President John F Kennedy, in an address before the Irish Parliament on 28 June 1963, reminded us of the varied and invaluable contributions of small states by invoking the words of a great English orator who had made the following observation:

“All the world owes much to the little ‘five feet high’ nations. The greatest art of the world was the work of little nations. The most enduring literature of the world came from little nations. The heroic deeds that thrill humanity through generations were the deeds of little nations fighting for their freedom.”

While these words were uttered in Ireland, they are equally applicable to other small states, and especially true for this part of the world. The countries of the Caribbean might be “five feet high” nations but between them, they have produced four Nobel Laureates. On a per capita basis, I don’t think there is any other sub-region which can claim to be as prolific as the Caribbean based on this measure of achievement.

Let me begin by thanking the Academic Council on the United Nations System (ACUNS) for inviting me to its Annual Meeting and to participate in this plenary session on “Small States at the UN.” It is befitting that this discussion on small states is taking place in Trinidad, in the Caribbean, a sub-region composed entirely of small states. On a personal note, let me say how happy I am to be here. You may not believe this, but it is my first visit to the Caribbean (excluding Cuba). More importantly, it is a sub-region with which Singapore, another small state, shares a strong sense of kinship. I have also always considered my CARICOM colleagues (together with my South Pacific colleagues) as being amongst Singapore’s best friends at the UN.

One might be tempted to extrapolate this line of thinking to the performance of small states at the UN and to assume that they have done as well at the UN in securing their political and economic interests. After all, of the 192 member states of the UN, at least 100 countries are deemed to be small, being members of the special informal grouping in the UN called the Forum of Small States (FOSS). (FOSS is a loose non-ideological and non-geographical coalition of small states. It is coordinated by Singapore and is based on common interests. Members meet regularly to exchange views and coordinate positions.)

However, I am sorry to disappoint. The record of small states at the UN has been at best mixed. Often, we don’t bring our collective influence to bear on any issue. Why is that so? What are the problems confronting small states and which prevent them from operating more effectively at the UN? I can think of several reasons. 
First, there is the problem of resources and coverage. Small states invariably do not have the manpower to cover comprehensively all the issues and committees at the UN, let alone have people running about to ferret out information and do political analysis.

Small states with small delegations may not have as many “feelers” as compared to larger delegations. (Some of the larger Member States may have two or three delegates per Committee.) This could be a disadvantage when gathering information. And, as you know, information can mean power and influence, especially at the UN.

It also means spotty attendance at meetings, missing out on the informal processes which are an important aspect of UN work, including discussions in the corridors and participating in smaller working groups, and an inability to engage in robust debate either because they do not know what is going on or do not have a sufficiently good picture of what is going on vis-a-vis many issues at the UN. As a result, small states sometimes display a lack of self-confidence, questioning their own ability to provide credible input, since they have not been following the discussions as thoroughly as other bigger delegations.

This resource and concomitant coverage problem means that most small states end up being led by their noses by the larger delegations that know what they are talking about.

And because many small delegations are not able to be present at various meetings, the problem gets further compounded. During negotiations in particular, other delegations want to work with States that they can rely on and which they know will be present at the meetings. So, if you are not seen as being reliable, that is, not there all the time to lend support to a position, you get cut off and become an non-player. You end up being marginalised.

The second problem is one relating to access. Small states are generally excluded from the real discussions. The UN Security Council is the most egregious example with the Permanent 5 members dominating in small groups and stringing the others along. But this probably holds true for all sorts of other fora like the Green Room of the WTO in Geneva, the General Assembly President’s small consultations, and other consultations. I am particularly reminded of what happened during the final round of negotiations on the Outcome Document for the High-Level Summit in conjunction with the 60th anniversary of the UN (2005). In the final stages, the President of the GA decided to confine negotiations to just 20 or so delegations, leaving out the small states (with the exception of the facilitators, some of whom like Ambassador Christopher Hackett from Barbados were from small countries, but who were there in their personal capacities). To some extent, this is the fault of small states too. They are not knowledgeable or perceived to be knowledgeable; hence they are deemed to be unable to contribute constructively. Most do not speak so they are cyphers that can be ignored. One needs not only to have constructive inputs but also to be prepared to make oneself heard and sometimes make a pain of oneself – rant and rave and push one’s way into the small group negotiations! Most small states don’t feel secure or comfortable enough to do that.

The third problem is one of heft. In this regard, small states have none unless they band together. But unfortunately they very often do not do that. Because they are poor, or weak, or unfocused, they allow themselves to be peeled off individually and literally “bought off”. This is done by the big countries and blocs comprising developed countries. Just look at FOSS – the Forum of Small States. We meet informally but invariably never attempt to develop common positions on any of the issues which are discussed at the UN. If we start doing that, some will have to toe the European Union position (e.g. the small European members of FOSS), while others would be bound by Organization of Islamic Conference or Non-aligned Movement positions.

Unless we develop heft, by which I mean becoming less dependant on the West for economic aid and technical assistance, the small developing states will find it difficult to stand up for what we believe in or to band together to promote the collective interests of small states. On some issues like stem cell research or the death penalty, I have witnessed for myself what pressure can do to dissuade a small state from voting for what it believes in. Sometimes, these small states even take positions at the UN contrary to what is spelt out in their national legislation! When asked, they will tell you sheepishly and in private that as much as they would have liked to support some of us as a matter of principle, they had been instructed by their governments to vote differently because of pressure being brought to bear upon them by the developed countries!

In short, the small states will not be listened to unless they do something like withholding votes from larger delegations and acting according to principles. But, unfortunately, life isn’t as simple as that. With aid and economic assistance on the line, most small delegations know where their bread is buttered. Duress and pressure tactics work in the UN. What that pretty much means is that small states today are an ineffective caucus.

