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons*, a policy framework for promoting the rights of persons with disabilities. The programme identifies two goals for international cooperation: equality of opportunity; and full participation of persons with disabilities in social life and development.

A major outcome of the **United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons** (1983-1992) was the adoption by the General Assembly in 1993 of the *Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities*, which serve as an instrument for policy making and as a basis for technical and economic cooperation. A special rapporteur monitors the implementation of these *Rules* and reports annually to the Commission for Social Development, a subsidiary body of ECOSOC.

A new set of standards for the protection of people with mental illness — the *Principles for the protection of persons with mental illness and the improvement of health care* — was adopted by the General Assembly in 1991. In 1994, the Assembly endorsed a long-term strategy to further the implementation of the *World Programme of Action*, with the goal of “a society for all”. In 1997, it set forth accessibility, employment, social services and social safety nets as the priority policy issues.

In 2001, the Assembly began a process aimed at drafting a comprehensive international convention to protect and promote the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities. After five years of negotiations, on 13 December 2006, it adopted the *Convention on the Rights of*

Persons with Disabilities. The Convention was opened for signature on 30 March 2007. (For description, see section on “Other conventions”, earlier in this chapter.)

United Nations activities. A growing body of data suggests the need to address disability issues in the context of national development, within the broad framework of human rights. The United Nations works with governments, NGOs, academic institutions and professional societies to promote awareness and build national capacities for broad human rights approaches to persons with disabilities. In doing so, it links disability issues with the international development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Growing public support for disability action has focused on the need to improve information services, outreach and institutional mechanisms to promote equal opportunity. The UN has been increasingly involved in helping countries strengthen their national capacities to promote such action in their overall development plans. (See also www.un.org/disabilities and www.ohchr.org/english/issues/disability)

Migrant workers

With increasing movement of people across international frontiers in search of work, a new human rights convention was approved to curb discrimination against migrant workers. In 1990, following 10 years of negotiations, the *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families* was adopted by the General Assembly. The Convention:

- covers the rights of both documented and undocumented migrant workers and their families;
- makes it illegal to expel migrant workers on a collective basis or to destroy their identity documents, work permits or passports;
- entitles migrant workers to receive the same remuneration, social benefits and medical care as nationals; to join or take part in trade unions; and, upon ending their employment, to transfer earnings, savings and personal belongings;
- grants children of migrant workers the right to registration of birth and nationality, as well as access to education.

The Convention entered into force on 1 July 2003. States parties monitor its implementation through the **Committee on Migrant Workers**.

Administration of justice

The United Nations is committed to strengthening the protection of human rights in the judicial process. When individuals are under investigation by state authorities, when they are arrested, detained, charged, tried or imprisoned, there is always a need to ensure that the law is applied with due regard for the protection of human rights.

The United Nations has worked to develop standards and codes that serve as models for national legislation. They cover such issues as the treatment of prisoners, the protection of detained juveniles, the use of firearms by police, the conduct of law enforcement officials, the role of lawyers and prosecutors, and the independence of the judiciary. Many of these standards have been developed through the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Centre for International Crime Prevention.

The OHCHR has a programme of technical assistance that focuses on human rights training for legislators, judges, lawyers, law enforcement officers, prison officials and the military.

Future priorities

Despite the efforts of the United Nations, there continue to be massive and widespread violations of human rights worldwide. Six decades after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, violations across the broad spectrum of human rights continue to dominate the news. At least part of this can be attributed to the heightened awareness of human rights and the stepped-up monitoring of problem areas. These include, in particular, child abuse, violence against women, and abuses that until only recently were considered acceptable behaviour by traditional standards.

Indeed, measures to promote and protect human rights are stronger than ever, and are increasingly linked to the fight for social justice, economic development and democracy. Human rights issues are now a cross-cutting theme in all UN policies and programmes. The vigorous actions taken by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, together with the enhanced cooperation and coordination among UN partners, are tangible expressions of the strengthened ability of the United Nations system to fight for human rights.



Chapter 5



HUMANITARIAN ACTION

Since it first coordinated humanitarian relief operations in Europe following the devastation and massive displacement of people in the Second World War, the United Nations has been relied upon by the international community to respond to natural and man-made disasters that are beyond the capacity of national authorities alone. Today, the Organization is a major provider of emergency relief and longer-term assistance, a catalyst for action by governments and relief agencies, and an advocate on behalf of people struck by emergencies.

Conflicts and natural disasters continue to drive civilians from their homes. By the end of 2006, some 12.8 million people were displaced within their own countries and another 9.9 million people had become refugees by fleeing across international borders.

Natural disasters, mostly weather-related, affect more than 200 million people every year. UNDP reports that 94 per cent of natural disasters are caused by cyclones, floods, earthquakes and drought, with heat waves and forest fires also taking a toll in human suffering. An overwhelming 98.2 per cent of those killed in natural disasters* are in developing countries — indicating how poverty, population pressures and environmental degradation exacerbate human suffering.

Confronted with conflict and the escalating human and financial costs of natural disasters, the United Nations engages on two fronts. On one hand, it brings immediate relief to the victims, primarily through its operational agencies; on the other hand, it seeks more effective strategies to prevent emergencies from arising in the first place.

When disaster strikes, the UN and its agencies rush to deliver humanitarian assistance. For example, in 2006, the World Food Programme (WFP) fed nearly 88 million people in 78 countries, including most of the world's refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) provided international protection and assistance to millions of refugees and IDPs. To fund emergency operations, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) launched inter-agency appeals that raised \$3 billion for humanitarian aid.

Through such means as the humanitarian early warning system (HEWS) and the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), the UN works to prevent such occurrences and mitigate their effects. (For HEWS, see www.hewsweb.org; for ISDR, see www.unisdr.org)

* Reducing Disaster Risks: A Challenge for Development”, UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, 2004.

The Indian Ocean Earthquake-Tsunami of December 2004

In the early hours of Sunday, 26 December 2004, a massive earthquake measuring 9.0 on the Richter scale struck the west coast of northern Sumatra, in Indonesia, triggering a powerful tsunami up to 10 metres (33 feet) in height. It moved through the Indian Ocean at up to 800 kilometres (500 miles) an hour.

The tsunami was unprecedented in modern history. It wrecked coastal areas in India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the Maldives, Myanmar, Seychelles and Somalia, travelling as far as 2,000 miles inland in places. It caused deaths as far away as South Africa, with more than half of them in Indonesia alone. Official tallies a year later recorded 181,516 dead and 49,936 missing in 12 countries. More than 1.7 million people lost their homes, while 5-6 million were in need of food, water and medical supplies.

The UN system immediately sprang into action. With programmes already on the ground in each of the affected countries, the massive and rapid UN response ensured that survivors had sufficient access to food, shelter and medical attention, thus preventing a second disaster — an outbreak of disease and hunger. On 5 January 2005, a “flash appeal” was issued for \$977 million to fund the efforts of some 40 UN agencies and NGOs addressing a wide range of humanitarian needs — including agriculture, support services, economic recovery and infrastructure, education, family shelter, mine action, security, protection of human rights and the rule of law, and water and sanitation.

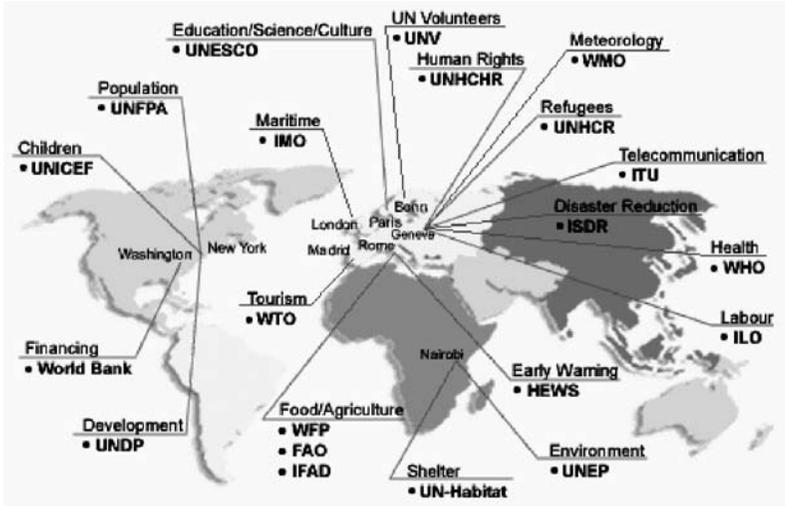
In addition, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) monitors impending famines, as well as other food and agricultural concerns, while the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) carries out tropical cyclone forecasting and drought monitoring. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) assists disaster-prone countries in developing contingency planning and other preparedness measures. (For the UN and humanitarian action, see www.un.org/ha)

Coordinating humanitarian action

Since the 1990s, the world has seen an upsurge in the number and intensity of civil wars. These have caused large-scale humanitarian crises — with extensive loss of life, massive displacements of people and widespread damage to societies, in complicated political and military environments. To address these “complex emergencies”, the United Nations upgraded its capacity to respond quickly and effectively.

In 1991, the General Assembly established an inter-agency standing committee to coordinate the international response to humanitarian crises. The **United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator** is the Organization’s focal point for this endeavour, acting as the system’s principal policy adviser, coordinator and advocate on humanitarian emergencies. The Emergency Relief Coordinator heads the **Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)**, which

UN family at work: Pulling together for tsunami aid and recovery



Source: UN News Service.

coordinates assistance in humanitarian crises that go beyond the capacity and mandate of any single agency. (See www.ochaonline.un.org)

Many actors — including governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and United Nations agencies — seek to respond simultaneously to complex emergencies. OCHA works with them to ensure that there is a coherent framework within which everyone can contribute promptly and effectively to the overall effort.

When an emergency strikes, OCHA coordinates the international response. It undertakes consultations with member states and with members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) at Headquarters and in the field, to determine priorities for action. OCHA then provides support for the coordination of activities in the affected country.

For example, OCHA maintains an in-house emergency response capacity, supported by a 24-hour monitoring and alert system. UN disaster assessment and coordination teams can be dispatched within 12 to 24 hours of a natural disaster or sudden-onset emergency to gather information, assess needs and coordinate international assistance. OCHA ensures that military resources — when available and appropriate — are effectively used to respond to humanitarian emergencies.

OCHA also operates through a network of regional offices and of field offices, UN humanitarian coordinators and country teams. The humanitarian coordinator has overall responsibility for ensuring coherence of relief efforts in the field. By coordinating needs assessments, contingency planning and the formulation of programmes, OCHA supports the humanitarian coordinator and the operational agencies that deliver assistance.

Coordinating emergency relief

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) brings together all major humanitarian agencies, both within and outside the United Nations. It is chaired by the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator.

The IASC develops humanitarian policies, agrees on a clear division of responsibility for the various aspects of humanitarian assistance, identifies and addresses gaps in response, and advocates for effective application of humanitarian principles (see www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc).

Its new “cluster approach” to humanitarian assistance aims to strengthen humanitarian response by ensuring high standards of predictability, accountability and partnership. Any major new or ongoing emergency is now addressed in terms of the following clusters, each with its own lead agency or agencies, and a range of UN and non-UN partners:

Agriculture (FAO); Camp coordination and management (UNHCR for conflict-induced displacement; IOM for natural disaster migrations); Early recovery (UNDP); Education (UNICEF and “Save the Children Alliance”); Emergency shelter (UNHCR for conflict-generated internal displacements, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies for disaster situations); Emergency telecommunications (OCHA, with telecommunications services provided by UNICEF and WFP); Health (WHO); Logistics (WFP); Nutrition (UNICEF); Protection (UNHCR); Water sanitation and hygiene (UNICEF).

(For additional information, see www.humanitarianreform.org)

The Office also helps its IASC partners and the humanitarian coordinator to mobilize resources by launching consolidated inter-agency appeals. It organizes donor meetings and follow-up arrangements, monitors the status of contributions in response to its appeals, and issues situation reports to keep donors and others updated on developments. Since 1992, OCHA has raised \$30 billion for emergency assistance, through a total of 244 consolidated and “flash” appeals (as of May 2006).

OCHA’s **Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)** was officially launched in March 2006 as an improved financing mechanism to facilitate an immediate response to humanitarian emergencies. It was established in the aftermath of a string of extremely destructive natural disasters — including the December 2004 tsunami, the South Asian earthquake, a record-breaking hurricane season, and a major landslide in the Philippines — which occurred with little warning and demanded rapid response for emergency relief and recovery.

In 2006, CERF committed over \$250 million to some 340 projects in 35 countries — two thirds for rapid response emergencies in countries like the Sudan and Lebanon, and the balance to meet priority needs in underfunded emergencies, including in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Chad. At a high-level conference in December, 51 donors pledged \$340 million for its operations in 2007.

OCHA also works with its partners in the humanitarian community to build consensus around policies and to identify specific humanitarian issues arising from operational experiences in the field. It tries to ensure that major humanitarian issues are addressed, including those that fall between the mandates of existing humanitarian bodies.

By advocating on humanitarian issues, OCHA gives voice to the silent victims of crises, and ensures that the views and concerns of the humanitarian community are reflected in overall efforts towards recovery and peacebuilding. OCHA promotes greater respect for humanitarian norms and principles, and draws attention to such specific issues as access to affected populations, the humanitarian impact of sanctions, anti-personnel landmines, and the unchecked proliferation of small arms.

To support humanitarian advocacy, policy making and emergency coordination, OCHA has developed a robust set of online tools. OCHA manages ReliefWeb — the world's foremost humanitarian website — providing the latest information on emergencies worldwide (see www.reliefweb.int). It also hosts IRIN — a news service that offers accurate and impartial reporting and analysis about sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia for the humanitarian community (www.irinnews.org).

Providing assistance and protection

Three United Nations entities — UNICEF, WFP and UNHCR — have primary roles in providing protection and assistance in humanitarian crises.

Children and women constitute the majority of refugees and displaced persons. In acute emergencies, the **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)** works alongside other relief agencies to help re-establish basic services such as water and sanitation, set up schools, and provide immunization services, medicines and other supplies to uprooted populations.

UNICEF also consistently urges governments and warring parties to act more effectively to protect children. Its programmes in conflict zones have included the negotiation of ceasefires to facilitate the provision of such services as child immunization. To this end, UNICEF has pioneered the concept of “children as zones of peace” and created “days of tranquillity” and “corridors of peace” in war-affected regions. Special programmes assist traumatized children and help reunite unaccompanied children with parents or extended families. In 2006, UNICEF provided more than \$513 million in humanitarian assistance relating to 53 emergencies.

The **World Food Programme (WFP)** provides fast, efficient relief to millions of people who are victims of natural or man-made disasters, including most of the world's refugees and internally displaced persons. Such crises consume the largest part of WFP's financial and human resources. A decade ago, two out of three tons of food aid provided by WFP was used to help people become self-reliant. Today, the picture is reversed, with more than 72 per cent of WFP resources going to victims of humanitarian crises. In 2006, that meant assistance to 63.4 million people — including IDPs, refugees, children orphaned by AIDS, and victims of conflict and such natural disasters as floods and drought — through 37 short-term emergency operations, 53 long-term relief and recovery operations and 35 special operations.