Does that mean that small states will forever remain ineffective? I hope not and believe that the situation can be quite different. To be more effective, a small state could do the following:

(a) Prioritising: Delegates from small States may choose to focus on one/two particular issues and become a major player in that area (e.g. Barbados on climate change issues; Marshall Islands on sustainable development issues or the Small 5 on UNSC working methods). A clear sense of priorities helps small countries prepare intensively and coordinate with like-minded delegations.

(b) Always try to be well-prepared and well organised (to the best of one’s ability) for discussions and negotiations at the UN. A small state which is well prepared and well organised for its work at the UN, which has a political commitment to principles and international law, which is active by inclination and constructive in its initiatives can play an extremely important role in the work of the UN.

(c) Team work: Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) and CARICOM often work together as a group to push their common agenda. The PSIDS also update each other on issues being discussed at the UN which others might have missed out on. During the Saint Lucia Presidency of the UNGA (2003 – 2004) and during Antigua’s Chairmanship of the G77 (2008), the CARICOM countries got together to provide logistical and manpower support to these two delegations, thereby enabling them to play effective roles at the UN.

(d) Perhaps, most importantly, for small states to play an effective role at the UN, one has to be quite self-sufficient in that one should not be dependent on others for economic assistance or financial aid. Of course, none of us can claim to be completely self-sufficient economically, especially in today’s integrated and globalised world. But, the more autonomous each of us are, the more likely that we would be able to speak our minds and act according to our principles.
Plans are under way to organize the 2010 conference in one of the major UN capitals around the theme, New Security Challenges. In an interview with ACUNS Executive Director, Patricia Goff, Dr. Michael Platzer, ACUNS Liaison Officer in Vienna, tells us a bit about what we can expect.

PG: Michael, why do you think that Vienna is a good place to hold the 2010 ACUNS Annual Meeting?

MP: The Vienna International Centre houses the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the UN agencies that deal with nuclear weapons proliferation and testing, terrorism, and organized crime. Together with UNIDO, UNCITRAL, and the Office of Outer Space Affairs, these units comprise 4,000 employees and make up the third UN headquarters. ACUNS has never met in the Austrian capital, the home of Mozart, Beethoven, Sigmund Freud, Gustav Klimt, Adolf Loos, Joseph Schumpeter and Hans Kelsen. The Austrians are proud of their humanist and cultural traditions and contributions to diplomacy, peacemaking, multi-cultural understanding, human rights, social sciences and international law. As a current member of the Security Council, Austria has chosen to emphasize human rights, the rule of law, conflict prevention, and the responsibility to protect. This small country hosts many important internationally-recognized institutions of peace studies, systemic analysis, economics, anti-corruption, and anti-racism. In addition, OPEC and the OSCE are settled in Vienna.

PG: In your view, why is the theme, “new security challenges” so important?

MP: Effective measures to contain Iran and North Korea, a renewed campaign to reduce nuclear missiles; terrorist attacks; the trillion dollar illegal trade in weapons, humans, drugs and other illicit goods; and the regional instabilities caused by ethnic tensions, tyrannies, corruption, failed states, poverty, war, and environmental degradation are today’s security challenges. Non-state actors - pirates, bandits, smugglers, rebel armies, and terrorists - can hold not only foreigners and their property hostage, but entire states. Combating these new security threats is much more complicated and involves a multi-sectoral preventive approach. Even organizations like UNIDO in pursuing sustainable development and UNCITRAL in promoting a fair legal framework for trade have important roles to play. These questions cry out for attention at a forum like the one ACUNS offers at its annual conference.

PG: What are the key topics that should be addressed, in your opinion?

MP: Nuclear proliferation, transnational criminality, societal disintegration, xenophobia, and the threats to human rights in the twenty first century are among the topics that will be addressed. The lessened prestige of the United Nations and the fact it is now deliberately targeted will get special attention. Other important issues include security threats arising from climate change; militarization of outer space; asteroid threat mitigation; urban crime; and governance building. Of course, as is always the case with ACUNS annual meetings, ideas for workshop panels are most welcome.

PG: Who will be the key co-operating partners from the region?

MP: We’ve already gotten a very enthusiastic response from folks in the region. We anticipate that, in addition to the Vienna-based UN organs, the Austrian Ministry of European and International Affairs, the Ministry for Science and Research, the City of Vienna, and University of Vienna will play key roles. Other cooperating partners include the Austrian Institute of International Affairs; the Austrian Foreign Policy and UN Association; the Austrian Peacekeeper Association; Austrian Society for Political Science; Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution; Boltzman Institute for Human Rights; the Diplomatic Academy; European Training and Research Centre for Human Rights and Democracy; the Hungarian UN Association; the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis; Institute for Peace Support and Conflict Management; the Kreisky Forum; Renner Institute, as well as individuals and institutes from Belgrade, Graz, Innsbruck, Klagenfurt, Linz, Macedonia, Montenegro, Salzburg, Sigmund Freud, and Webster Universities. We also hope to have participation from Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Liechtenstein, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Turkey, and Ukraine.

PG: As a long-time resident of Vienna and a former UNODC staffer, what can people expect?

MP: A better understanding of the international organizations in Austria; interesting exchanges with scholars from middle and south eastern Europe with different perspectives; and a finer appreciation of Austrian culture, “Weltanschaung”, cuisine, history, architecture, and music traditions, if desired. There are hotels in every price category nearby the two sites of the conference, the “UN Centre” and the University of Vienna, with excellent public transport connections. Combined with a few extra days, Bratislava, Budapest, Munich, Prague or the mountains and lakes of Salzburg, Carinthia, or Slovenia are easily accessible with high speed trains. It should be a great conference, following on the wonderful experience we had in Trinidad and Tobago this year.