Protecting children in war

Today, in more than 30 conflict situations worldwide, more than 250,000 young persons under 18 are ruthlessly exploited as soldiers — some as young as seven or eight, girls as well as boys. More than 2 million children have been killed in wars and civil strife, and 6 million have been maimed or permanently disabled. Thousands of girls are subject to rape and other forms of sexual violence and exploitation, while boys and girls are being abducted from their homes on an unprecedented scale. Still others have been orphaned by war or separated from their parents.

To tackle this tragedy, the Security Council has called for stronger efforts to end the use of children as soldiers and to protect children in armed conflict. Peacekeeping operations now include the protection of children in their mandate, and several peacekeeping missions — such as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Côte d'Ivoire — include civilian specialists on the protection of children.

A framework of norms and standards for the protection of children during conflict has evolved over the years. It includes:

- The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court — classifies conscription, enlistment or use in hostilities of children under 15 as a war crime.
- The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child — sets an age limit of 18 years for compulsory recruitment and direct participation in hostilities, and requires states parties to raise the minimum age for voluntary recruitment to at least 16.
- Six Security Council resolutions — 1261 (1999), 1314 (2000), 1379 (2001), 1460 (2003), 1539 (2004) and 1612 (2005) — on the protection of children during conflict.
- ILO Convention 182 — defines child soldiering as one of the worst forms of child labour and sets 18 as the minimum age for forced or compulsory recruitment.
- The Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols — stipulate that children shall be the object of special respect and shall be protected against any form of assault during conflict, and that they should be provided “with the care and aid they require”.

The Secretary-General's special representative for children and armed conflict works to increase global awareness and mobilize the political support of governments and civil society. The special representative is a key advocate for such measures as strengthening the monitoring and reporting mechanisms on violations of children's rights in armed conflict; placing their welfare on peace agendas; and putting their needs at the centre of post-conflict recovery programmes. (See www.un.org/children/conflict)

Travelling to war zones, the special representative has sought and obtained important commitments from governments and insurgents for the protection and well-being of children in conflict and post-conflict situations. In addition, UNICEF has long worked with governments and rebel movements to demobilize child soldiers, reunite them with their families and foster their social reintegration.

Protecting UN staff and humanitarian workers

United Nations personnel and other humanitarian workers in the field continue to be subject to attacks. Over the years, scores have been killed, taken hostage or detained while working in conflict areas. Violent incidents against UN staff have included armed robbery, assault and rape.

The heightened visibility of UN personnel as representatives of the international community places them at substantial risk of being targeted. This was strikingly brought home on 19 August 2003, when the bombing of UN headquarters in Baghdad left 22 dead and 150 injured. Among those killed was UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Sergio Vieira de Mello, on assignment as head of the UN mission there. It was the most deliberate and devastating single attack on UN civilian staff in the Organization's 62-year history.

In his annual report to the General Assembly on the protection of UN staff and the security of humanitarian personnel*, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said in September 2007 that he was deeply concerned by the "disturbing trends of unabated targeting of humanitarian workers in hostage incidents and deliberate threats" against UN personnel in conflict areas, particularly in areas of UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations, as well as the vulnerability of locally recruited personnel of the UN and humanitarian organizations.

Noting that "primary responsibility for the security and protection of the United Nations and associated personnel rests with the host governments", the Secretary-General stressed the importance of security collaboration between the UN and the host country on contingency planning, information exchange, risk assessment and combating impunity.

Observing that not all countries have fully investigated attacks or other threats against international and locally recruited UN and associated staff, or held perpetrators accountable under international and national law, he commended those governments and national and local authorities and officials "who continue to observe the internationally agreed principles on the protection of humanitarian and United Nations personnel".

The 1994 Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel obliges the governments of countries where the UN is at work to safeguard its staff, and to take preventive measures against murders and abductions.

* The Secretary-General's report can be viewed online by visiting the UN Official Document System (ODS) — <http://documents.un.org> — and searching for document A/62/324.

When war or disaster strikes, WFP responds quickly with emergency relief, then mounts programmes to facilitate smooth and effective recovery aimed at rebuilding lives and livelihoods. WFP is also responsible for mobilizing food and funds for all large-scale refugee-feeding operations managed by UNHCR. (For UNHCR's role in humanitarian crises, see section below on "International protection and assistance to refugees".)

Rural populations in the developing world are often the most vulnerable to disasters, with most of these communities dependent on agriculture for their food security and livelihoods. The

expertise of the **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)** in farming, livestock, fisheries and forestry is therefore crucial in emergency relief and rehabilitation.

FAO assists countries in preventing, mitigating, preparing for and responding to disasters. Its *Global Information and Early Warning System* provides regular and updated information on the global food situation (www.fao.org/giews). Together with WFP, it carries out assessments of the food situation in food-insecure countries following man-made or natural disasters. Based on these assessments, emergency food aid operations are prepared and jointly approved.

FAO's work in post-disaster and complex emergency situations emphasizes the protection and rehabilitation of agricultural livelihoods. FAO aims to restore local food production, providing an exit from food aid and other forms of assistance, bolstering self-reliance and reducing the need for relief and harmful coping strategies.

The assistance programmes of the **World Health Organization (WHO)** focus on assessing the health needs of those affected by emergencies and disasters, providing health information and assisting in coordination and planning. WHO carries out emergency programmes in such areas as nutritional and epidemiological surveillance, control of epidemics (including HIV/AIDS), immunizations, management of essential drugs and medical supplies, reproductive health and mental health. WHO makes special efforts to eradicate polio and to control tuberculosis and malaria in countries affected by emergencies.

The **United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)** also moves quickly when emergency strikes. In times of upheaval, pregnancy-related deaths and sexual violence soar. Reproductive health services often become unavailable. Young people become more vulnerable to HIV infection and sexual exploitation. And many women lose access to family planning services. In emergencies, UNFPA acts to protect the reproductive health of communities in crisis, and continues to provide assistance as these communities move beyond the acute phase into reconstruction efforts.

The **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** is the agency responsible for coordinating activities for natural disaster mitigation, prevention and preparedness. Governments frequently call on UNDP to help design rehabilitation programmes and direct donor aid. UNDP and humanitarian agencies work together to integrate concern for recovery, and transitional and long-term development in their relief operations. UNDP also supports programmes for the demobilization of former combatants, comprehensive mine action, the return and reintegration of refugees and internally displaced persons, and the restoration of the institutions of governance.

To ensure that the resources provided will have the greatest possible impact, each project is carried out in consultation with local and national government officials. UNDP offers rapid assistance to whole communities, while helping to establish the social and economic foundations for durable peace, development and the alleviation of poverty. This community-based approach has helped provide urgent and lasting relief for hundreds of thousands of victims of war and civil upheaval. Today, many conflict-scarred communities have improved their living standards thanks to training programmes, credit schemes and infrastructure projects.

Refugees in their own country

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) are those who have been forced to flee their homes to escape war, generalized violence, human rights violations or natural and man-made disasters, but who have not crossed an international border. Civil wars have created large groups of such persons all over the world. Today, there are an estimated 12.8 million of them — more than the number of refugees.

While refugees often find safety, food and shelter in a second country and are protected by a well-defined body of international laws, the internally displaced may be trapped in an ongoing internal conflict at the mercy of warring parties, making the provision of relief hazardous or impossible. Primary responsibility for such persons lies with the national government, which is often unable — or unwilling — to help, and may even view them as “enemies of the state”.

Yet like refugees, internally displaced persons need immediate protection and assistance, as well as long-term solutions, such as return or resettlement. UNHCR has increasingly been called on to aid such persons in various regions and countries — including Colombia, Cote d’Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Lebanon, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, Uganda and elsewhere — providing assistance on the basis of humanitarian need rather than refugee status. But the task has been daunting.

Recognizing that no UN agency had the mandate and resources to protect and assist IDPs single-handedly, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) in 2005 developed a collaborative model by which agencies pool their resources in responding to humanitarian crises. (See www.humanitarianreform.org)

Under this new “cluster approach”, UNHCR, on 1 January 2006, accepted leadership responsibility and accountability for the clusters relating to protection; emergency shelter; and camp coordination and management.

With respect to situations resulting from natural disasters, it shares the lead: on shelter, with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC); on camps, with the International Organization for Migration (IOM); and on protection, with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

International protection and assistance to refugees

At the end of 2006, the Office of the **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)** was providing international protection and assistance to approximately 33 million people who had fled war or persecution — of whom 9.9 million were refugees, 12.8 million were internally displaced persons, 5.8 million were stateless persons, 2.6 million were returnees, and nearly 2 million were asylum-seekers and others of concern to the agency.

UNHCR has been one of the lead humanitarian agencies for some of the major emergencies in post-war history — in the Balkans, which produced the largest refugee flows in Europe since

People in flight
Number of people of concern to UNHCR*

Total: **32.9 million**

By region:

Africa	9.8 million
Asia	15.0 million
Europe	3.4 million
Latin America and Caribbean	3.5 million
North America	1.1 million
Oceania	86 thousand

More than 4.3 million Palestinians, who are assisted by UNRWA, are not included. However, Palestinians outside the UNRWA area of operations, such as those in Iraq or Libya, are of concern to UNHCR.

* Includes refugees, asylum-seekers, returnees, internally displaced persons and others of concern as of 1 January 2007.

Source: UNHCR

the Second World War; in the aftermath of the Gulf War; in Africa's Great Lakes region; in the massive exoduses in Kosovo and Timor-Leste; in the repatriation operation in Afghanistan; and, more recently, in the exodus of refugees from Iraq.

Refugees are defined as those who have fled their countries because of a well-founded fear of persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group, and who cannot or do not want to return.

The legal status of refugees is defined in two international treaties, the 1951 *Convention relating to the Status of Refugees* and its 1967 *Protocol*, which spell out their rights and obligations. There are 147 states parties to one or both of these instruments.

UNHCR's most important function is international protection — trying to ensure respect for refugees' basic human rights, including their ability to seek asylum, and to ensure that no one is returned involuntarily to a country where he or she has reason to fear persecution. Other types of assistance include:

- help during major emergencies involving the movement of large numbers of refugees;
- regular programmes in such fields as education, health and shelter;
- assistance to promote the self-sufficiency of refugees and their integration in host countries;

- voluntary repatriation;
- resettlement in third countries for refugees who cannot return to their homes and who face protection problems in the country where they first sought asylum.

Although UNHCR's mandate is to protect and assist refugees, it has been called upon more and more to come to the aid of a wider range of people living in refugee-like situations. These include people displaced within their own countries; former refugees who may need UNHCR monitoring and assistance once they have returned home; stateless persons; and those who receive temporary protection outside their home countries but do not receive the full legal status of refugees. Today, refugees comprise the second largest group of people of concern to UNHCR.

Asylum-seekers are persons who have left their countries of origin and have applied for recognition as refugees in other countries, and whose applications are still pending. At the end of 2006, UNHCR was assisting 738,000 people in this category. South Africa was the main destination for asylum-seekers, followed by the United States, Kenya, France, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Canada. Some 34,200 Iraqi citizens claimed asylum in more than 70 countries during 2006, the number exceeded only by Somalia, with 45,600 Somali asylum claims.

Most refugees want to return home as soon as circumstances permit. At the end of 2006, UNHCR was assisting some 2.6 million returnees, and there were more than 700,000 refugee returns. The three main durable solutions for refugees are (a) voluntary repatriation to their home country in safety and dignity; (b) local integration in the country of asylum, where feasible; or (c) resettlement in a third country. Voluntary repatriation is generally considered the preferred option.

However, the sudden return of large numbers of people can quickly overwhelm fragile economic and social infrastructures. To ensure that returnees can rebuild their lives after they return home, UNHCR works with a range of organizations to facilitate reintegration. This requires emergency assistance for those in need, development programmes for the areas that have been devastated, and job-creation schemes.

The development of effective links between peace, stability, security, respect for human rights and sustainable development is increasingly seen as crucial for the achievement of durable solutions to the refugee problem.

Palestine refugees

The **United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)** has been providing education, health, relief and social services to Palestine refugees since 1950. The General Assembly created UNRWA to provide emergency relief to some 750,000 Palestine refugees who had lost their homes and livelihoods as a result of the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict. By the end of 2006, UNRWA was providing essential basic services to assist more than 4.5 million registered Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and the occupied Palestinian territory (comprised of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip).

UNRWA's humanitarian role has been reinforced by recurrent conflicts — civil war in Lebanon; the Palestinian uprising (*intifada*) of 1987-1993; the second outbreak of Israeli/Palestinian violence, which began September 2000; and conflict in Lebanon in 2006 and 2007.

Education is UNRWA's largest area of activity, accounting for nearly 60 per cent of its regular budget and 72 per cent of its staff. Its 666 elementary, prep and secondary schools accommodated nearly 485,000 students in the 2006/2007 school year, while the eight UNRWA vocational training centres had nearly 5,700 trainees. The Agency's network of 128 health centres handled more than 9 million patient visits from July 2006 through June 2007. UNRWA also provides environmental health services to more than 1.3 million refugees living in camps.

In 2006, some 250,000 of the poorest refugees, unable to support themselves, received special hardship assistance, including the provision of food and shelter rehabilitation. Meanwhile, an income-generation programme in 2006 provided 14,023 small loans worth \$15.3 million to informal entrepreneurs and small businesses in the occupied Palestinian territory, Syria and Jordan.

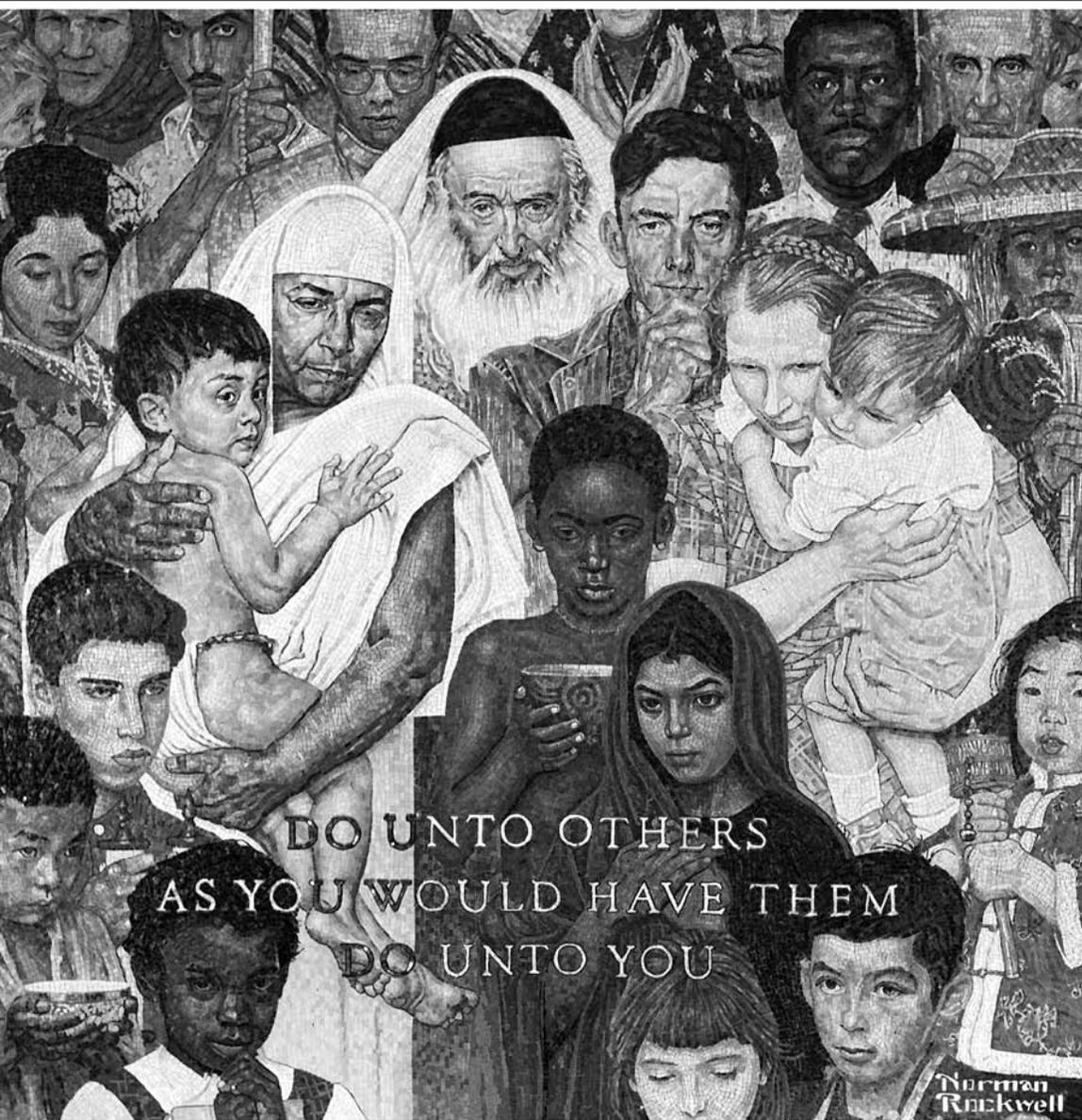
Some 250,000 people received special hardship assistance in 2006, which sought to ensure minimum standards of nutrition and shelter and to promote self-reliance through poverty-alleviation programmes. The income-generation programme in the West Bank and Gaza Strip provided 126,474 loans worth \$131.1 million to small businesses and micro-enterprises.

In 1993, following the accords between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization and the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in the occupied Palestinian territory, UNRWA began a Peace Implementation Programme (1993-1999) to ensure that the benefits of the peace process would be realized at the local level. The Agency's continuing efforts have helped to upgrade infrastructure, create employment, and improve socio-economic conditions in Palestine refugee communities. By June 2007, nearly 1,000 such UNRWA projects had been funded, with pledges and contributions totalling \$461.1 million.

The international community considers UNRWA a stabilizing factor in the Middle East. The refugees themselves look upon its programmes as a symbol of the international community's commitment to a solution of the Palestine refugee issue.



Chapter 6



UN Photo / 31379
Mosaic art gifted to UN by
the United States, based
on Norman Rockwell's
"Do Unto Others"

International Law

INTERNATIONAL LAW

Among the United Nations most pervasive achievements has been the development of a body of international law — conventions, treaties and standards — that play a central role in promoting economic and social development, as well as international peace and security. Many of the treaties brought about by the United Nations form the basis of the law that governs relations among nations. While the United Nations work in this area does not always receive attention, it has a daily impact on the lives of people everywhere.

The United Nations Charter specifically calls on the Organization to help in the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means, including arbitration and judicial settlement (Article 33), and to encourage the progressive development of international law and its codification (Article 13). Over the years, the United Nations has sponsored over 500 multilateral agreements, which address a broad range of common concerns among states and are legally binding for the countries that ratify them.

In many areas, the United Nations legal work has been pioneering, addressing problems as they take on an international dimension. It has been in the forefront of efforts to provide a legal framework in such areas as protecting the environment, regulating migrant labour, curbing drug trafficking and combating terrorism. This work continues today, as international law assumes a more central role across a wider spectrum of issues, including human rights law and international humanitarian law. (For the UN and international law, see www.un.org/law. For the UN Office of Legal Affairs, see <http://untreaty.un.org/ola>)

Judicial settlement of disputes

The primary United Nations organ for the settlement of disputes is the **International Court of Justice**. Popularly known as the World Court, it was founded in 1946. As of October 2007, it had delivered 93 judgments on disputes brought to it by states and issued 25 advisory opinions in response to requests by duly authorized United Nations organizations. Most cases have been dealt with by the full Court, but since 1981 six cases have been referred to special chambers at the request of the parties (see the Court's site at www.icj-cij.org).

In its judgments, the Court has addressed international disputes involving economic rights, rights of passage, the non-use of force, non-interference in the internal affairs of states, diplomatic relations, hostage-taking, the right of asylum and nationality. States bring such disputes before the Court in search of an impartial solution to their differences, on the basis of law. By achieving peaceful settlement on such questions as land frontiers, maritime boundaries and territorial sovereignty, the Court has often helped to prevent the escalation of disputes.

In a typical case of territorial rights, the Court in 2002 settled a sovereignty dispute between Cameroon and Nigeria over the oil-rich Bakassi peninsula, and then over the whole land and sea boundary between the two states. Earlier that year, it resolved a sovereignty dispute between Indonesia and Malaysia over two islands in the Celebes Sea, granting them

to Malaysia. In 2001, the Court ended a maritime and territorial dispute between Qatar and Bahrain, which had been a strain on their relations.

In 1999, the Court resolved a sensitive frontier dispute between Botswana and Namibia, with a ruling accepted by both countries. In 1992, it settled a nearly century-old dispute between El Salvador and Honduras, which had led to a short but bloody war in 1969. In 1994, the Court acted on a dispute that had been jointly referred to it by Libya and Chad, ruling that their territory was defined by a 1955 treaty between Libya and France. As a result, Libya withdrew its forces from an area along its southern border with Chad.

Various cases have been referred to the Court against the background of conflict or political upheaval. In 1980, the United States brought a case arising from the seizure of its embassy in Tehran and the detention of its staff. The Court held that Iran must release the hostages, hand back the embassy and make reparation. However, before the Court could set the amount of reparation, the case was withdrawn following an agreement between the two countries. In 1989, Iran asked the Court to condemn the shooting down of an Iranian airliner by a United States warship, and to find the United States responsible for the payment of compensation to Iran. The case was closed in 1996, following a compensation settlement between the parties.

In 1986, Nicaragua brought a case against the United States over the latter's support for Nicaragua's "contras". The Court found that by supporting the contras and laying mines outside Nicaraguan ports — which could not be justified as "collective self-defence" — the United States had violated its international legal obligations not to intervene in the affairs of another state, not to use force against another state, and not to infringe on its sovereignty. Accordingly, the Court decided that the United States had to make reparation. However, in 1991, before the amount was determined, Nicaragua requested that the case be dismissed.

In 1992, Libya brought two cases — one against the United Kingdom and one against the United States — concerning the interpretation or application of the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation, arising out of the crash, in 1988, of Pan American flight 103 at Lockerbie, Scotland. The cases were removed from the Court's docket in September 2003, as part of a larger agreement reached between the parties.

In 1993, Bosnia and Herzegovina brought a case concerning the application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia — now "the Republic of Serbia" — regarding the massacres that took place at Srebrenica, mainly from 13 to 16 July 1995. In its judgment, issued on 26 February 2007, the Court said it had not been established that the massacres had taken place on the instructions, under the control, or with the foreknowledge of the Federal Republic. Therefore, under international law, it had not committed genocide.

However, the Court found that "that the authorities of the Respondent could not have been unaware of the grave risk of genocide once the VRS forces" — the Army of the Republika Srpska — "had decided to take possession of the Srebrenica enclave". Despite

this, “the Respondent did nothing to prevent the Srebrenica massacres, claiming that they were powerless to do so, which hardly tallies with their known influence over the VRS”. It was therefore in breach of its obligation under the Convention to take whatever action it could to prevent the genocide.

The Court in 1996 rejected objections by the United States to its jurisdiction in a 1992 case concerning the destruction of Iranian oil platforms by United States warships. In November 2003, the Court held that the United States actions could not be justified as necessary to protect its national security interests. However, as those actions did not constitute a breach of its obligations regarding freedom of commerce, Iran’s claim for reparation could not be upheld. It also refused to uphold a United States counterclaim.

States often submit questions relating to economic rights. In 1995, in the midst of a dispute over fisheries jurisdiction between Canada and the European Union, Spain instituted a case against Canada after that country seized a Spanish fishing trawler on the high seas. A case involving environmental protection was brought by Hungary and Slovakia concerning the validity of a 1997 treaty they had concluded on the building of a barrage system on the Danube River. In 1997, the Court found both states in breach of their legal obligations, and called on them to carry out that treaty.

On 8 October 2007, the Court rendered its judgment in a case instituted in 1999 by Nicaragua against Honduras with regard to legal issues between the two states concerning maritime delimitations in the Caribbean Sea. The Court found that Honduras had sovereignty over certain disputed islands (Bobel Cay, Savanna Cay, Port Royal Cay and South Cay) and decided on the starting point and delimitation line of a single maritime boundary. The Court instructed the parties to negotiate in good faith with a view to agreeing on the course of a line between the present endpoint of the land boundary between Honduras and Nicaragua and the starting point of the maritime boundary between them as now determined by the Court.

The number of judicial cases submitted to the Court has increased significantly since the 1970s, when it had only one or two cases on its docket at any one time. During the past decade, that number has even exceeded 20 cases. At the end of 2006, there were 14 pending cases on the Court’s docket, including two under active consideration.

The Court’s advisory opinions have dealt with, among other things, admission to United Nations membership, reparation for injuries suffered in the service of the United Nations, the territorial status of Western Sahara, the expenses of certain peacekeeping operations and, more recently, the status of UN human rights rapporteurs. Two opinions, rendered in 1996 at the request of the General Assembly and the World Health Organization, concerned the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons.

In a 1971 advisory opinion requested by the Security Council, the Court stated that the continued presence of South Africa in Namibia was illegal and that South Africa was under obligation to withdraw its administration and end its occupation — clearing the way for the independence of Namibia in March 1990.

Development and codification of international law

The **International Law Commission** was established by the General Assembly in 1947 to promote the progressive development of international law and its codification. The Commission, which meets annually, is composed of 34 members elected by the General Assembly for five-year terms. Collectively, the members represent the world's principal legal systems, and serve as experts in their individual capacity, not as representatives of their governments. They address a wide range of issues relevant to the regulation of relations among states. (See www.un.org/law/ilc)

Most of the Commission's work involves the preparation of drafts on aspects of international law. Some topics are chosen by the Commission, others are referred to it by the General Assembly. When the Commission completes work on a topic, the General Assembly sometimes convenes an international conference of plenipotentiaries to incorporate the draft into a convention. It is then opened to states to become parties — meaning that countries formally agree to be bound by its provisions. Some of these conventions form the very foundation of the law governing relations among states. For example:

- The Convention on the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses, adopted by the General Assembly in 1997, which regulates the equitable and reasonable utilization of watercourses shared by two or more countries.
- The Convention on the Law of Treaties between States and International Organizations or between International Organizations, adopted at a conference in Vienna in 1986.
- The Convention on the Succession of States in Respect of State Property, Archives and Debts, adopted at a conference in Vienna in 1983.
- The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents, adopted by the General Assembly in 1973.
- The Convention on the Law of Treaties, adopted at a conference in Vienna in 1969.
- The Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961) and the Convention on Consular Relations (1963), adopted at conferences held in Vienna.

In 1999, the Commission adopted a draft declaration aimed at preventing people from becoming stateless in such situations as dissolution of a state or separation of a territory. State responsibility had been a major subject of study by the Commission since its first session in 1949. In 2001, it completed its study of the subject with the adoption of draft articles on “Responsibility of States for internationally wrongful acts”. Also in 2001, the Commission adopted draft articles on the prevention of transboundary damage resulting from hazardous activities.

In 2006, the Commission adopted a set of draft articles on diplomatic protection; draft principles on the allocation of loss in the case of transboundary harm arising out of hazardous activities; and guiding principles applicable to unilateral declarations of states capable of

creating legal obligations. It adopted, on first reading, a set of draft articles on the law of transboundary aquifers. And it concluded its consideration of the topic, “Fragmentation of international law: difficulties arising from the diversification and expansion of international law” — taking note of the report and conclusions of its study group on this item.

Other topics currently being considered by the Commission include: reservations to treaties; effects of armed conflicts on treaties; responsibility of international organizations; expulsion of aliens; obligation to extradite or prosecute (*aut dedere aut judicare*); and shared natural resources.

International trade law

The **United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL)** facilitates world trade by developing conventions, model laws, rules and legal guides designed to harmonize international trade law. Established by the General Assembly in 1966, this 60-nation body brings together representatives of the world’s geographic regions and principal economic and legal systems. Over the years, UNCITRAL has become the core legal body of the UN system in the field of international trade law. The international trade law division of the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs serves as its secretariat. (See www.uncitral.org)

Over its 41-year history, the Commission has developed widely accepted texts that are viewed as landmarks in various fields of law. These include the UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules (1976); the *UNCITRAL Conciliation Rules* (1980); the *United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods* (1980); the *UNCITRAL Model Law on International Commercial Arbitration* (1985); the *UNCITRAL Model Law on Procurement of Goods, Construction and Services* (1994); the *UNCITRAL Notes on Organizing Arbitral Proceedings* (1996); the *Model Law on Electronic Commerce* (1996); and the *UNCITRAL Model Law on Cross-Border Insolvency* (1997).

Other notable texts include: the *Convention on the Limitation Period in the International Sale of Goods* (1974); the *United Nations Convention on the Carriage of Goods by Sea (Hamburg Rules)* (1978); the *United Nations Convention on International Bills of Exchange and International Promissory Notes* (1988); the *UNCITRAL Legal Guide on Drawing Up International Contracts for the Construction of Industrial Works* (1988); the *United Nations Convention on the Liability of Operators of Transport Terminals in International Trade* (1991); the *UNCITRAL Legal Guide on International Countertrade Transactions* (1992); the *United Nations Convention on Independent Guarantees and Standby Letters of Credit* (1995); the *UNCITRAL Legislative Guide on Privately Financed Infrastructure Projects* (2000); the *United Nations Convention on the Assignment of Receivables in International Trade* (2001); the *UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Signatures* (2001); the *UNCITRAL Model Law on International Commercial Conciliation* (2002); and the *UNCITRAL Model Legislative Provisions on Privately Financed Infrastructure Projects* (2003).

More recently adopted texts include the *UNCITRAL Legislative Guide on Insolvency Law* (2004); the *United Nations Convention on the Use of Electronic Communications in International Contracts* (2005); the revised *UNCITRAL Model Law on International*

Commercial Arbitration (2006); and the *Recommendation regarding the interpretation of article II (2) and article VII (1) of the Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards (1958)*, adopted by UNCITRAL in 2006.