PG: Thanks, Michael! We’re looking forward to it!
This report is wonderfully easy to write because I have the pleasure of letting you know that the 2009 ACUNS Annual Meeting was such a success! We gathered to explore the theme of “Small, Middle and Emerging Powers in the UN System.” From the opening keynote address to the closing plenary session, participants had a truly memorable experience in Trinidad and Tobago. Our hosts at The University of the West Indies – especially Tim Shaw and his team at the Institute of International Relations – struck the perfect balance between stimulating conference sessions and ample opportunity for informal socializing, complete with live Latin and steel drum music and fabulous Caribbean food. Highlights included the keynote address by the Director General of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, Dr. Len Ishmael; a frank discussion of the role of small states at the UN (in this newsletter) by Ambassadors Vanu Gopala Menon of Singapore and Christopher Hackett of Barbados; Tom Weiss’ Holmes lecture on the international civil service; and a moving intervention by former President of Trinidad and Tobago, A.N.R. Robinson, about his important contribution to the creation of the International Criminal Court. We also had the privilege of hearing insightful analysis of the international financial crisis and of contemporary security challenges, among other topics. For those of you who were unable to join us in Trinidad, there is a paper archive on the ACUNS website and we will soon post videos of the keynote address, the Holmes lecture, and the plenary sessions. We hope that you’ll visit the website and enjoy these resources. Unfortunately, we cannot give you a taste of the lovely social events we enjoyed, including a reception at the home of the President of Trinidad and Tobago; Latin dancing under the stars courtesy of Professor Clement Sankat, Principal of the St. Augustine campus of The University of the West Indies; and a perfect end to the conference, sharing Caribbean delicacies while listening to the renowned military steel drum band. We are grateful to all of the folks who came together in Trinidad, throughout the Caribbean and elsewhere to make this such a great event.

The 2009 Annual Meeting marked a changing of the guard, of sorts. We welcomed Christer Jönsson as our new Board Chair and thanked Thomas Weiss for his service in that position over the last three years. Next year, we’re looking forward to a very different, but equally exciting experience in Vienna, Austria, home to several UN offices, among them the IAEA and UNODC. We’ll gather from 3-5 June, 2010 around the theme of New Security Challenges and we hope you’ll join us. Please watch the website for information as it develops. In this issue, our liaison officer in Vienna, Michael Platzer, gives us a taste of what we can expect next year in Vienna.

I’ve also just returned from Edmonton and the 2009 Summer Workshop. Hosted by the University of Alberta with support from the UN University, Dr. Andy Knight and Dr. Obi Aginam led the event on the theme of Global Public-Private Partnerships. Fifteen participants converged on Edmonton – 8 from the UN and 7 from academia. They were joined by expert guests, including the Executive Director and the Chief of Operations from the UN Office for Partnerships. It was a stimulating time north of the magnificent Canadian Rockies and a few short miles from the Alberta tar sands. We’ll tell you more in the next newsletter.

Notes from the Executive Director
STAYING on topic:
CELEBRATING SUCCESS AND LOOKING FORWARD TO CHANGE

Patricia Goff, Executive Director, ACUNS

Pictured above: Timothy Shaw, Christer Jönsson, Thomas Weiss, and Patricia Goff at the University of the West Indies in Trinidad and Tobago
New ACUNS Board Members

ACUNS is proud to announce the appointment of the following individuals to the Board of Directors, effective June 2009, for three-year terms.

We look forward to working with them.

ALDO CALIARI is Director of the Rethinking Bretton Woods Project at the Center of Concern in Washington, D.C. Originally from Argentina, he has a Masters of International Policy and Practice from George Washington University (2007), with a focus on economics and finance. He also holds a Masters degree from the Washington College of Law, American University, on International Legal Studies (2000), where he was honored with the Outstanding Graduate Award. He earned his first law degree in Argentina, at the Universidad Nacional de Tucumán Law School, in 1997. Since 2000 Aldo has been staff at the Center of Concern where he was at first responsible for advocacy and coalition-building activities around the International Conference on Financing for Development (Monterrey, Mexico, 2002) and its follow-up, as well as bringing a human rights approach to the work of the Rethinking Bretton Woods Project. In 2002, Mr. Caliari started what has now become the International Working Group on Trade-Finance Linkages, currently a coalition of over 400 organizations, networks and academics, with three regional platforms, that innovated in the way that organizations work together in advocacy on financial and trade policy issues. In 2004-5 he was responsible for conceptualizing and negotiating with UN officials the Multi-Stakeholder Consultation on Systemic Issues, a partnership that took advantage of the newly-created mandate to the UN to convene Multi-Stakeholder consultations within the framework of the UN Financing for Development process, but led by civil society. In 2008 he was responsible for the first ever initiative to address the relationship between human rights and financing for development, conceptualizing a partnership with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. In the same year, he was responsible for a set of collaborative workshops on Financing for Development that brought together Group of 77 members in New York and civil society experts.

SAM DAWNS is the Executive Director of the United Nations Association of the UK. From June 2000 to June 2003 he served as First Officer in the Executive Office of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. A senior policy adviser on UN issues for more than 19 years, Sam spent six years as co-director of a Geneva-based international consultancy, having previously served as the inaugural head of the UNA-UK UN and Conflict Programme. He has also served on working attachment to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Research Analysts), as a parliamentary researcher at the House of Commons, and as Programme Assistant to the Quaker UN Office in Geneva. Sam has degrees in Social Anthropology and International Conflict Analysis and undertook doctoral studies on UN Security Council reform at New College, Oxford. He has been a visiting fellow at the Lauterpacht Centre for International Law of Cambridge University and at the UN Studies Programme of Yale University. Sam has been interviewed frequently on television and radio and has lectured at Oxford University (PPE), UCL (UN law) and the UN University in Tokyo. He has co-authored or edited six books on the UN, including The Procedure of the UN Security Council and The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations (both published by Oxford University Press). He is an alumnus of the UN’s International Leadership Academy in Amman, Jordan, of the London Business School and of the Top Management Programme of the National School of Government.