The Commission's current work includes a draft instrument on the international carriage of goods by sea and a draft legislative guide on secured transactions. Work is also continuing on issues of insolvency in groups of companies (enterprise groups); revision of the *UNCITRAL Model Law on Procurement* and the *UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules*; and the compilation and publication of Case Law on UNCITRAL Texts (CLOUT).

Environmental law

The United Nations has pioneered the development of international environmental law, brokering major treaties that have advanced environmental protection everywhere. The **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)** administers many of these treaties, while the rest are administered by other bodies, including treaty secretariats. (See www.unep.org/dec and www.unep.org/law)

- The *Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat* (1971) obligates states parties to use wisely all wetlands under their jurisdiction. This Convention was promoted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).
- The *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (1972) obligates states parties to protect unique natural and cultural areas. Also promoted by UNESCO.
- The *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora* (1973) controls international trade in selected wild animal and plant species or products through quotas or outright bans, to ensure their survival.
- The *Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals* (1979), and a series of associated regional and species-specific agreements, aims to conserve terrestrial, marine and avian migratory species and their habitats.
- The *Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (Acid Rain Convention)* (1979) and its protocols, negotiated under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), provide for the control and reduction of air pollution in Europe and North America.
- The *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea* (1982) regulates in a comprehensive way numerous maritime issues. These include rights of civil and naval navigation; the protection of coasts and the marine environment; rights to living and non-living resources; and marine scientific research.
- The *Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer* (1985), the *Montreal Protocol* (1987) and its amendments seek to reduce damage to the ozone layer, which shields life from the sun's harmful ultraviolet radiations.

- The *Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal* (1989) and its amendment obligates states parties to reduce shipping and dumping of dangerous wastes across borders; to minimize the amount and toxicity generated by hazardous waste; and to ensure their environmentally sound management as close as possible to the source of generation. In 1999, states parties adopted a protocol on liability and compensation resulting from cross-border movement of hazardous wastes.
- The *Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol* (1991) was established to assist developing country parties to the *Montreal Protocol* whose annual per capita consumption and production of ozone-depleting substances (ODS) is less than 0.3kg — referred to as Article 5 countries — to comply with its control measures. Contributions to the Multilateral Fund from non-Article 5 countries are determined according to the United Nations scale of assessments.
- The *Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas* (1991), concluded under the auspices of the *Convention on Migratory Species*, aims to promote close cooperation among parties with a view to achieving and maintaining a favourable conservation status for small cetaceans. States parties are obligated to engage in habitat conservation and management, surveys and research, pollution mitigation and public information.
- The *Convention on Biological Diversity* (1992) seeks to conserve biological diversity, promote the sustainable use of its components, and encourage equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources. Its *Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety* (2000) seeks to protect biological diversity from potential risks that might be posed by living modified organisms (LMOs) resulting from modern biotechnology. It establishes an advance inform agreement procedure for ensuring that countries are provided with prior written notification and information necessary to make informed decisions before agreeing to the first import of LMOs that are to be intentionally introduced into the environment.
- The *Framework Convention on Climate Change* (1992) obligates states parties to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases that cause global warming and related atmospheric problems. The Convention's *Kyoto Protocol* (1997) strengthens the international response to climate change by calling on industrialized countries to meet legally binding emission targets during the period 2008-2012. The protocol also establishes several mechanisms that allow some flexibility in how the industrialized countries make and measure their emissions reductions.
- The *International Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa* (1994) seeks to promote international cooperation for action to combat desertification and to mitigate the effects of drought.

- The *Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic area* (1996) seeks to reduce the threat to cetaceans in Mediterranean and Black Sea waters. It requires that states implement a detailed conservation plan for cetaceans, including legislation banning the deliberate capture of cetaceans; measures to minimize their incidental capture; and the creation of protected zones.
- The *Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade* (1998) obligates the exporters of a hazardous chemical or pesticide to provide to the importing country information on the substance's potential health and environmental dangers.
- The *Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants* (2001) aims to reduce and eliminate releases of certain highly toxic pesticides, industrial chemicals and by-products — such as DDT, PCBs and dioxin — that are highly mobile and accumulate in the food chain.
- The *ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution* (2002) was designed to prevent a repeat of the suffocating smog caused by forest fires that plagued South-East Asia in 1997 and 1998. States parties commit to monitoring, assessment, prevention, preparedness, a national emergency response to forest fires and the resulting haze pollution, as well as the provision of assistance. The 1997-98 fires destroyed 10 million hectares of Indonesia's forests — one of the world's centres of biodiversity — and exposed more than 20 million people to extremely high levels of dangerous atmospheric pollution.

The UNEP Regional Seas Programme helps more than 140 participating countries in 13 regions to address the accelerating degradation of the world's oceans and coastal areas through the sustainable management and use of the marine and coastal environment. In most cases, it does so on the basis of a strong legal framework in the form of a regional convention and associated protocols on specific problems. UN partners include UNDP, FAO, the International Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO, the IMO and the IAEA. (See www.unep.org/regionalseas)

Law of the sea

The *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea* is one of the most comprehensive instruments of international law. Its 320 articles and 9 annexes contain an all-encompassing legal regime for the world's oceans and seas, establishing rules governing all activities in the oceans and the use of their resources — including navigation and overflight, exploration and exploitation of minerals, conservation and management of living resources, protection and preservation of the marine environment, and marine scientific research. It enshrines the notion that all problems of ocean space are closely interrelated and need to be addressed as a whole. It embodies in one instrument the codification of traditional rules for the use of the oceans, as well as the development of new rules governing emerging concerns. It is a unique instrument, often referred to as the “constitution for the oceans”. (See www.un.org/Depts/los)

It is now universally accepted that all activities in the oceans and the seas must be carried out in conformity with the provisions of the Convention, whose authority is based on its near-universal acceptance. As of September 2007, the Convention had 155 states parties, including the European Community; and other states are in the process of becoming party to it. Nearly all states recognize and adhere to its provisions.

Impact of the Convention

Through national and international legislation and related decision-making, states have consistently upheld the Convention as the pre-eminent international legal instrument in the field. Its implicit authority has resulted in the near-universal acceptance of some of its key provisions, including: 12 nautical miles as the limit of the territorial sea; coastal states' sovereign rights and jurisdiction in an "exclusive economic zone" up to the limit of 200 nautical miles; and their sovereign rights over the continental shelf extending up to a distance of 200 nautical miles or, under certain circumstances, beyond that limit. It has also brought stability in the area of navigation — establishing the rights of innocent passage through the territorial sea, transit passage through narrow straits used for international navigation, sea lanes passage through archipelagic waters, and freedom of navigation in the exclusive economic zone.

The near-universal acceptance of the Convention was facilitated in 1994 by the General Assembly's adoption of the *Agreement Relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the Convention*, which removed certain obstacles relating to the seabed area that had prevented mainly industrialized countries from signing the Convention. The Part XI Agreement is now widely accepted, having 130 states parties, as of September 2007.

The Convention has also been acknowledged for its provisions on the rights of coastal States, in the exercise of their jurisdiction, to regulate, authorize and conduct marine scientific research, as well as their duties relating to the prevention, reduction and control of pollution of the marine environment, and on the rights of landlocked states to participate in the exploitation of the living marine resources of the exclusive economic zones of coastal states. Moreover, the Convention is recognized as the framework and foundation for any future instruments that seek to further clarify the rights and obligations of states in the oceans.

In this respect, the 1995 *Agreement on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks* implements provisions in the Convention relating to these fish stocks, setting out the legal regime for their conservation and management. It requires states to cooperate in adopting measures to ensure their long-term sustainability and to promote their optimum utilization. It provides for the application of a precautionary and ecosystem approach to fisheries management, and for the adoption of conservation and management measures based on the best scientific evidence available. States are also required to cooperate to achieve compatibility of measures with respect to these stocks for areas under national jurisdiction and the adjacent high seas. As of September 2007, the Agreement had 67 parties.

Bodies established under the Convention

The Convention established three specific organs to deal with various aspects of the law of the sea.

The **International Seabed Authority** is the organization through which states parties organize and control activities relating to the deep seabed's mineral resources in the international seabed area, beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. Inaugurated in 1994, it is located in Kingston, Jamaica (www.isa.org.jm).

In 2002, the Authority adopted regulations on prospecting and exploration for polymetallic nodules in the Area (defined as "the seabed and ocean floor and subsoil thereof, beyond the limits of national jurisdiction").

Following adoption of the regulations, which include standard clauses for exploration contracts, the first 15-year contracts for exploration for polymetallic nodules in the deep seabed were signed in 2001 with the registered pioneer investors: the State Enterprise Yuzhmorgeologiya (Russian Federation); the Interoceanmetal Joint Organization (a consortium formed by Bulgaria, Cuba, the Czech Republic, Poland, the Russian Federation and the Slovak Republic); the Republic of Korea; the China Ocean Minerals Research and Development Association (COMRA); the Institut français de recherche pour l'exploitation de la mer (IFREMER)/Association française pour l'étude et la recherche des nodules (AFERNOD); the Deep Ocean Resources Development Company (DORD-Japan); and the Department of Ocean Development, India. In 2006, a contract was signed between the Authority and Germany, represented by the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources.

The pioneer investors are state-owned enterprises or multinational consortia that — having undertaken prospecting activities and having located economically exploitable deposits of polymetallic nodules in the Area before the adoption of the Convention — were accorded preferential treatment in the granting of production authorizations over other applicants, except the Enterprise itself. The Enterprise is the organ of the International Seabed Authority which carries out activities in the Area as enumerated in the Convention, as well as the transport, processing and marketing of minerals recovered from the Area. The functions of the Enterprise are currently being carried out by the Legal and Technical Commission of the Authority.

The **International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea**, operational since 1996, was established to settle disputes relating to the interpretation or application of the Convention (see www.itlos.org). Composed of 21 judges elected by the states parties, it is located in the German seaport of Hamburg. It received its first application instituting a case in 2001.

As of September 2007, 15 cases have been submitted to the Tribunal, most of them seeking the prompt release of vessels and their crews — allegedly arrested in breach of the Convention. Some, such as *New Zealand v. Japan* and *Australia v. Japan*, concerning southern blue-fin tuna stocks, have dealt with the conservation of living resources. Another case,

Ireland v. United Kingdom, dealt with the prevention of land-based pollution from a plant designed to reprocess spent nuclear fuel into a new fuel known as “mixed oxide fuel”. Of these 15 cases, the only one still on the court’s docket is *Chile v. the European Union*, which concerns swordfish stocks in the south-eastern Pacific Ocean.

The purpose of the **Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf** is to facilitate implementation of the Convention with respect to delineation of the outer limits of the continental shelf when that submerged portion of the land territory of a coastal state extends *beyond* the 200 nautical miles from its coastline — established as the minimal legal distance under the Convention. Under its article 76, the coastal state may establish the outer limits of its *juridical* continental shelf in such cases through the application of specified scientific and technical formulas.

The Commission held its first session at United Nations Headquarters in 1997. Its 21 members, elected by the states parties to the Convention, serve in their personal capacity. They are experts in the fields of geology, geophysics, hydrography and geodesy. The Commission received its first submission by a state party, the Russian Federation, in December 2001. Since then (as of September 2007), submissions have been made by Brazil, Australia, Ireland, New Zealand, Norway, France, and jointly by France, Ireland, Spain and the United Kingdom. (See www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs_new/clcs_home.htm)

Meetings of states parties and General Assembly processes

Although the Convention does not provide for a periodic conference of states parties, the annual meeting of states parties, which is convened by the Secretary-General, has served as a forum where issues of concern have been discussed. This is in addition to its assigned administrative functions, such as election of members of the Tribunal and the Commission, as well as other budgetary and administrative actions. Similarly, the Secretary-General has convened annual informal consultations of the states parties to the UN Fish Stocks Agreement since its entry into force in 2001, to monitor its implementation, as well as a Review Conference in May 2006 to assess the effectiveness of the Agreement.

The General Assembly performs an oversight function with respect to ocean affairs and the law of the sea. In 2000, it established an open-ended, informal, consultative process to facilitate its own annual review of developments in the field. That process, convened annually, makes suggestions to the Assembly on particular issues, with an emphasis on identifying areas where coordination and cooperation among governments and agencies should be enhanced. Such topics have included safety of navigation and the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems. The consultative process, originally instituted for three years, has twice been extended for additional three-year periods because of the positive results it has achieved.

In 2004, the Assembly also established an open-ended, informal, ad hoc working group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity *beyond* areas of national jurisdiction. That working group met in 2006, and will meet again in 2008.

International humanitarian law

International humanitarian law encompasses the principles and rules that regulate the means and methods of warfare, as well as the humanitarian protection of civilian populations, sick and wounded combatants, and prisoners of war. Major instruments include the 1949 *Geneva Conventions for the Protection of War Victims* and two additional protocols, concluded in 1977 under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (see www.icrc.org).

The UN has taken a leading role in efforts to advance international humanitarian law. The Security Council has become increasingly involved in protecting civilians in armed conflict, promoting human rights and protecting children in wars. The establishment of the International Criminal Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda have served both to ensure accountability, and to strengthen and enhance the wider appreciation of humanitarian law. This applies as well to such courts established with UN support, including the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia.

The General Assembly, as a political forum of the United Nations, has contributed to elaborating a number of instruments. Among them are the *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide* (1948); the *Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity* (1968); the *Convention on Prohibition and Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which may be deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to have Indiscriminate Effects* (1980) and its five protocols; and the *Principles of International Cooperation in the Detection, Arrest, Extradition and Punishment of Persons Guilty of War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity*, which the Assembly adopted in 1973.

The Assembly also facilitated the convening of the diplomatic conference that adopted the **Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court** in 1998 (see *box*). Even prior to this landmark event, the preparatory commission for the Court had elaborated the “elements of crimes” with respect to genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity — a major contribution to international humanitarian law.

International tribunals

Mass violations of international humanitarian law in the former Yugoslavia and in Rwanda led the Security Council to establish two international tribunals to prosecute persons responsible for such offences. Both tribunals were established under Chapter VII of the Charter, which deals with enforcement measures, and are subsidiary organs of the Council.

- The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, established in 1993, is composed of four chambers (three trial chambers and an appeals chamber), a prosecutor and the registry. Under its Statute, it can prosecute four kinds of offences: grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions; violations of the laws or customs of war; genocide; and

crimes against humanity. The Tribunal is located at The Hague, in the Netherlands. (See www.un.org/icty).