LORRAINE ELLIOTT BA MA (Hons) (Auckland), PhD (ANU) is a Senior Fellow in the Department of International Relations. Her research focuses on the global politics of the environment; environmental governance in Southeast Asia; peace and security including non-traditional security; cosmopolitan political theory; cosmopolitan military; transnational harm, cosmopolitan ethics and the politics of consent; transnational environmental crime. Her books include International Environmental Politics: Protecting the Antarctic (Macmillan, 1994), The Global Politics of the Environment (Macmillan, 2nd edition 2004; 1st edition 1998) and (co-edited with Graeme Cheeseman), Forces for Good: Cosmopolitan Militaries in the 21st century (Manchester University Press, 2005). As well as numerous book chapters, she has also published articles in The Pacific Review, Global Society, Contemporary Security Policy and the Australian Journal of International Affairs. Career highlights include an Exchange Fellowship, Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences and Australian Academy of Social Sciences (2007); Visiting Research Fellow, Balliol College, Oxford (2002); Visiting Fellow, Asia Research Centre, London School of Economics (2001); Research grant, United States Institute of Peace (2002); Australasian Political Studies Association L F Crisp Medal for originality and intellectual contribution (1997); Vice-Chancellor’s Endowment for Excellence for retention of outstanding staff; Member, Australian National Committee, Council for Security Cooperation Asia Pacific (CSCAP).

RAmesh thakur is Director of the Balsille School of International Affairs, Distinguished Fellow at the Centre for International Governance Innovation, and Professor of Political Science at the University of Waterloo, Canada. Previously, Dr. Thakur was Vice Rector and Senior Vice Rector of the United Nations University (and Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations) from 1998-2007. Educated in India and Canada, he was a Professor of International Relations at the University of Otago in New Zealand and Professor and Head of the Peace Research Centre at the Australian National University, during which time he was also a consultant/adviser to the Australian and New Zealand governments on arms control, disarmament and international security issues. He was a Commissioner and one of the principal authors of The Responsibility to Protect (2001), and Senior Adviser on Reforms and Principal Writer of the United Nations Secretary-General’s second reform report (2002). The author and editor of over thirty books and 300 articles and book chapters, he also writes regularly for quality national and international newspapers around the world. He recently published the book, War in Our Time: Reflections on Iraq, Terrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction, (United Nations University Press, 2007). He was the recipient of the 2008 Friends of ACUNS Book Award for The United Nations, Peace, and Security (Cambridge University Press, 2006).

ACUNS is pleased to welcome Professor Christer Jönsson as the Chairman of the Board of Directors from June 2009 through June 2012.

Christer Jönsson is Professor of Political Science at Lund University, Sweden, and a member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. In 1995-97 he served as President of the Swedish Political Science Association, and in 1996-99 as President of the Nordic International Studies Association (NISA). He has been Visiting Professor at Stanford University and Kyung Hee University, Seoul, and a Fellow at the Collegium Budapest Institute for Advanced Study. He has served on the editorial boards of International Organization and Global Governance. In addition to international organization, his research interests and publications range from negotiation theory and diplomacy to the role of transnational networks and NGOs in global governance. He has contributed to the Sage Handbooks of International Relations (2002) and of Conflict Resolution (2009), as well as the Oxford Handbook on the United Nations. His most recent co-authored books are Organizing European Space (2000) and Essence of Diplomacy (2005).
Civil society, specifically nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), have repeatedly joined with small and middle powers to form transnational advocacy networks that have worked successfully in and around the UN system to change norms, develop programs, and establish treaties and other rules. This has sometimes resulted in success even in the face of opposition from hegemonic large powers. Most notable has been the alliance of Canada and the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) in the Ottawa Process that produced the land mines Convention, signed in December 1997 and in force in record time in March 1999, and won the ICBL the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize. The October 1996 challenge from Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy, to meet again in Canada in a year to sign the treaty, was a key moment. The treaty was drafted by Austria. Other less well known cases exemplify the synergistic relationship between NGOs and certain small and middle powers that has contributed to a redistribution of power in the international system.

**THE NGO ROLE IN THE UN**

While neither the original July 18, 1944 “US Tentative Proposals for a General International Organization,” nor the Dumbarton Oaks Proposals put forth by the four major powers (the US, UK, Soviet Union, and China) on October 7, 1944, contained any reference to the role of non-governmental organizations, the San Francisco Conference – in which small and middle powers also participated – provided for the establishment of a relationship between the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the nongovernmental organizations, formalizing the League practice of consultation with NGOs. Thus Article 71 of the United Nations Charter provided that ECOSOC might make arrangements for consultation with international and national NGOs “concerned with matters within its competence,” that is, economic and social, but not peace and security, matters.

The Committee on Arrangements for Consultation with Non-Governmental Organizations report, adopted by ECOSOC on 21 June 1946, stated that the purposes of consultative status were to “secure expert information or advice” and to “enable organizations which represent important elements of public opinion to express their views.” These multiple purposes made their way into the procedures adopted in 1950, revised with ECOSOC Resolution 1296 of 23 May 1968 to define Categories I (organizations “concerned with matters of the Council” and “broadly representative”) and II (“organizations with a special competence” in a few ECOSOC fields) and Roster (organizations which “can make occasional and useful contributions”), and revised again in ECOSOC Resolution 1996/31 of July 25, 1996, updating the arrangements and renaming the categories General, Special, and Roster. Following the passage of ECOSOC 1996/31, the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Status with ECOSOC (CONGO) proposed that similar arrangements be extended to the General Assembly. NGOs have used their consultative status with the UN even in areas outside the economic and social, and have built networks in and out of the UN, often reframing security issues to human rights issues.

**WOMEN’S RIGHTS, PEACE AND SECURITY**

Often NGOs, in collaboration with middle powers, were the initiators of UN General Assembly conferences. In 1972 a group of NGOs under the leadership of a representative of the International Federation of Business and Professional Women asked ECOSOC’s Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) to call for an International Women’s Year. At the 24th session of the CSW, 14 February to 3 March 1972, 10 NGOs signed a statement calling for such a year (E/CN.6/NGO/244). The Women’s International Democratic Federation (WIDF), in particular, used its consultative status to get Romania to introduce this resolution in the CSW. It was the work of women’s NGOs, particularly the International Council of Women and WIDF, consistently lobbying governments on the subject, which insured that the proposal did not get dropped at any stage (Foster, 76).

The General Assembly declared 1975 International Women’s Year and held the International Women’s Year Conference in Mexico City. The 10 NGOs who had signed the statement at the CSW came together to run the Tribune, the forum for NGOs with Mexico providing the university space to make this possible. Women’s organizations continued to contribute significantly to the 1970s series of General Assembly ad hoc mega-conferences which were repeated in the 1980s and 1990s, especially the women’s conferences: Copenhagen 1980, at which the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination was opened for signature; Nairobi 1985; and Beijing 1995. They worked with middle level states (especially Denmark, Kenya), foundations, and UN agencies, both to run the Forums and to impact the intergovernmental policy-making at the official conferences.

The Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) and other women’s NGOs worked closely with Bangladesh and later Namibia to get the Security Council in October 2000 to pass Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (text at www.PeaceWomen.org/1325inTranslation/index.html), the first time the Council had taken up this linkage. During the Commission on the Status of Women, Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury of Bangladesh, then President of the Security Council, made a speech on March 8, 2000, International Women’s Day, that linked equality, development and peace, the themes of the UN women’s conferences, and the urgent need for greater women’s involvement. Chowdhury said that he was working toward a Security Council session on the role of women in armed conflict and peace. The Women and Armed Conflict Caucus, convened by WILPF, organized events to provide information on the issue to Security Council members. In the NGO Working Group on Women and International Peace and Security, a small number of women’s NGOs worked with Chowdhury and other small and middle powers, and met with UN gender officials and Security Council states. Because Namibia had hosted the May meeting that produced the Windhoek Declaration, the group hoped Namibia...
adopted by ECOSOC on 21 June 1946, stated that the purposes of consultative status were to “secure expert information or advice” and to “enable organizations which represent important elements of public opinion to express their views.”

would hold the Security Council open session during its October presidency. Regional consultations, the production of documents, and information sharing networks, preceded the meeting. Under the Arria Formula (an arrangement initiated by Ambassador Diego Arria of Venezuela in 1993 in which NGOs meet informally with members of the Security Council), meetings were held on October 23 and 30, where women from Sierra Leone, Guatemala, Somalia, Tanzania, and various NGO experts, addressed Security Council members.

On October 31, 2000 the Security Council adopted Resolution 1225, which urged increased representation of women in decision-making on prevention, management, and resolution of conflict, and called upon all parties to armed conflict “to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence.” The group did not stop with the passage of the resolution, but has continued to work on its implementation.

(Hill; Hill, Aboitz, and Poehlman-Doumbouya).

THE WORLD COURT PROJECT: NGOs AND THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

While consultative status has been important to NGOs, they have played significant roles even where they did not have consultative status. In the World Court Project, NGOs worked with New Zealand and other states critical of nuclear weapons to bring a case to the International Court of Justice. In the early 1980s Sean MacBride of the International Peace Bureau suggested getting an advisory opinion of the World Court on the legality of nuclear weapons. In 1986 the World Court Project began in New Zealand to get countries to request such an opinion. New Zealand had earlier joined with Australia to protest French nuclear testing in the Pacific, and with other island states to create the South Pacific Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in 1985, as well as declaring itself a nuclear free zone. The International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), which had received a Nobel Peace Prize in 1985 for its work on nuclear weapons, sponsored a resolution at its World Congress in 1988. The practice of states including NGOs on their national delegations enabled a citizen advisor on the New Zealand delegation to the Third UN Special Session on Disarmament to spread the idea to other delegates. The project spread to the World Congress of the International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms (IALANA), and to other states, with the aid of newsletter coverage by the Parliamentarians for Global Action.

Using Article 66 of the Charter, which allows other organs, in addition to the UN General Assembly, to request World Court advisory opinions, the IPPNW convinced the World Health Organization to adopt a resolution on the subject on May 14, 1993. After the case went to the Court in September 1993, IALANA and IPPNW drafted model submissions which were used by some states. The World Court Registrar received citizen delegations with documents and petitions in 1994 and 1995. Nuclear weapons states and others argued that, not WHO, but the UN General Assembly, was the correct venue for such a question. The Lawyers’ Committee on Nuclear Policy, the US affiliate of IALANA, pushed for the adoption of a resolution by the UN General Assembly First Committee. Having achieved the support of the Non-Aligned Movement, the resolution was adopted 18 November 1994. In December 1994 the resolution was adopted by the General Assembly (78-43, with 21 abstentions and 53 not voting). Within days the case arrived at the World Court, which decided to consider the WHO and General Assembly questions separately but simultaneously. The World Court delivered its decision on July 8, 1996, finding threat or use of nuclear weapons contrary to the law of armed conflict, and in particular international humanitarian law, but not concluding in the case of self-defense. (Dewes and Green)

NGOs in this case worked with middle powers and used their consultative status, coupled with legal expertise and social movement organizing, to obtain a result from the International Court of Justice that powerful nuclear states strongly opposed. This pattern was echoed in other cases outside the realm of economic and social issues. Secretary-General Kofi Annan repeatedly indicated the importance of NGOs with respect to the development of the International Criminal Court and the land mines treaty.

THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT, THE NGO COALITION, AND THE LIKE-MINDED GROUP

The movement toward the establishment of the International Criminal Court represents a unique collaboration between the Like-Minded Group of states and nongovernmental organizations, with the strong support of the UN Office of Legal Affairs. In a letter of 21 August 1989 (UN Doc. A/44/195), the “Permanent Representative of Trinidad and Tobago requested that the Secretary-General include a supplementary item on the possibility of establishing an international criminal court with jurisdiction over illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs across national frontiers and other transnational criminal activities.” The matter was referred to the International Law Commission by GA Res. 44/39 (1989).

(Murphy, p. 1019) This occurred at the initiative of then Prime Minister A.N.R. Robinson, who had worked closely with Robert Woetzel, President of the Foundation for an International Criminal Court (Glasius). According to presentations at a panel on Trinidad and Tobago and the ICC at the 2009 Annual Meeting of the Academic Council on the UN System in Trinidad and Tobago, while the initiative did advocate including illicit drugs under the jurisdiction of the court, this was done as much to interest the United States in the court as from particular interest in the drugs issue. (Ramcharan, interjection during panel discussion). The General Assembly in 1991 requested that the International Law Commission (ILC) draft an international criminal court treaty (UN General Assembly Resolution 4654). With the ILC’s 1994 final draft of a court statute, the General Assembly, at the recommendation of its Sixth (legal) Committee, established a PrepCom in 1995 and authorized a diplomatic conference from 15 June to 17 July, 1998 in Italy to finalize and adopt the treaty.

The Like-Minded Group, originally roughly a dozen small and middle level states (largely from Northern Europe and Latin America, plus Canada), many of whom had worked together in the Sixth Committee, came together especially at the second PrepCom in August 1996 on the issue of setting a clear date for the diplomatic conference and worked to create a strong, independent court quickly. The group grew to 42 members and later to over 60. Leadership of the conference came largely from the Group: Adriaan Bos of the Netherlands, who had helped establish the

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This question has taken on greater relevancy amid China’s so-called “rise” in the international system. China’s power capabilities, economic weight, and international influence have grown to the point where some international observers are looking to Beijing for solutions to the current global economic crisis, knowing that Washington is mired in its own difficulties. The issue has taken on new meaning as the UN itself has come under increasing criticism from within and outside, challenges to its role, purpose and most of all, its effectiveness in future world organization.

Two new lines of research are framing the burgeoning debate on China, in particular, and the UN, and global governance reform. The first asks whether an increasingly powerful China is pulling its diplomatic weight in the UN system? In an exploratory article, Cooper and Fues note that the sheer size of China’s economy provides not only enhanced global weight and options but also added expectations. Their investigation leads them to suggest that China’s willingness to pull its weight as a top-tier state is “ambiguous”. The verdict, so far, is that China has yet to pull its new weight, that its diplomatic profile and performance inside the UN’s operations have been less than what could be hoped for, by now.

On the other side of the spectrum, there are those who argue that China has been leveraging its new capabilities and influence to constrain the agenda of the UN in ways that serve Beijing’s diplomatic interests. This short article suggests that closer examination of China’s evolving relations in the UN system reveals three main findings – counter-intuitive observations – that give reason to rethink the conventional wisdom and reframe the debate on China and the UN. First, that China has significantly increased its contributions to the U.N. recently in some important functional areas, and that the contributions have served to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the UN’s specialized agencies which have been the recipients of the support. Beijing’s new contributions can be seen in issue-areas ranging from controlling nuclear proliferation in the Korea peninsula in the UN Security Council and the Six Party Talks, peace keeping operations in Haiti, to new international security operations such as the anti-piracy efforts off the Somali Coast. Beijing has gained international profile for its support to the UN’s Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), both the gains achieved inside China, as well as growing international contributions. Chinese authorities expanded their international contributions to the MDGs beyond agriculture and rural development, areas of assistance that China is traditionally known for, by donating Chinese anti-malarial drugs to Africa. In so doing, China was seen as making contributions in areas of science and technology. At the behest of the UN Office in China, Beijing also made large scale contributions to the UN’s humanitarian relief operations in the international response to the Indian Ocean tsunami of December 2004, sending relief supplies and experts to the affected zones, and on the Pakistan earthquake of 2005 by opening new land transport routes inside China to help move relief supplies more rapidly to the quake zone. More recently, the first plane load of tamiflu vaccine that was donated to the Mexican government in the H1N1 crisis came from Beijing’s stock, arriving at the Mexico City airport the day after the outbreak was announced.

Second, by actually pulling greater diplomatic weight than many have assumed, and increasing its contributions to the UN across a full range of functional areas, Beijing ironically intensifies an existing dilemma for the UN’s donor operations. China’s increased contributions as a donor shine a spotlight on the question of the relevancy of international donor programs, in terms of their continuing presence in China. To briefly summarize, China no longer needs the money of the international donors. It does not even need much of the technical assistance that has been traditionally offered. This puts all of the international donors in a transitional mode. While it has become fashionable in international policy circles to challenge Beijing on whether it is acting as a “responsible stakeholder”, when the Chinese government actually steps up its contributions, this creates a crisis of relevancy for the international donor organizations, and especially their traditional methods of engaging China. Increased Chinese contributions to the UN agencies and the Bretton Woods institutions have made it necessary for the major international organizations to adjust their operations and rationale for engaging China.