- The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, established in 1994, is composed of four chambers (three trial chambers and an appeals chamber), a prosecutor and the registry. In 1998, the Tribunal handed down the first-ever conviction of genocide by an international court. The Tribunal is located in Arusha, Tanzania; the Office of the Prosecutor is in Kigali, Rwanda. (See www.ict.rw)

The **Special Court for Sierra Leone**, an independent judicial body, was established in January 2002 pursuant to an agreement between the government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations to prosecute persons who bear the greatest responsibility for the commission of crimes against humanity, war crimes and other serious violations of international humanitarian law, as well as crimes committed under relevant Sierra Leonean law within the territory of Sierra Leone since 30 November 1996. The Court is located in Freetown, Sierra Leone. The Secretary-General of the United Nations appoints the prosecutor and the registrar. The Secretary-General and the government of Sierra Leone each get to appoint judges of both the trial and appeals chambers of the Court. (See www.sc-sl.org)

The **Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia** is attached to the country's current judiciary system. It was established to prosecute former Khmer Rouge leaders for their alleged role in genocide and crimes against humanity, including the deaths of some 1.7 million people, between 17 April 1975 and 6 January 1979. With 17 national and 12 international judges and prosecutors, the Extraordinary Chambers is also mandated to try those responsible for grave breaches of the 1949 Geneva Conventions and other crimes defined by the Cambodian law instituting the Chambers, including murder, torture, religious persecutions, destruction of cultural property in armed conflict, and violations of the Vienna Convention on the protection of diplomats. It issued its first charges on 31 July 2007. (See www.eccc.gov.kh)

International terrorism

The United Nations has consistently addressed the problem of terrorism, at both the legal and political level.

In the legal sphere, the UN and its related bodies — such as the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) — have developed a network of international agreements that constitute the basic legal instruments against terrorism. These are the:

- Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft (Tokyo, 1963).
- Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft (The Hague, 1970).

- Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation (Montreal, 1971).
- Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents (New York, 1973).
- Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (Vienna, 1980).
- Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation (Montreal, 1988).
- Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (Rome, 1988).
- Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf (Rome, 1988).
- Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives for the Purpose of Detection (Montreal, 1991).

The General Assembly has also concluded the following five conventions:

- International Convention against the Taking of Hostages (1979), in which states parties agree to make the taking of hostages punishable by appropriate penalties. They also agree to prohibit certain activities within their territories, to exchange information and to enable any criminal or extradition proceedings to take place. If a state party does not extradite an alleged offender, it must submit the case to its own authorities for prosecution.
- The Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel (1994), adopted by the Assembly following many instances of attacks against UN personnel in the field which resulted in injury and death.
- International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings (1997). It is aimed at denying “safe havens” to persons wanted for terrorist bombings by obligating each state party to prosecute such persons if it does not extradite them to another state that has issued an extradition request.
- International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (1999) obligates states parties either to prosecute or extradite persons accused of funding terrorist activities, and requires banks to enact measures to identify suspicious transactions.
- International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (2005) covers a broad range of acts and possible targets, in crisis and post-crisis situations. It also covers threats and attempts to commit or participate in such acts, including as an accomplice. The Convention, which stipulates that offenders be either prosecuted or extradited, entered into force on 7 July 2007.

In 1994, the General Assembly adopted a *Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism*. In 1996, in a *Declaration to Supplement the 1994 Declaration*, the Assembly condemned all acts and practices of terrorism as criminal and unjustifiable, wherever and by

The International Criminal Court

(www.icc-cpi.int)

The idea of a permanent international court to prosecute crimes against humanity was first considered at the United Nations in the context of the adoption of the Genocide Convention of 1948. For many years, differences of opinions forestalled further developments. In 1992, the General Assembly directed the International Law Commission to prepare a draft statute for such a court. The massacres in Cambodia, the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda made the need for it even more urgent.

Established by the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (www.un.org/law/icc), and adopted at a plenipotentiary conference in Rome on 17 July 1998, the International Criminal Court has jurisdiction to prosecute individuals who commit genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. It will also have jurisdiction over the crime of aggression when agreement is reached on the definition of such a crime. The Statute entered into force on 1 July 2002. As of 1 January 2007, it had 104 states parties.

The Court has 18 judges, elected by the states parties for a term limited to nine years, except that a judge shall remain in office to complete any trial or appeal which has already begun. No two judges can be from the same country. The President of the Court is Judge Philippe Kirsch (Canada); its Prosecutor is Luis Moreno Ocampo (Argentina); and its Registrar is Bruno Cathala (France).

The International Criminal Court is located at The Hague, in the Netherlands. Its budgetary expenditure in 2006 was Euros 64.7 million. As of August 2007, it had four cases on its docket, including the prosecution of alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity in the Darfur region of the Sudan.

whomever committed. It also urged states to take measures at the national and international levels to eliminate international terrorism.

An ad hoc committee established by the Assembly in 1996 is currently negotiating a comprehensive convention against international terrorism, to fill in gaps left by existing treaties.

On 28 September 2001, following the 11 September terrorist attack on the United States, the Security Council established its **Counter-Terrorism Committee**. Among its functions, the Committee monitors implementation of the Council's resolution 1373 (2001), which imposed certain obligations on member states. These include: criminalization of terrorism-related activities, including the provision of assistance to carry them out; denial of funding and safe haven to terrorists; and the exchange of information on terrorist groups. (See www.un.org/sc/ctc)

On 19 September 2006, the **United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy** was launched, following its unanimous adoption on 8 September by the General Assembly. Based on the fundamental conviction that terrorism in all its forms is unacceptable and can never be justified, the Strategy outlines a range of specific measures to address terrorism in all its aspects, at the national, regional and international levels. (See www.un.org/terrorism)

Additional information on UN action against terrorism is available by clicking the “terrorism” link on its “News Focus” page of the UN News Service. (See www.un.org/News/dh/infocus)

Other legal questions

The General Assembly has adopted legal instruments on various other questions. Among them are the *International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries* (1989); the *Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment* (1988); and the *Declaration on the Enhancement of the Effectiveness of the Principle of Refraining from the Threat or Use of Force in International Relations* (1987).

The Assembly has adopted many international instruments on the recommendation of the **Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization**, established by the Assembly in 1974. These include the *United Nations Model Rules for the Conciliation of Disputes between States* (1995); the *Declaration on the Enhancement of Cooperation between the United Nations and Regional Arrangements or Agencies in the Maintenance of International Peace and Security* (1994); the *Declaration on Fact-finding by the United Nations in the Field of the Maintenance of International Peace and Security* (1991); the *Declaration on the Prevention and Removal of Disputes and Situations Which May Threaten International Peace and Security and on the Role of the United Nations in this Field* (1988); and the *Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes* (1982).

Under Article 102 of the UN Charter, every international agreement entered into by any member state shall be registered with the United Nations Secretariat and published by it. The United Nations **Office of Legal Affairs** is responsible for the registration and publication of treaties. It publishes the *United Nations Treaty Series*, which contains the texts of more than 60,000 treaties and related information. It also discharges the functions of the Secretary-General as depositary of multilateral treaties. In that role, the Office maintains the status of over 530 major multilateral treaties in the publication, *Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary-General*, which is updated daily in electronic format and is available in the United Nations Treaty Collection on the Internet (see <http://untreaty.un.org>). It is also available in hard copy and is printed annually.



Chapter 7



DECOLONIZATION

Nearly 100 nations whose peoples were formerly under colonial rule or a trusteeship arrangement have joined the United Nations as sovereign independent states since the world Organization was founded in 1945. Additionally, many other Territories have achieved self-determination through political association or integration with an independent state. The United Nations has played a crucial role in that historic change by encouraging the aspirations of dependent peoples and by setting goals and standards to accelerate their attainment of independence. United Nations missions have supervised elections leading to independence — in Togoland (1956 and 1968), Western Samoa (1961), Namibia (1989) and, most recently, in Timor-Leste (formerly East Timor).

The decolonization efforts of the United Nations derive from the Charter principle of “equal rights and self-determination of peoples”, as well as from three specific chapters in the Charter (XI, XII and XIII) which are devoted to the interests of dependent peoples. Since 1960, the United Nations has also been guided by the General Assembly’s *Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples*, also known as the Declaration on decolonization, by which member states proclaimed the necessity of bringing colonialism to a speedy end. The United Nations has also been guided by General Assembly resolution 1541 (XV) of 15 December 1960, which defined the three options offering full self-government for Non-Self-Governing Territories.

Despite the great progress made against colonialism, more than 1 million people still live under colonial rule, and the United Nations continues its efforts to help achieve self-determination in the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories. (See www.un.org/Depts/dpi/decolonization)

International trusteeship system

Under Chapter XII of the Charter, the United Nations established the international trusteeship system for the supervision of Trust Territories placed under it by individual agreements with the states administering them.

The system applied to: (a) Territories held under mandates established by the League of Nations after the First World War; (b) Territories detached from “enemy states” as a result of the Second World War; and (c) Territories voluntarily placed under the system by states responsible for their administration. The goal of the system was to promote the political, economic and social advancement of the Territories and their development towards self-government and self-determination.

The **Trusteeship Council** was established under Chapter XIII of the Charter to supervise the administration of Trust Territories and to ensure that governments responsible for their administration took adequate steps to prepare them for the achievement of the Charter goals.

**Territories to which the Declaration on the Granting of
Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples
continues to apply (as of 2007)**

TERRITORY	ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY
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Africa:

Western Sahara¹

Asia and the Pacific:

American Samoa

United States

Guam

United States

New Caledonia²

France

Pitcairn

United Kingdom

Tokelau

New Zealand

Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean and Mediterranean:

Anguilla

United Kingdom

Bermuda

United Kingdom

British Virgin Islands

United Kingdom

Cayman Islands

United Kingdom

Falkland Islands (Malvinas)³

United Kingdom

Gibraltar

United Kingdom

Montserrat

United Kingdom

Saint Helena

United Kingdom

Turks and Caicos Islands

United Kingdom

United States Virgin Islands

United States

¹ On 26 February 1976, Spain informed the Secretary-General that as of that date, it had terminated its presence in the Territory of the Sahara and deemed it necessary to place on record that Spain considered itself thenceforth exempt from any international responsibility in connection with its administration, in view of the cessation of its participation in the temporary administration established for the Territory. In 1990, the General Assembly reaffirmed that the question of Western Sahara was a question of decolonization that remained to be completed by the people of Western Sahara.

² On 2 December 1986, the General Assembly determined that New Caledonia was a Non-Self-Governing Territory.

³ A dispute exists between the governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom concerning sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas).

In the early years of the United Nations, 11 Territories were placed under the trusteeship system (*see tables in Part Three*). Over the years, all 11 Territories either became independent states or voluntarily associated themselves with a state.

The last one to do so was the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (Palau), administered by the United States. The Security Council in 1994 terminated the United Nations Trusteeship Agreement for that Territory, after it chose free association with the United States in a 1993 plebiscite. Palau became independent in 1994, joining the United Nations as its 185th member state. With no Territories left on its agenda, the trusteeship system had completed its historic task.

Non-Self-Governing Territories

The United Nations Charter also addresses the issue of other Non-Self-Governing Territories not brought into the trusteeship system.

Chapter XI of the Charter — the Declaration regarding Non-Self-Governing Territories — provides that member states administering Territories which have not attained self-government recognize “that the interests of the inhabitants of these Territories is paramount” and accept as a “sacred trust” the obligation to promote their well-being.

To this end, administering powers, in addition to ensuring the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the peoples, undertake to assist them in developing self-government and democratic political institutions. Administering powers have an obligation to transmit regularly to the Secretary-General information on the economic, social and educational conditions in the Territories under their administration.

In 1946, eight member states — Australia, Belgium, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States — enumerated the Territories under their administration that they considered to be non-self-governing. In all, 72 Territories were enumerated, of which eight became independent before 1959. In 1963, the Assembly approved a revised list of 64 Territories to which the 1960 Declaration on decolonization applied. Today, only 16 such Territories remain, with France, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States as administering powers (*see table on facing page*).

In August 2005, Tokelau’s national representative body, the General Fono, approved a draft treaty of free association between Tokelau and New Zealand, and by November it had approved a draft constitution. In February 2006, a referendum was held on self-government, in which 60 per cent of registered Tokelauans voted in favour of free association, falling just short of the required two-thirds majority. A second referendum, held in Tokelau from 20 to 24 October 2007, also failed to produce the required two-thirds majority for Tokelau to enter into self-governance in free association with New Zealand. Of 692 votes cast, 446 were in favour of self-governance — 16 votes short of the required majority.

Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

The aspirations of the peoples of the Territories to achieve self-determination, and the international community's perception that Charter principles were being too slowly applied, led the General Assembly to proclaim, on 14 December 1960, the *Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples* (resolution 1514 (XV)).

The Declaration states that subjecting peoples to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation constitutes a denial of fundamental human rights, is contrary to the Charter, and is an impediment to the promotion of world peace and cooperation. It adds that “immediate steps shall be taken, in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories or all other Territories which have not yet attained independence, to transfer all powers to the peoples of those Territories, without any conditions or reservations, in accordance with their freely expressed will and desire, without any distinction as to race, creed or colour in order to enable them to enjoy complete independence and freedom”.

Also in 1960, the Assembly approved resolution 1541 (XV), defining the three legitimate political status options offering full self-government — free association with an independent state, integration into an independent state, or independence.

The Assembly, in 1961, established a special committee to examine the application of the Declaration and make recommendations on its implementation. Commonly referred to as the Special Committee of 24 or the **Special Committee on decolonization**, its full title is the Special Committee on the Situation with Regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. It meets annually, hears petitioners and representatives of the Territories, dispatches visiting missions to the Territories, and organizes annual seminars on the political, social, economic and educational situations in the Territories.

In the years following the adoption of the Declaration, some 60 former colonial Territories, inhabited by more than 80 million people, attained self-determination through independence, and joined the United Nations as sovereign members. (*For the list of Territories that have become integrated or associated with independent states since the adoption of the Declaration on decolonization, see Part Three.*)

The Assembly has called upon the administering powers to take all necessary steps to enable the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories to exercise fully their right to self-determination and independence. It has also called upon the administering powers to complete the withdrawal of remaining military bases from the Territories, and to ensure that no activity of foreign economic and other interests hinders the implementation of the Declaration.

In this respect, New Zealand has extended continuous cooperation to the Special Committee regarding Tokelau. France began cooperating with the Committee in 1999, following the signing of an agreement on the future of New Caledonia. In recent years, two administering powers have not participated formally in the Committee's work. The United

States has maintained that it remains conscious of its role as an administering power and will continue to meet its responsibilities under the Charter. The United Kingdom has stated that while most of the Territories under its administration chose independence, a small number have preferred to remain associated with it.

At the end of the **International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (1991-2000)**, the General Assembly declared the **Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (2001-2010)**, calling on member states to redouble their effort to achieve complete decolonization.

In the case of certain Territories, such as Western Sahara, the Assembly has entrusted the Secretary-General with specific tasks to facilitate the process of decolonization, in accordance with the UN Charter and the objectives of the Declaration.

Namibia

The United Nations helped bring about the independence of Namibia in 1990 — a case history that reveals the complexity of the efforts required to ensure a peaceful transition.

Formerly known as South West Africa, Namibia was an African Territory once held under the League of Nations mandate system. The General Assembly in 1946 asked South Africa to administer the Territory under the trusteeship system. South Africa refused, and in 1949 informed the United Nations that it would no longer transmit information on the Territory, maintaining that the mandate had ended with the demise of the League.

The General Assembly in 1966, stating that South Africa had not fulfilled its obligations, terminated that mandate and placed the Territory under the responsibility of the United Nations Council for South West Africa, which was renamed the Council for Namibia in 1968.

In 1976, the Security Council demanded that South Africa accept elections for the Territory under United Nations supervision. The General Assembly stated that independence talks must involve the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) — the sole representative of the Namibian people.

In 1978, Canada, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States submitted to the Security Council a settlement proposal providing for elections for a constituent assembly under United Nations auspices. The Council endorsed the Secretary-General's recommendations for implementing the proposal, asked him to appoint a special representative for Namibia, and established the **United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG)**.

Years of negotiations by the Secretary-General and his special representative, as well as United States mediation, led to the 1988 agreements for the achievement of peace in southern Africa, by which South Africa agreed to cooperate with the Secretary-General to ensure Namibia's independence through elections.

The operation that led to Namibia's independence started in April 1989. UNTAG supervised and controlled the entire electoral process, which was conducted by the Namibian authorities; monitored the ceasefire between SWAPO and South Africa and the demobilization of all military forces; and ensured a smooth electoral process, including monitoring of local police.

The elections for the constituent assembly were won by SWAPO and were declared "free and fair" by the Secretary-General's special representative, Mr. Martti Ahtisaari. Following the elections, South Africa withdrew its remaining troops. The constituent assembly drafted a new Constitution, approved in February 1990, and elected SWAPO leader Sam Nujoma as President for a five-year term. In March, Namibia became independent, with the Secretary-General administering the oath of office to Namibia's first President. In April, the country joined the United Nations.

Timor-Leste

Another United Nations success story is the process that led to the independence of Timor-Leste — formerly known as East Timor. A major UN operation oversaw its transition towards independence, after the East Timorese people voted in favour of independence in a popular consultation conducted by the United Nations in 1999.

The island of Timor lies to the north of Australia, in the south-central part of the chain of islands forming the Republic of Indonesia. Its western part had been a Dutch colony and became part of Indonesia when that country attained independence. East Timor was a Portuguese colony.

In 1960, the General Assembly placed East Timor on the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. In 1974, recognizing its right to self-determination, Portugal sought to establish a provisional government and popular assembly to determine **East Timor's** status. But in 1975, civil war broke out between the Territory's newly formed political parties. Portugal withdrew, stating it could not control the situation. One East Timorese side declared independence as a separate country, while another proclaimed independence and integration with Indonesia.

In December, Indonesian troops landed in East Timor, and a "provisional government" was formed. Portugal broke off relations with Indonesia and brought the matter before the Security Council, which called on Indonesia to withdraw its forces and urged all states to respect the right of the East Timorese people to self-determination. In 1976, the "provisional government" held elections for an assembly, which then called for integration with Indonesia. When Indonesia issued a law supporting that decision, the pro-independence movement began an armed resistance. In 1983, the Secretary-General started talks with Indonesia and Portugal, but it was only in May 1999, through the good office of the Secretary-General, that agreements were reached, paving the way for a popular consultation.

On the basis of those agreements, the **United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET)** organized and conducted voter registration and an official ballot. But on 30 August 1999,

when 78.5 per cent of 450,000 registered voters rejected autonomy within Indonesia, militias opposing independence unleashed a campaign of systematic destruction and violence, killing many and forcing more than 200,000 East Timorese to flee their homes.

After intensive talks, Indonesia accepted the deployment of a UN-authorized multinational force. And in September 1999, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Security Council authorized the dispatch of the **International Force in East Timor (INTERFET)**, which helped restore peace and security.

Immediately following that action, the Council, in October 1999, established the **United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET)**, giving it full executive and legislative authority during the country's transition to independence. On 30 August 2001, more than 91 per cent of East Timor's eligible voters went to the polls to elect an 88-member constituent assembly, tasked with writing and adopting a new constitution and establishing the framework for future elections and the transition to full independence.

On 22 March 2002, the constituent assembly signed into force the Territory's first Constitution; on 14 April, after winning 82.7 per cent of the vote, Xanana Gusmão was appointed president-elect; and on 20 May 2002, the Territory attained independence. The constituent assembly was transformed into the national parliament, and the new country adopted the name Timor-Leste. On 27 September, it became the 191st member state of the United Nations.

Following the successful decolonization of East Timor, the UN has remained fully committed in supporting the independent country of Timor-Leste in its efforts to consolidate democratic institutions and advance socio-economic development. (For information on subsequent UN action in Timor-Leste, see the section on "UN Action for Peace" in Chapter 2.)

Western Sahara

The United Nations has been dealing since 1963 with an ongoing dispute concerning Western Sahara — a Territory on the north-west coast of Africa bordering Morocco, Mauritania and Algeria.

Western Sahara became a Spanish colony in 1884. In 1963, both Morocco and Mauritania laid claim to it. The International Court of Justice, in a 1975 opinion requested by the General Assembly, rejected the claims of territorial sovereignty by Morocco or Mauritania.

The United Nations has been seeking a settlement in Western Sahara since the withdrawal of Spain in 1976 and the ensuing fighting between Morocco — which had "reintegrated" the Territory — and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Río de Oro (Frente POLISARIO), which was supported by Algeria (*see footnote to table in this chapter*).

In 1979, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) called for a referendum to enable the people of the Territory to exercise their right to self-determination. By 1982, 26 OAU

member states had recognized the “Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR)” proclaimed by POLISARIO in 1976. When SADR was seated at the 1984 OAU summit, Morocco withdrew from the OAU.

A joint good offices mission by the Secretary-General and the OAU Chairman led to their 1988 settlement proposals, calling for a ceasefire, and for a referendum to choose between independence and integration with Morocco, to which the parties agreed in principle.

By its resolution 690 of 29 April 1991, the Security Council created the **United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO)**, to assist the Secretary-General’s special representative in all matters related to the organization and conduct of a referendum of self-determination for the people of Western Sahara. All Western Saharans aged 18 and over counted in the 1974 Spanish census would have the right to vote, whether living in the Territory or outside. An identification commission would update the census list and identify voters. Refugees living outside the Territory would be identified with the assistance of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

On 6 September 1991, the ceasefire came into effect and has been observed ever since by MINURSO’s military observers, with no major violations. However, the parties have continued to differ on implementation of the settlement plan — particularly with respect to voter eligibility for the referendum. In 1997, a compromise was brokered by the Secretary-General’s personal envoy for Western Sahara, Mr. James A. Baker, III, and the identification process was completed in December 1999. Nevertheless, despite continuing consultations and negotiations, disagreements persisted over implementation of the plan. In April 2004, Morocco rejected a proposal put forward by the special envoy as well as the settlement plan itself. Mr. Baker resigned as personal envoy in June.

Despite the continuing stalemate, there were some positive developments over the ensuing years, including the Frente POLISARIO’s release of all remaining Moroccan prisoners of war in August 2005, and a UNHCR-sponsored “family visits” programme between Western Saharan refugees living in the camps in Tindouf, Algeria, and their relatives in Western Sahara Territory — some of whom have not seen each other for 30 years.

In April 2007, Mr. Peter van Walsum, the Secretary-General’s new personal envoy, observed that there were two options left: indefinite prolongation of the impasse, or direct negotiations. The Security Council called for good faith negotiations without preconditions. Mr. van Walsum then facilitated meetings with the parties, in June and August 2007 in Greentree, NY, also attended by the neighbouring countries. At the second meeting, the parties, in a communiqué, acknowledged that the status quo was unacceptable and committed themselves to continuing the negotiations in good faith.



Appendices



UNITED NATIONS MEMBER STATES

(as of December 2006)

Member state	Date of admission	Scale of assessments for 2006 (per cent)	Population (est.)
Afghanistan	19 November 1946	0.001	22,576,000
Albania	14 December 1955	0.006	3,142,000
Algeria	8 October 1962	0.085	32,906,000
Andorra	28 July 1993	0.008	75,000
Angola	1 December 1976	0.003	12,768,000
Antigua and Barbuda	11 November 1981	0.002	83,000
Argentina	24 October 1945	0.325	38,971,000
Armenia	2 March 1992	0.002	3,220,000
Australia	1 November 1945	1.787	20,701,000
Austria	4 December 1955	0.887	8,233,000
Azerbaijan	2 March 1992	0.005	8,485,000
Bahamas	18 September 1973	0.016	307,000
Bahrain	21 September 1971	0.033	743,000
Bangladesh	17 September 1974	0.010	141,800,000
Barbados	9 December 1966	0.009	273,000
Belarus ^a	24 October 1945	0.020	9,825,000
Belgium	27 December 1945	1.102	10,479,000
Belize	25 September 1981	0.001	301,000
Benin	20 September 1960	0.001	6,770,000
Bhutan	21 September 1971	0.001	635,000
Bolivia	14 November 1945	0.006	9,627,000
Bosnia and Herzegovina	22 May 1992	0.006	3,843,000
Botswana	17 October 1966	0.014	1,740,000
Brazil	24 October 1945	0.876	186,771,000
Brunei Darussalam	21 September 1984	0.026	383,000
Bulgaria	14 December 1955	0.020	7,740,000
Burkina Faso	20 September 1960	0.002	12,802,000
Burundi	18 September 1962	0.001	6,412,000
Cambodia	14 December 1955	0.001	13,661,000
Cameroon	20 September 1960	0.009	15,429,000

Member state	Date of admission	Scale of assessments for 2006 (per cent)	Population (est.)
Canada	9 November 1945	2.977	32,624,000
Cape Verde	16 September 1975	0.001	488,000
Central African Republic	20 September 1960	0.001	3,151,000
Chad	20 September 1960	0.001	8,322,000
Chile	24 October 1945	0.161	16,433,000
China	24 October 1945	2.667	1,303,720,000
Colombia	5 November 1945	0.105	46,772,000
Comoros	12 November 1975	0.001	576,000
Congo	20 September 1960	0.001	3,542,000
Costa Rica	2 November 1945	0.032	4,354,000
Côte d'Ivoire	20 September 1960	0.009	19,658,000
Croatia	22 May 1992	0.050	4,442,000
Cuba	24 October 1945	0.054	11,242,000
Cyprus	20 September 1960	0.044	758,000
Czech Republic	19 January 1993	0.281	10,234,000
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	17 September 1991	0.007	23,612,000
Democratic Republic of the Congo ^b	20 September 1960	0.003	49,785,000
Denmark	24 October 1945	0.739	5,416,000
Djibouti	20 September 1977	0.001	681,000
Dominica	18 December 1978	0.001	71,000
Dominican Republic	24 October 1945	0.024	9,250,000
Ecuador	21 December 1945	0.021	13,408,000
Egypt ^c	24 October 1945	0.088	72,580,000
El Salvador	24 October 1945	0.020	6,757,000
Equatorial Guinea	12 November 1968	0.002	1,015,000
Eritrea	28 May 1993	0.001	3,847,000
Estonia	17 September 1991	0.016	1,346,000
Ethiopia	13 November 1945	0.003	75,067,000
Fiji	13 October 1970	0.003	853,000
Finland	14 December 1955	0.564	5,246,000

Member state	Date of admission	Scale of assessments for 2006 (per cent)	Population (est.)
France	24 October 1945	6.301	60,873,000
Gabon	20 September 1960	0.008	1,269,000
Gambia	21 September 1965	0.001	1,509,000
Georgia	31 July 1992	0.003	4,400,000
Germany	18 September 1973	8.577	82,464,000
Ghana	8 March 1957	0.004	20,028,000
Greece	25 October 1945	0.596	11,104,000
Grenada	17 September 1974	0.001	103,000
Guatemala	21 November 1945	0.032	13,019,000
Guinea	12 December 1958	0.001	8,242,000
Guinea-Bissau	17 September 1974	0.001	1,296,000
Guyana	20 September 1966	0.001	760,000
Haiti	24 October 1945	0.002	8,374,000
Honduras	17 December 1945	0.005	7,028,000
Hungary	14 December 1955	0.244	10,087,000
Iceland	19 November 1946	0.037	296,000
India	30 October 1945	0.450	1,117,734,000
Indonesia ^d	28 September 1950	0.161	212,051,000
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	24 October 1945	0.180	70,603,000
Iraq	21 December 1945	0.015	28,810,000
Ireland	14 December 1955	0.445	4,131,000
Israel	11 May 1949	0.419	7,048,000
Italy	14 December 1955	5.079	58,607,000
Jamaica	18 September 1962	0.010	2,667,000
Japan	18 December 1956	16.624	127,757,000
Jordan	14 December 1955	0.012	5,104,000
Kazakhstan	2 March 1992	0.029	15,301,000
Kenya	16 December 1963	0.010	36,433,000
Kiribati	14 September 1999	0.001	85,000
Kuwait	14 May 1963	0.182	2,213,000
Kyrgyzstan	2 March 1992	0.001	5,192,000
Lao People's Democratic Republic	14 December 1955	0.001	5,622,000

Member state	Date of admission	Scale of assessments for 2006 (per cent)	Population (est.)
Latvia	17 September 1991	0.018	2,301,000
Lebanon	24 October 1945	0.034	3,537,000
Lesotho	17 October 1966	0.001	2,189,000
Liberia	2 November 1945	0.001	3,099,000
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	14 December 1955	0.062	5,299,000
Liechtenstein	18 September 1990	0.010	35,000
Lithuania	17 September 1991	0.031	3,392,000
Luxembourg	24 October 1945	0.085	457,000
Madagascar	20 September 1960	0.002	17,206,000
Malawi	1 December 1964	0.001	12,758,000
Malaysia ^e	17 September 1957	0.190	26,640,000
Maldives	21 September 1965	0.001	298,000
Mali	28 September 1960	0.001	10,400,000
Malta	1 December 1964	0.017	406,000
Marshall Islands	17 September 1991	0.001	57,000
Mauritania	27 October 1961	0.001	2,724,000
Mauritius	24 April 1968	0.011	1,243,000
Mexico	7 November 1945	2.257	104,874,000
Micronesia (Federated States of)	17 September 1991	0.001	120,000
Moldova (Republic of)	2 March 1992	0.001	3,388,000
Monaco	28 May 1993	0.003	34,000
Mongolia	27 October 1961	0.001	2,579,000
Montenegro ^g	28 June 2006	0.001	623,000
Morocco	12 November 1956	0.042	29,680,000
Mozambique	16 September 1975	0.001	19,420,000
Myanmar	19 April 1948	0.005	48,205,000
Namibia	23 April 1990	0.006	1,830,000
Nauru	14 September 1999	0.001	12,000
Nepal	14 December 1955	0.003	25,887,000
Netherlands	10 December 1945	1.873	16,336,000