Third, despite the criticism the UN has received in other areas of its operations, in its relations with China, the UN has exhibited effective institutional adaptation. It has built new ties of influence with China, which may offset, to some degree, China’s rising institutional influence, or open new channels for influence in a non-zero sum game. The UN has moved beyond North-South dynamics in its relationship with China, and shifted its attention to China’s growing involvement in South-South relations. It has shown strong awareness of China’s increased weight across the Global South, and strategically repositioned itself amid China’s growing economic ties with Africa – flows that have increased from US$2 billion in trade in 1999 to total economic flows of US$35 billion in 2007. These flows are estimated by the UN to reach $100 billion by 2010. Although this is certainly a bit of exaggeration, some people call Beijing the new Washington. The world is no longer mainly or only organized along North-South relationships, and the importance of relations and partnerships between developing countries has increased. This has been jumpstarted and sustained by China’s economic rise. The UN has adjusted to this shift in the global order by, for example, supporting the China-African Business Partnership, with the UNDP emphasizing corporate social responsibility and balancing of trade and investment in the new Sino-African relations, since the latter is more important for creating sustainable jobs.

In helping to establish new partnerships between China and Africa in areas of mutual interest, the UN is, in turn, leveraging these new international relationships to promote policy and other reforms inside China. This extends to matters of general political sensitivity including the land rights of farmers and the growth of civil society. The UN has taken up these issues with China’s central authorities, and made serious efforts to coordinate its programs with local priorities. It has integrated the operations of the UNDP into joint efforts and programs that the Chinese government has also committed itself to, and invested in, including targeted reforms to bring about improvements in governance, public policy, and public management.
The UN has been able to use its core strength – multilateralism – to encourage China on global engagement. The UN has focused the engagement on “global best practices” and “global norms and standards”. This can be seen in the UN’s efforts in many areas of its recent work with China, particularly in anti-corruption, the Montreal Protocol, and environmental sustainability. The UN’s mechanisms, such as its regime of Conventions and Treaties have been very useful for engaging China as a member of the global community. The UN has the ability to influence China’s governance reforms through its Conventions, which China sees as legitimate, for example, with the Convention on Disability, and the UN Convention Against Corruption. China has come to see reforms in these areas as in the national interest, and has chosen to work more in accordance to the international principles in the UN Conventions – even if not wholly so. Beijing has “imported” international principles, norms and values into the domestic legal system. UN officials are aware that, in issue-areas such as disability rights, when the values of the UN Convention are championed inside China, it means new national rules, and significant adjustments to the system. This can be seen as “win-win benefit” for the UN and China.

It can be argued that, the UN, at its core, is about multilateralism – this is its comparative advantage as an international organization, in engaging China. At the same time, the UN also recognizes that, given China’s growing global footprint, new mechanisms for engaging China, multilaterally, are also needed. The existing regime of Conventions and Treaties may not be enough. It would be useful for the UN to look at various types of review mechanisms for monitoring it relations with China and the other Great Powers, including for reviewing the actions of the major powers both regionally and globally. This would clearly be a very different modality for engaging China than the old development assistance, project-driven partnership approach.

What the above suggests is that, the UN, in its recent engagements with China, has demonstrated new relevancy, and even comparative advantages, in diffusing shared international norms, principles and values through its regime of Conventions and Treaties – even if this diffusion is partial and incremental in relation to China. Closer scrutiny of the UN’s evolving relations with China reveal that the UN may be better positioned for engaging this rising power than many assume, especially relative to other major international organizations. Contrary to the conventional criticism, the UN’s proactive approach to adjusting to China’s evolution is enabling it to demonstrate renewed relevancy within the existing system of international governance.

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Please note that all references and citations for this article can be found at www.acuns.org.

Civil Society, Small and Emerging Powers and the UN

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Ad Hoc Tribunal on the Former Yugoslavia, became Chairman of the PrepCom. He was succeeded by Philippe Kirsch of Canada as Chair of the Rome Conference. Cherif Bassiouni, both Egyptian government representative and NGO activist, served as Vice-Chair of the PrepCom and chaired the drafting committee in Rome.

Six NGOs observing the Sixth Committee in fall 1994, recognizing their inability to influence negotiations, came together to form the NGO Coalition for an International Criminal Court (CICC). Founded primarily by human rights NGOs, and organized by Bill Pace of the World Federalist Movement, the CICC worked to support the Like-Minded Group both by attempting to influence governments at home and, more directly, negotiations at the UN. Among the organizations prominent in the CICC were Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the Lawyers’ Committee for Human Rights. The CICC, which began with 30 members, expanded to include 800 NGOs from all regions, including humanitarian, parliamentary, religious, and women’s groups, with the more prominent groups producing expert documents that influenced the negotiations, and others disseminating information and building coalitions. (Benedetti and Washburn) Their help was significant in the work of the well-organized Like-Minded Group of states, which eventually even split the permanent five Security Council members.

CONCLUSIONS

With the active encouragement of small and middle powers, non-governmental organizations and civil society have used their consultative status in the UN, beyond ECOSOC areas, to develop networks that magnify both their power and that of the small and middle level powers with whom they have worked. They have learned to be extremely effective even on peace and security issues where there has been opposition from hegemonic states. Small and middle powers have leveraged their international influence by cooperating with networks of non-governmental organizations that share their views of a less hegemonic world order. The transnational advocacy networks that have resulted appear to have significantly affected the creation and implementation of less hegemonic security norms and international regimes that reflect the emerging transformation to human and not just state security.