Member state	Date of admission	Scale of assessments for 2006 (per cent)	Population (est.)
New Zealand	24 October 1945	0.256	4,140,000
Nicaragua	24 October 1945	0.002	5,145,000
Niger	20 September 1960	0.001	13,045,000
Nigeria	7 October 1960	0.048	140,004,000
Norway	27 November 1945	0.782	4,623,000
Oman	7 October 1971	0.073	2,577,000
Pakistan	30 September 1947	0.059	150,360,000
Palau	15 December 1994	0.001	20,000
Panama	13 November 1945	0.023	3,284,000
Papua New Guinea	10 October 1975	0.002	2,499,000
Paraguay	24 October 1945	0.005	5,899,000
Peru	31 October 1945	0.078	26,152,000
Philippines	24 October 1945	0.078	86,973,000
Poland	24 October 1945	0.501	38,161,000
Portugal	14 December 1955	0.527	10,549,000
Qatar	21 September 1971	0.085	744,000
Republic of Korea	17 September 1991	2.173	48,297,000
Romania	14 December 1955	0.070	21,583,000
Russian Federation ^f	24 October 1945	1.200	143,150,000
Rwanda	18 September 1962	0.001	8,129,000
Saint Kitts and Nevis	23 September 1983	0.001	46,000
Saint Lucia	18 September 1979	0.001	165,000
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	16 September 1980	0.001	109,000
Samoa	15 December 1976	0.001	175,000
San Marino	2 March 1992	0.003	32,000
Sao Tome and Principe	16 September 1975	0.001	149,000
Saudi Arabia	24 October 1945	0.748	22,678,000
Senegal	28 September 1960	0.004	10,848,000
Senegal	28 September 1960	0.004	10,848,000
Serbia ^g	1 November 2000	0.021	7,441,000
Seychelles	21 September 1976	0.002	85,000
Sierra Leone	27 September 1961	0.001	4,963,000

Member state	Date of admission	Scale of assessments for 2006 (per cent)	Population (est.)
Singapore	21 September 1965	0.347	4,484,000
Slovakia	19 January 1993	0.063	5,391,000
Slovenia	22 May 1992	0.096	2,009,000
Solomon Islands	19 September 1978	0.001	450,000
Somalia	20 September 1960	0.001	9,088,000
South Africa	7 November 1945	0.290	47,391,000
Spain	14 December 1955	2.968	44,097,000
Sri Lanka	14 December 1955	0.016	19,462,000
Sudan	12 November 1956	0.010	34,512,000
Suriname	4 December 1975	0.001	493,000
Swaziland	24 September 1968	0.002	1,146,000
Sweden	19 November 1946	1.071	9,089,000
Switzerland	10 September 2002	1.216	7,484,000
Syrian Arab Republic ^h	24 October 1945	0.016	17,980,000
Tajikistan	2 March 1992	0.001	6,569,000
Thailand	16 December 1946	0.186	65,306,000
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia ⁱ	8 April 1993	0.005	2,036,000
Timor-Leste	27 September 2002	0.001	925,000
Togo	20 September 1960	0.001	5,337,000
Tonga	14 September 1999	0.001	101,000
Trinidad and Tobago	18 September 1962	0.027	1,294,000
Tunisia	12 November 1956	0.031	9,932,000
Turkey	24 October 1945	0.381	70,712,000
Turkmenistan	2 March 1992	0.006	4,720,000
Tuvalu	5 September 2000	0.001	10,000
Uganda	25 October 1962	0.003	24,442,000
Ukraine	24 October 1945	0.045	46,757,000
United Arab Emirates	9 December 1971	0.302	4,041,000
United Kingdom	24 October 1945	6.642	60,209,000
United Republic of Tanzania ^j	14 December 1961	0.006	38,251,000

Member state	Date of admission	Scale of assessments for 2006 (per cent)	Population (est.)
United States of America	24 October 1945	22.000	296,410,000
Uruguay	18 December 1945	0.027	3,241,000
Uzbekistan	2 March 1992	0.008	25,368,000
Vanuatu	15 September 1981	0.001	202,000
Venezuela	15 November 1945	0.200	27,031,000
Viet Nam	20 September 1977	0.024	80,670,000
Yemen	30 September 1947	0.007	19,495,000
Zambia	1 December 1964	0.001	11,799,000
Zimbabwe	25 August 1980	0.008	12,104,000

States which are not Members of the United Nations but which participate in certain of its activities, shall be called upon to contribute towards the expenses of the Organization on the basis of the following percentage rates:

Holy See	0.001	1,000
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^a On 19 September 1991, Byelorussia informed the United Nations that it had changed its name to Belarus.

^b The Republic of Zaire informed the United Nations that, effective 17 May 1997, it had changed its name to Democratic Republic of the Congo.

^c Egypt and Syria were original members of the United Nations from 24 October 1945. Following a plebiscite on 21 February 1958, the United Arab Republic was established by a union of Egypt and Syria and continued as a single member. On 13 October 1961, Syria, having resumed its status as an independent state, resumed its separate membership in the United Nations. On 2 September 1971, the United Arab Republic changed its name to the Arab Republic of Egypt.

^d By letter of 20 January 1965, Indonesia announced its decision to withdraw from the United Nations "at this stage and under the present circumstances". By a telegram of 19 September 1966, it announced its decision "to resume full cooperation with the United Nations and to resume participation in its activities". On 28 September 1966, the General Assembly took note of this decision and the President invited representatives of Indonesia to take seats in the Assembly.

^e The Federation of Malaya joined the United Nations on 17 September 1957. On 16 September 1963, its name was changed to Malaysia, following the admission to the new federation of Singapore, Sabah (North Borneo) and Sarawak. Singapore became an independent state on 9 August 1965 and a United Nations member on 21 September 1965.

^f The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was an original member of the United Nations from 24 October 1945. In a letter dated 24 December 1991, Boris Yeltsin, the President of the Russian Federation, informed the Secretary-General that the membership of the Soviet Union in the Security Council and all other United Nations organs was being continued by the Russian Federation with the support of the 11 member countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

^g The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was admitted as a member of the United Nations on 1 November 2000. On 12 February 2003, it informed the United Nations that it had changed its name to Serbia and Montenegro effective 4 February 2003. In a letter dated 3 June 2006, the President of the Republic of Serbia informed the Secretary-General that the membership of Serbia and Montenegro was being continued by the Republic of Serbia, following Montenegro's declaration of independence from Serbia on 3 June 2006. On 28 June 2006 Montenegro was accepted as a United Nations member state by the General Assembly.

^h Egypt and Syria were original members of the United Nations from 24 October 1945. Following a plebiscite on 21 January 1958, the United Arab Republic was established by a union of Egypt and Syria and continued as a single member. On 13 October 1961, Syria, having resumed its status as an independent state, resumed its separate membership in the United Nations.

ⁱ The General Assembly decided on 8 April 1993 to admit to United Nations membership the state being provisionally referred to for all purposes within the United Nations as "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" pending settlement of the difference that had arisen over its name.

^j Tanganyika was a United Nations member from 14 December 1961 and Zanzibar was a member from 16 December 1963. Following the ratification on 26 April 1964 of Articles of Union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar, the United Republic of Tanganyika and Zanzibar continued as a single member, changing its name to the United Republic of Tanzania on 1 November 1964.

GROWTH IN UNITED NATIONS MEMBERSHIP, 1945-2006

Year	Number	Member States
1945	51	Original Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Belarus, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, France, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, India, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Liberia, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Russian Federation ¹ , Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia
1946	55	Afghanistan, Iceland, Sweden, Thailand
1947	57	Pakistan, Yemen ²
1948	58	Myanmar
1949	59	Israel
1950	60	Indonesia
1955	76	Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Nepal, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sri Lanka
1956	80	Japan, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia
1957	82	Ghana, Malaysia
1958	82 ³	Guinea
1960	99	Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Gabon, Madagascar, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Togo, Democratic Republic of the Congo
1961	104 ⁴	Mauritania, Mongolia, Sierra Leone, United Republic of Tanzania
1962	110	Algeria, Burundi, Jamaica, Rwanda, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda
1963	112	Kenya, Kuwait
1964	115	Malawi, Malta, Zambia
1965	117 ⁵	Gambia, Maldives, Singapore
1966	122 ⁶	Barbados, Botswana, Guyana, Lesotho
1967	123	Democratic Yemen ²
1968	126	Equatorial Guinea, Mauritius, Swaziland
1970	127	Fiji
1971	132	Bahrain, Bhutan, Oman, Qatar, United Arab Emirates

Year	Number	Member States
1973	135	Bahamas, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of ⁷
1974	138	Bangladesh, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau
1975	144	Cape Verde, Comoros, Mozambique, Papua New Guinea, Sao Tome and Principe, Suriname
1976	147	Angola, Samoa, Seychelles
1977	149	Djibouti, Viet Nam
1978	151	Dominica, Solomon Islands
1979	152	Saint Lucia
1980	154	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Zimbabwe
1981	157	Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Vanuatu
1983	158	Saint Kitts and Nevis
1984	159	Brunei Darussalam
1990	159 ^{2,7}	Liechtenstein, Namibia
1991	166	Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Estonia, Federated States Of Micronesia, Latvia, Lithuania, Marshall Islands, Republic of Korea
1992	179	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina ⁸ , Croatia ⁸ , Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, San Marino, Slovenia ⁸ , Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan
1993	184	Andorra, Czech Republic ⁹ , Eritrea, Monaco, Slovak Republic ⁹ , The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia ⁸
1994	185	Palau
1999	188	Kiribati, Nauru, Tonga
2000	189	Tuvalu, Serbia ⁸
2002	191	Switzerland, Timor-Leste
2006	192	Montenegro ⁸

¹ The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was an original member of the United Nations from 24 October 1945. In a letter dated 24 December 1991, Boris Yeltsin, the President of the Russian Federation, informed the Secretary-General that the membership of the Soviet Union in the Security Council and all other United Nations organs was being continued by the Russian Federation with the support of the 11 member countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

² Yemen was admitted to membership in the United Nations on 30 September 1947 and Democratic Yemen on 14 December 1967. On 22 May 1990, the two countries merged and have since been represented as one member with the name "Yemen".

³ The total remains the same because from 21 January 1958 Syria and Egypt continued as a single member (United Arab Republic)

⁴ Syria resumed its status as an independent state.

⁵ Indonesia withdrew as of 20 January 1965.

⁶ Indonesia resumed its membership as of 28 September 1966.

⁷ The Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic were admitted to membership in the United Nations on 18 September 1973. Through the accession of the German Democratic Republic to the Federal Republic of Germany, effective from 3 October 1990, the two German states have united to form one sovereign state.

⁸ The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was an original member of the United Nations, the Charter having been signed on its behalf on 26 June 1945 and ratified 19 October 1945, until its dissolution following the establishment and subsequent admission as new members of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia, the Republic of Slovenia, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of Slovenia were admitted as members of the United Nations on 22 May 1992. On 8 April 1993, the General Assembly decided to admit as a member of the United Nations the state being provisionally referred to for all purposes within the United Nations as “The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” pending settlement of the difference that had arisen over its name. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was admitted as a member of the United Nations on 1 November 2000. On 12 February 2003, it informed the United Nations that it had changed its name to Serbia and Montenegro, effective 4 February 2003. In a letter dated 3 June 2006, the President of the Republic of Serbia informed the Secretary-General that the membership of Serbia and Montenegro was being continued by the Republic of Serbia following Montenegro’s declaration of independence from Serbia on 3 June 2006. On 28 June 2006 Montenegro was accepted as a United Nations member state by the General Assembly.

⁹ Czechoslovakia was an original member of the United Nations from 24 October 1945. In a letter dated 10 December 1992, its Permanent Representative informed the Secretary-General that the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic would cease to exist on 31 December 1992 and that the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic, as successor states, would apply for membership in the United Nations. Following the receipt of such applications, the Security Council, on 8 January 1993, recommended to the General Assembly that the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic be admitted to United Nations membership. They were thus admitted on 19 January 1993 as member states.

PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS: PAST AND PRESENT

(As of December 2007)

***UNTSO**

United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (Jerusalem)
May 1948–

***UNMOGIP**

United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan
January 1949–

UNEF I

First United Nations Emergency Force (Gaza)
November 1956–June 1967

UNOGIL

United Nations Observation Group in Lebanon
June–December 1958

ONUC

United Nations Operation in the Congo
July 1960–June 1964

UNSF

United Nations Security Force in West New Guinea (West Irian)
October 1962–April 1963

UNYOM

United Nations Yemen Observation Mission
July 1963–September 1964

***UNFICYP**

United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus
March 1964–

DOMREP

Mission of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the Dominican Republic May 1965–October 1966

UNIPOM

United Nations India-Pakistan Observation Mission
September 1965–March 1966

UNEF II

Second United Nations Emergency Force (Suez Canal and later Sinai Peninsula)
October 1973–July 1979

***UNDOF**

United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (Syrian Golan Heights)
May 1974–

***UNIFIL**

United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
March 1978–

UNGOMAP

United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan
May 1988–March 1990

UNIIMOG

United Nations Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group
August 1988–February 1991

UNAVEM I

United Nations Angola Verification Mission I
December 1988–June 1991

UNTAG

United Nations Transition Assistance Group (Namibia and Angola)
April 1989–March 1990

ONUCA

United Nations Observer Group in Central America
November 1989–January 1992

***MINURSO**

United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara
April 1991–

UNIKOM

United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission
April 1991–October 2003

UNAVEM II

United Nations Angola Verification Mission II
May 1991–February 1995

ONUSAL

United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador
July 1991–April 1995

UNAMIC

United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia
October 1991–March 1992

UNPROFOR

United Nations Protection Force (former Yugoslavia)
February 1992–December 1995

UNTAC

United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia
March 1992–September 1993

UNOSOM I

United Nations Operation in Somalia I
April 1992–March 1993

ONUMOZ

United Nations Operation in Mozambique
December 1992–December 1994

UNOSOM II

United Nations Operation in Somalia II
March 1993–March 1995

UNOMUR

United Nations Observer Mission Uganda-Rwanda
June 1993–September 1994

***UNOMIG**

United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia
August 1993–

UNOMIL

United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia
September 1993–September 1997

UNMIH

United Nations Mission in Haiti
September 1993–June 1996

UNAMIR

United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda
October 1993–March 1996

UNASOG

United Nations Aouzou Strip Observer Group (Chad/Lybia)
May–June 1994

UNMOT

United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan
December 1994–May 2000

UNAVEM III

United Nations Angola Verification Mission III
February 1995–June 1997

UNCRO

United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia
March 1995–January 1996

UNPREDEP

United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)
March 1995–February 1999

UNMIBH

United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina
December 1995–December 2002

UNTAES

United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (Croatia)

January 1996–January 1998

UNMOP

United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka

February 1996–December 2002

UNSMIH

United Nations Support Mission in Haiti

July 1996–June 1997

MINUGUA

United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala

January–May 1997

MONUA

United Nations Observer Mission in Angola

June 1997–February 1999

UNTMIH

United Nations Transition Mission in Haiti

August–November 1997

MIPONUH

United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti

December 1997–March 2000

UNPSG

United Nations Civilian Police Support Group (Croatia)

January–October 1998

MINURCA

United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic

April 1998–February 2000

UNOMSIL

United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone

July 1998–October 1999

***UNMIK**

United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
June 1999–

***UNAMSIL**

United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
October 1999–December 2005

UNTAET

United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor
October 1999–May 2002

***MONUC**

United Nations Observer Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
December 1999–

***UNMEE**

United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea
July 2000–

UNMISSET

United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor
May 2002–May 2005

***UNMIL**

United Nations Mission in Liberia
September 2003–

***UNOCI**

United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire
April 2004–

***MINUSTAH**

United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti
April 2004–

***UNMIS**

United Nations Mission in the Sudan
March 2005–

ONUB

United Nations Operation in Burundi

May 2004–31 December 2006

***UNAMID**

African Union/United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

July 2007–

***MINURCAT**

United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad

September 2007–

*Current operation, as of December 2007.

DECOLONIZATION

Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories that have achieved independence since the adoption of the 1960 Declaration*

State or entity	Date of admission to the United Nations
Africa	
Algeria	8 October 1962
Angola	1 December 1976
Botswana	17 October 1966
Burundi	18 September 1962
Cape Verde	16 September 1975
Comoros	12 November 1975
Djibouti	20 September 1977
Equatorial Guinea	12 November 1968
Gambia	21 September 1965
Guinea-Bissau	17 September 1974
Kenya	16 December 1963
Lesotho	17 October 1966
Malawi	1 December 1964
Mauritius	24 April 1968
Mozambique	16 September 1975
Namibia	23 April 1990
Rwanda	18 September 1962
Sao Tome and Principe	26 September 1975
Seychelles	21 September 1976
Sierra Leone	27 September 1961
Swaziland	24 September 1968
Uganda	25 October 1962
United Republic of Tanzania ¹	14 December 1961
Zambia	1 December 1964
Zimbabwe	18 April 1980
Asia	
Brunei Darussalam	21 September 1984
Democratic Yemen	14 December 1967
Oman	7 October 1971
Singapore	21 September 1965

* Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, adopted by the General Assembly on 14 December 1960.

State or entity	Date of admission to the United Nations
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Caribbean

Antigua and Barbuda	11 November 1981
Bahamas	18 September 1973
Barbados	9 December 1966
Belize	25 September 1981
Dominica	18 December 1978
Grenada	17 December 1974
Guyana	20 September 1966
Jamaica	18 September 1962
Saint Kitts and Nevis	23 September 1983
Saint Lucia	18 September 1979
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	16 September 1980
Suriname ²	4 December 1975
Trinidad and Tobago	18 September 1962

Europe

Malta	1 December 1964
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Pacific

Federated States of Micronesia	17 September 1991
Fiji	13 October 1970
Kiribati	14 September 1999
Marshall Islands	17 September 1991
Nauru	14 September 1999
Palau	15 December 1994
Papua New Guinea	10 October 1975
Samoa	15 December 1976
Solomon Islands	19 September 1978
Timor-Leste	27 September 2002
Tuvalu	5 September 2000

¹The former Trust Territory of Tanganyika, which became independent in December 1961, and the former Protectorate of Zanzibar, which achieved independence in December 1963, united into a single state in April 1964.

²By resolution 945(X), the General Assembly accepted the cessation of the transmission of information regarding Suriname following constitutional changes in the relationship between the Netherlands, Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles.

DECOLONIZATION

Dependent Territories that have become integrated or associated with independent states since the adoption of the 1960 Declaration*

Territory	Remarks
Cameroons under British administration	The northern part of the Trust Territory joined the Federation of Nigeria on 1 June 1961 and the southern part joined the Republic of Cameroon on 1 October 1961
Cook Islands	Fully self-governing in free association with New Zealand since August 1965
Ifni	Returned to Morocco in June 1969
Niue	Fully self-governing in free association with New Zealand since August 1974
North Borneo	North Borneo and Sarawak joined the Federation of Malaya in 1963 to form the Federation of Malaysia
São Joao Batista de Ajuda	Nationally united with Dahomey (now Benin) in August 1961
Sarawak	Sarawak and North Borneo joined the Federation of Malaya in 1963 to form the Federation of Malaysia
West New Guinea (West Irian)	United with Indonesia in 1963
Cocos (Keeling) Islands	Integrated with Australia in 1984

* Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, adopted by the General Assembly on 14 December 1960.

DECOLONIZATION

Trust Territories that have achieved self-determination

Togoland (under British administration)	United with the Gold Coast (Colony and Protectorate), a Non-Self-Governing Territory administered by the United Kingdom, in 1957 to form Ghana
Somaliland (under Italian administration)	United with British Somaliland Protectorate in 1960 to form Somalia
Togoland (under French administration)	Became independent as Togo in 1960
Cameroons (under French administration)	Became independent as Cameroon in 1960
Cameroons (under British administration)	The northern part of the Trust Territory joined the Federation of Nigeria on 1 June 1961 and the southern part joined the Republic of Cameroon on 1 October 1961
Tanganyika (under British administration)	Became independent in 1961 (in 1964, Tanganyika and the former Protectorate of Zanzibar, which had become independent in 1963, united as a single state under the name of the United Republic of Tanzania)
Ruanda-Urundi (under Belgian administration)	Voted to divide into the two sovereign states of Rwanda and Burundi in 1962
Western Samoa (under New Zealand administration)	Became independent as Samoa in 1962
Nauru (administered by Australia on behalf of Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom)	Became independent in 1968
New Guinea (administered by Australia)	United with the Non-Self-Governing Territory of Papua, also administered by Australia, to become the independent state of Papua New Guinea in 1975

Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands

(a) Federated States of Micronesia	Became fully self-governing in free Association with the United States in 1990
(b) Republic of the Marshall Islands	Became fully self-governing in free Association with the United States in 1990
(c) Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	Became fully self-governing as a Commonwealth of the United States in 1990
(d) Palau	Became fully self-governing in free Association with the United States in 1994

BUDGET OF THE UNITED NATIONS

For the 2006-2007 biennium, the appropriation for the regular budget of the United Nations (i.e. excluding the bulk of offices and programmes, as well as the specialized agencies and other associated bodies), as initially approved in 2005, totalled \$3,829,916,200, divided into 14 main categories of expenditures, as follows (in United States dollars):

1.	Overall policy-making, direction and coordination	661,735,300
2.	Political affairs	571,471,500
3.	International justice and law	77,246,300
4.	International cooperation for development	372,156,400
5.	Regional cooperation for development	425,715,500
6.	Human rights and humanitarian affairs	209,058,900
7.	Public information	177,302,500
8.	Common support services	515,239,300
9.	Internal oversight	31,330,100
10.	Jointly financed activities and special expenses	104,400,800
11.	Capital expenditures	74,841,300
12.	Safety and security	190,954,100
13.	Development account	13,954,100
14.	Staff assessment*	405,332,800

The main source of funds for the regular budget is the contributions of member states, who are assessed on a scale specified by the Assembly on the recommendation of the 18-member Committee on Contributions. The fundamental criterion on which the scale of assessments is based is the real capacity of member states to pay. The Assembly has fixed a maximum of 22 per cent of the budget for any one contributor and a minimum of 0.001 per cent. (For scale of assessments of member states, see pages 000-000.)

Initial income estimates for the biennium 2006-2007, other than assessments on member states, totalled \$434,860,100.

1.	Income from staff assessment*	409,239,700
2.	General income	20,867,000
3.	Services to the public	4,753,400

*To equalize the net pay of all United Nations staff members, whatever their national tax obligations, the Organization deducts from their salaries a sum of money designated as "staff assessment". The rate of withholding is roughly equivalent to the amount paid by United States citizens for federal, state and local taxes calculated at the standard rate. The money collected by the United Nations from the staff assessment is then credited towards the United Nations membership "dues" of the staff member's home country.

Most governments excuse nationals who are United Nations employees from further taxation. The United States is the main exception; its citizens who work for the Secretariat must pay the same income taxes as all other United States citizens. To enable them to pay their taxes, the United Nations refunds to United States employees that part of their staff assessment which is equal to what the national revenue authorities require for taxes. The citizen then pays that amount to those authorities. In this way, United States nationals are not required to pay taxes twice.

The regular programme budget, to which these assessments apply, covers expenses relating to substantive programmes, programme support and administrative activities of the Organization, both at Headquarters and around the globe.

UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

INTERNATIONAL DECADES AND YEARS

2001-2010	Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa
2001-2010	Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism
2001-2010	International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World
2003-2012	United Nations Literacy Decade: Education for All
2005-2014	Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People
2005-2014	United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development
2005-2015	International Decade for Action, "Water for Life" (from 22 March 2005)
2008	International Year of the Potato
2008	International Year of Planet Earth
2008	International Year of Sanitation
2009	International Year of Reconciliation
2009	International Year of Natural Fibres
2010	International Year of Biodiversity
2011	International Year of Forests

ANNUAL DAYS AND WEEKS

27 January	International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust
21 February	International Mother Language Day
8 March	United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace
21 March	International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
Beginning 21 March	Week of Solidarity with the Peoples Struggling against Racism and Racial Discrimination
22 March	World Day for Water
23 March	World Meteorological Day
4 April	International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action
7 April	World Health Day
23 April	World Book and Copyright Day
3 May	World Press Freedom Day
8 and 9 May	Time of Remembrance and Reconciliation for those who lost Their Lives during the Second World War
15 May	International Day of Families
17 May	World Telecommunication Day

ANNUAL DAYS AND WEEKS

17 May	World Information Society Day
21 May	World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development
22 May	International Day for Biological Diversity
Beginning 25 May	Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories
29 May	International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers
31 May	World No-Tobacco Day
4 June	International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression
5 June	World Environment Day
17 June	World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought
20 June	World Refugee Day
23 June	United Nations Public Service Day
26 June	International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking
26 June	International Day in Support of Victims of Torture
First Saturday of July	International Day of Cooperatives
11 July	World Population Day
9 August	International Day of the World's Indigenous People (through 2014)
12 August	International Youth Day
23 August	International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and Its Abolition
8 September	International Literacy Day
16 September	International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer
21 September	International Day of Peace
During last week of September	World Maritime Day
1 October	International Day of Older Persons
5 October	World Teachers' Day
First Monday of October	World Habitat Day
9 October	World Post Day
10 October	World Mental Health Day
Second Wednesday of October	International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction
4-10 October	World Space Week
16 October	World Food Day
17 October	International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
24 October	United Nations Day

ANNUAL DAYS AND WEEKS

24 October	World Development Information Day
24-30 October	Disarmament Week
6 November	International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict
14 November	World Diabetes Day
16 November	International Day for Tolerance
20 November	Africa Industrialization Day
20 November	Universal Children's Day
21 November	World Television Day
Third Sunday of November	World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims
25 November	International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women
29 November	International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People
1 December	World AIDS Day
2 December	International Day for the Abolition of Slavery
3 December	International Day of Disabled Persons
5 December	International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development
7 December	International Civil Aviation Day
10 December	Human Rights Day
11 December	International Mountain Day
18 December	International Migrants Day
19 December	United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation
20 December	International Human Solidarity Day

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AFRICA

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E-mail: unicdakar@cinu-dakar.org (Internet: <http://dakar.unic.org>)
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United Nations Information Centre, Msimbazi Creek Housing Estate Limited,
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E-mail: registry.sd@undp.org
Services to: Sudan, Somalia

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Services to: Togo, Benin

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Services to: Zambia, Botswana, Malawi, Swaziland

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E-mail: unic.cm@undp.org (Internet: <http://yaounde.unic.org>)

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Services to: Argentina, Uruguay

La Paz

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E-mail: informes@uniclima.org.pe (Internet: www.uniclima.org.pe)
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Mexico City

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Morales, 11570 México, D.F.
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Panama City

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Services to: Panama

Port of Spain

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E-mail: unicpos@unicpos.org.tt (Internet: www.unicpos.org.tt)
Services to: Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname

Rio de Janeiro

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San Salvador

United Nations Information Centre (temporarily inactive)
Edificio Escalón, 2o. Piso, Paseo General Escalón y 87 Avenida Norte, Colonia Escalón (P.O. Box 2157), San Salvador, El Salvador
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Services to: El Salvador

Santiago

United Nations Information Service, Edificio Naciones Unidas, Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe, Avenida Dag Hammarskjöld, Casilla 179-D, Santiago, Chile
Telephone: (56 2) 210-2000 • Fax: (56 2) 228 1947 (ECLAC)
E-mail: dpisantiago@eclac.cl (Internet: www.eclac.org/prensa)
Services to: Chile, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

Washington, D.C.

United Nations Information Centre, 1775 K Street, N.W., Suite 400, Washington, D.C. 20006, United States
Telephone: (202) 331 8670 • Fax: (202) 331 9191
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Services to: United States of America

ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

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United Nations Information Service, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), United Nations Building, Rajdamnern Nok, Avenue, Bangkok 10200, Thailand

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E-mail: unisbkk.unescap@un.org (Internet: www.unescap.org/unis)

Services to: Thailand, Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Singapore, Socialist Republic of Vietnam, ESCAP

Beirut

United Nations Information Centre, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), Riad El Solh Square (P.O. Box 11-8575-4656), Beirut, Lebanon
Telephone: (961 1) 981 301/311/401 ext. 1533/34/35 • Fax: (961 1) 97 04 24 (UNIC)

E-mail: unic.beirut@un.org (Internet: www.escwa.org.lb)

Services to: Lebanon, Jordan, Kuwait, Syrian Arab Republic, ESCWA

Canberra

United Nations Information Centre, 7 National Circuit, Level 1, Barton, Canberra ACT 2600, (P.O. Box 5366 Kingston, ACT 2604) Australia

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Services to: Australia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Samoa

Colombo

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E-mail: unic@dsl.net.pk (Internet: www.un.org.pk/unic/unic.htm)

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Jakarta

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Kathmandu

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E-mail: registry.np@undp.org
Services to: Nepal

Manama

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E-mail: unic.bahrain@undp.org (Internet : www.undp.org/bh/unic/index.html)
Services to: Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates

Manila

United Nations Information Centre, Jaka II Building, 5th floor, 150 Legaspi street, Legaspi Village, Makati City (P.O. Box 7285 ADC (DAPO) Pasay City), Metro Manila, Philippines
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Services to: Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands

New Delhi

United Nations Information Centre, 55 Lodi Estate, New Delhi-110003, India
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Services to: India, Bhutan

Sana'a

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Services to: Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Holy See,
Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Spain,
Sweden, the Netherlands, United Kingdom, European Union

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Fax: (48 22) 825 7706
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Asmara

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FOR FURTHER READING

This selection of United Nations publications and products can be obtained from the Organization, some at no charge and other as sales items. The letters in parentheses at the end of each entry refer to where the publications can be obtained (see *Where to Order*, page 354).

Periodicals

Africa Recovery. Department of Public Information. E/F. Annual subscription: \$20.00 (a)
Quarterly magazine covering issues of economic and social reform in Africa and international cooperation for development.

Development Update. Department of Public Information. Free
Bi-monthly newsletter with updates on the development activities of the UN system.

UN Chronicle. Department of Public Information. E/F/S/A/C/R. Annual subscription \$25.00 (a)
Quarterly magazine providing coverage of the work of the UN and its agencies.

United Nations Development Business. Department of Public Information. Annual subscription \$590.00 (b)
Bi-monthly newsletter providing information on opportunities to supply goods and services for projects financed by the United Nations, governments and the world's leading development banks. Also available as an online subscription.

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