Given the huge asymmetries in the global system, middle and small powers may be natural allies with nongovernmental organizations. NGOs often find alliances with middle powers less threatening than with large states. They may have more access in smaller states. Small and middle states, because of their inability to field very large delegations, may benefit more from the expertise and energy of NGOs with which they agree. Middle level states are less able to behave unilaterally on the global scale, and the coalitions that result – often between Canada, the Scandinavian states, and other selected states in all regions – may reflect the less hegemonic norms that may well result from this structural position. In some cases, working with NGOs may give middle powers allies within the large powers they seek to influence. Many of the cases which attribute tremendous success to civil society advocacy are in fact alliances of middle level states and NGOs, in which the power of each is magnified toward the development of less hegemonic norms and international regimes.

Among the research questions that might be pursued in this area might be whether there are particular types of middle level states that are more likely to cooperate with particular types of NGOs. For example, are democratic middle level states more likely to work with NGOs? If so, why? With respect to issues of co-optation, are NGOs less likely to be co-opted by middle level states than large states? Or the reverse: are southern small and middle powers likely or not likely to be co-opted by alliances with northern NGOs, particularly those who may provide concrete benefits? Do the norms and regimes that result from middle power/NGO cooperation simply reflect existing power structures or a redistribution of power in the international system?

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Please note that full references for this article can be found at www.acuns.org.
What's Wrong with the United Nations and How to Fix it

Thomas G. Weiss

Published by: Polity Press in 2009

Six decades after its establishment, the United Nations and its system of related agencies and programs is perpetually in crisis. While World War I and World War II gave rise to ground-breaking efforts at international organization in 1919 and 1945, the UN today seems ill-equipped to deal with modern challenges to world order. Neither the end of the Cold War nor the aftermath of 9/11 has led to the creation of a “next generation” of multilateral institutions.

But what exactly is wrong with the UN, and how can we fix it? Is it possible to retrofit the world body? In this succinct and illuminating analysis, Thomas G. Weiss takes a diagnosis and cure approach to the world organization’s inherent difficulties. In the first half of the book, he considers: the problems of international leadership and decision making in a world of self-interested states; the diplomatic difficulties caused by the artificial divisions between the industrialized North and the global South; the structural problems of managing the UN’s many overlapping jurisdictions, agencies, and bodies; and the ever-demanding challenges of bureaucracy and leadership. The second half examines how to mitigate these maladies and points the way to a more ideal world in which the UN’s institutional ills might be “cured.” His remedies are not based on pious hopes of a miracle cure for the UN, but rather on specific and encouraging examples that could be replicated. With considered optimism and in contrast to received wisdom, Weiss contends that substantial change in intergovernmental institutions is plausible and possible.

This indispensable book will spark debate amongst students, scholars, and policy-makers concerned with international politics, as well as anyone genuinely interested in the future of the United Nations and international cooperation.

Becoming Knowledge Focused
A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO MANAGING KNOWLEDGE IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Ugochukwu N. Ugbor, PhD

Published by the Knowledge Management Associates GmbH for the Center for International Knowledge Management
ISBN 978-3-9502550-1-0

Adopting a pragmatic “bottom-up” approach, this book explores the knowledge in international organizations and the dynamic interactions between stakeholders. It also proposes taxonomy and practical tools to classify the various knowledge products and to contextualize knowledge initiatives in international organizations interested in knowledge management (KM).

This book is expected to help international organizations develop a more comprehensive understanding of the process of becoming knowledge focused, and how KM can address their situation, while taking advantage of investments in KM systems (KMS). Knowledge audits in the form of interviews, developed as part of the study, helped understand contextual issues facing the international organizations and the strategic KM systems proposed and implemented. The result is a novel, and comprehensive discussion about managing knowledge in international knowledge-intensive organizations, suitable for graduate-level students and international organizations alike.

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Military Forces in 21st Century Peace Operations
No Job for a Soldier?
James V. Arbuckle

Published by Routledge ISBN: 978-0-415-54498-6

A major new study of the realities of contemporary warfare, which presents a range of fresh insights and is essential reading for all students and professionals engaged in the field. This book clearly shows us that:

• neither military nor civilian agencies can act effectively alone in resolving modern conflicts
• joint civil-military efforts are needed, and those efforts must be deliberately planned from the outset of an operation; they cannot be added on as afterthoughts when all else has failed
• the record of our efforts over nearly a decade and a half since the end of the Cold War demonstrates that we are doing badly at creating civil-military partnerships, and that we are not getting better.

James V. Arbuckle shows how these issues are neither structural nor organizational – they are cultural. They involve attitudes, beliefs, perceptions – positive and negative, true and false. The solutions will involve changing attitudes, moving beyond prejudices, replacing competition with cooperation. The principal mechanisms for this will be common civil-military training and education.

Put Your Corporate Social Responsibility Act Together!
Mark Esposito

Published by Tate Publishing, 2009 ISBN: 978-1-60799-433-6

In assessing the economic, human, and environmental situation of our world today, this report draws worrying conclusions. Poverty remains a major issue, and the gap between the richest and the poorest is widening. Some people still do not possess the basic requirements to live a decent and safe human life. Our footprint increasingly shatters the earth’s equilibriums, causing pollution, species extinction, and global warming, and it has adverse effects on extreme weather events. These events necessitate the development of a conscience among the world’s corporations and immediate serious action towards improving the situation.

Put Your Corporate Social Responsibility Act Together, by Dr. Mark Esposito, explores ways in which corporations can increase employee satisfaction, decrease their carbon footprint, and maintain good business practices while reaping the continued benefits of yearly revenue. With examples of successful Corporate Social Responsibility and analyses of the current economic and environmental climate, this book is the perfect resource for any company hoping to improve its impact on both the globe and the community.

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